

## Brushing and Flossing Around Braces

With braces, oral hygiene is more important than ever. That's because braces have tiny spaces where food particles and plaque get trapped, and insufficient cleaning while wearing braces can cause enamel staining and tooth decay around brackets or bands.

Be sure to brush carefully after every meal with fluoride toothpaste and a soft-bristled toothbrush. Rinse thoroughly and check your teeth in the mirror to make sure they're clean.



Take time to floss between braces and under wires with the help of a floss threader. Additionally, visit the dentist to have your teeth cleaned every six months to keep your gums and teeth healthy.

### Braces Care Guidelines

The following routine will help make daily brushing and flossing both simple and effective.

1. **Prepare to brush.** Take off elastics, and any other removable parts of your orthodontic appliance.
2. **Clean your braces.** Use your brush at a 45-degree angle to clean around the wires and pins of your braces. Brush from the top of each wire and then from the bottom. (Take time to ensure that all plaque and debris are removed, and that you work all the way around upper and lower teeth.)
3. **Brush your teeth.** Clean each tooth individually. First, place your brush at a 45-degree angle to the junction between the tooth and the gum, then apply gentle pressure as you move in a circular motion. Do this for about 10 seconds. Use the same brushing action on all outer and inner tooth surfaces, tilting the brush as needed to better reach the insides of smaller front teeth.
4. **Floss once a day with super floss,** a type of floss for cleaning around appliances such as braces. Have your dental professional show you how to use this floss, or follow the instructions on the product package.

**Rinse and check your teeth.** Rinse thoroughly with water or mouth rinse, and examine your teeth and braces in the mirror. They should sparkle, shine and feel clean.