

How many appointments do I need to have a crown made?

It normally takes two appointments. The first is for preparing the tooth, taking the impressions, recording the shade of your teeth, and fitting a temporary crown. The second appointment is for cementing the permanent crown.

What is a post crown?

A post crown is used when a tooth has been root filled and the remaining part of the tooth is too brittle to support a crown on its own. The dentist prepares the tooth to take a post. Once cemented, the post provides the support to hold the crown securely in place.

Various types of post can be used depending upon individual circumstances. Either prefabricated and fitted at the first appointment or, alternatively, made from cast material such as gold and fitted at the second appointment. Your dentist will recommend the most suitable post.

What is a core?

If a tooth is broken down your dentist may be able to rebuild it using a filling material to make what is called a 'core'. This is then prepared for the crown in the same way as a natural tooth. It is called a pinned core if dental pins are used for increased stability.

Does a crown look like a natural tooth?

Yes, crowns are individually made to look as natural as possible. Your dentist will record the colour and translucency of the neighbouring teeth and the crown will be made to match. Usually a crown will improve the shape and colour of the original tooth, modern porcelain can be incredibly beautiful, life-like and long-lasting.

How long does a crown last?

A crown can last many years provided it is properly looked after. You should brush and floss crowns in the same way as your natural teeth. The dentist or hygienist can show you the most effective home care techniques. Regular check-ups with the dentist and hygienist are essential to maintain the health of your teeth and gums.



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CROWNS

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What is a crown?

Crowns (or caps) are hand-made coverings designed to fit over teeth if they are misshapen, discoloured, or have been weakened by damage or a large filling. A crown will restore the strength of a tooth and give it the shape and colour of your natural teeth.

When do I need a crown?

A crown may be recommended if:

- You want to improve the appearance of a tooth
- Your tooth is weakened by a very large filling
- You have a discoloured filling
- Your tooth is damaged
- You have a root treated tooth which requires crown protection
- You have a bridge or denture which needs to be held in place



What materials are used for making a crown?

Crowns are made from various materials depending on the clinical diagnosis and personal preferences. Your dentist will recommend the most appropriate material, the most popular are:

- Porcelain, bonded to precious metal: this is used for most crowns, consisting of a precious metal base with layers of porcelain bonded on top
- Pure porcelain: this is used for metal-free crowns giving them a more natural appearance
- Porcelain and composite resins: these are new materials used for metal-free crowns giving them improved wear and strength
- Solid precious metal (gold and palladium): these are very strong and hard-wearing and are mainly used at the back of the mouth where they can't be seen.

Pure porcelain crowns

Your dentist can now fit pure porcelain crowns on both the front and back teeth. These have the translucency and beauty of natural teeth with the inner strength of the latest generation porcelain. By substituting the gold core with porcelain, dental technicians are able to exercise a greater degree of artistry to create crowns that have no dark margins, making them virtually indistinguishable from natural teeth.

How is a tooth prepared for a crown?

Your dentist will prepare the tooth by removing some of the outer surface leaving a strong inner base. During this preparation a local anaesthetic is used; the treatment is comfortable and feels little different from having a filling. The amount of tooth removed will usually equal the thickness of the crown, roughly about 1 mm. Once your tooth is prepared, the dentist will take an impression of the shaped tooth together with one from the opposite jaw, to record the bite. You will then be fitted with a temporary crown for a week or two until the permanent one has been made and can be fitted.

How is a crown made?

The impressions of your tooth and opposite jaw are sent to a dental laboratory where a technician will use them to make plaster models. The crown is hand-crafted on the model to ensure a perfect fit. The colours, shape, translucency and fine details of your teeth are matched by building up the porcelain in layers, using a range of shades and opacities. The hand-made crown is then fired in a furnace and the personalised characteristics become permanent.

