

When it comes to choosing an orthodontist, there are many factors to be considered. Use this simple checklist to guide you through the process for deciding who you and your child would like to work with for your treatment by identifying what to look for.

Qualifications	Notes
<p>What are your orthodontist's qualifications? Have they completed a five year dental degree and a three year full time orthodontic degree?</p>	
<p>Is your orthodontist a member of the relevant professional orthodontic society or association? Professional associations require that members meet certain criteria such as continuing professional development</p>	
Technology & Practice	
<p>How does your orthodontist stay abreast of advancements in technologies and techniques? You can ask if they have any association with local or international research institutions from which they source input to their practice of orthodontics.</p>	
<p>Does your orthodontist use 3D imaging technology to help diagnose issues and develop more accurate treatment plans? This can result in shorter treatment times, less invasive treatment, more accurate treatment outcomes, including straighter teeth.</p>	
Treatment	
<p>Can your orthodontist provide evidence of successful treatment? Ask if your orthodontist is prepared to provide details of patients who have enjoyed their experience and are happy with their results. Are there photos you can refer to on the website or in the practice that demonstrate their work?</p>	

<p>Does the orthodontist measure the accuracy of their treatment times and can they provide evidence of this? Remember faster treatment is not an indicator of treatment success.</p>	
<p>What treatment options do they offer? Does your orthodontist offer clear or metal braces and lingual braces (braces placed on the inside of teeth)?</p>	
<p>What kind of growth modification treatments does your orthodontist offer? Can the orthodontist explain these in a way that you understand both the treatment and the outcome?</p>	
<p>Does your orthodontist offer complimentary growth and monitoring checks? Growth monitoring is a valuable measure for identifying the ideal time at which treatment should begin if your child requires it. Apart from the fee charged for an initial consult, you may find an orthodontist who will provide this for minimal fee or free.</p>	
<p>Communication</p>	
<p>Can you and your child relate to the orthodontist on a personal level? Observe how the orthodontist relates to your child. Do they speak directly to them and communicate so your child responds positively? How do you feel when they talk to you?</p>	
<p>How does your orthodontist relate to their team? Are they respectful and inclusive? The way they are with people they work with all day is a good indicator of how they'll interact with your child.</p>	
<p>When communicating with you, are their explanations clear? In simple terms, can you understand what they're saying?</p>	

<p>What's their approach to presenting treatment options? Are they open and non-judgmental about patients' and parents' decisions, leaving you space and time to make up your mind about what's best for you?</p>	
<p>Logistics</p>	
<p>Where is the practice located? Consider if your orthodontist's practice is easy to get to and if parking is easy for you. Is it located in close proximity to school and work?</p>	
<p>Is the practice easily accessible, including with prams and wheelchairs? This is a consideration if you will be bringing other young children to the appointment, have children who are in wheelchairs or have difficulty walking</p>	
<p>What are the practice opening hours? Can they accommodate early and late appointments, including before and after school?</p>	
<p>What is their cancellation policy? What lead time is required for cancelling an appointment? What is the penalty if you cancel outside of that window.</p>	
<p>How does the orthodontist help patients keep their appointments? Do they book your next appointment as you leave your existing appointment?</p>	
<p>The Experience</p>	
<p>What is the ambience of the practice? Is it modern, clean, warm and inviting? Think about how you feel when you walk into the practice. Do you feel welcome?</p>	
<p>Are there facilities for keeping children entertained while you wait in the patient lounge? Children's capacity for waiting can be stretched when there are activities to keep them occupied. This can be especially helpful when you have more than one child waiting!</p>	

<p>What is provided for the comfort of parents and carers? Sometimes a visit to the orthodontist is a rare opportunity to take a breather. Can you do this with a cup of tea or coffee? While it's not essential, it can make for a pleasant wait in the patient lounge.</p>	
<p>What is the general vibe of the practice? Is it upbeat and fun or staid and sterile? Is the practice an enjoyable place to visit or does it feel like a clinical and sterile environment?</p>	
<p>Are the staff throughout the practice (e.g. on reception, in the treatment room) welcoming and friendly? Do they greet you and your child by name? Do they communicate directly with you?</p>	
<p>Community</p>	
<p>Has the orthodontist built a community within their practice? If they have, how is that demonstrated? Do they invite new patients to participate in the community?</p>	
<p>Does your orthodontist support the local community in any way, e.g. by delivering talks at schools or sponsoring local teams and clubs?</p>	
<p>Does your orthodontist participate in pro bono programs? For example, do they work in partnership with Give a Smile or B1G1, which provide opportunities for people to receive dental and orthodontic treatment if they're unable to afford it?</p>	