

How to get that *Instagram-perfect smile*

From cosmetic dentistry to changing lifestyle habits, we hear from leading dentists on how to prep those pearly whites for the big day

As perhaps the most photographed day of a woman's life, all brides want to look perfect on their wedding day – and have a flawless smile.

With the rise of social media, this pursuit for toothy perfection has reached an all-time high. Fortunately, help is at hand...

Straighten up

Dr Mervyn Druian, renowned for bringing cosmetic dentistry to the UK, believes that preparation is key in order to guarantee a gorgeous grin: "We often see brides coming to the practice a month before their wedding to see

if they can get their smile picture-perfect – it seems to be the last item on their to-do list," he says.

Therefore, he advises

brides to book in a consultation at least six months before the big day to work out an effective treatment plan.

Dr Saul Konviser, who's based at specialist practice Dawood & Tanner in London's Wimpole Street, agrees that forward planning is key to achieving the best results. "Problems can take time to resolve, so if you're getting married, I'd recommend booking an appointment with your dentist as soon as possible."

Dr Konviser notes how common it is for brides to want to straighten their teeth, so procedures such as braces and Invisalign are in high demand. Teeth straightening can take anywhere from two to 18 months,

depending on the complexity. For time-poor brides, there are quicker alternatives, including CFast, which Dr Druian offers at his practice. While the average length of a straightening treatment is three to six months, this clear brace can achieve results in eight weeks. "The secret to its success is that it only corrects the front six teeth, also known as the Social Six or the Smile Line," he explains. "Because it's so quick, it's also more cost-effective than its competitors."

Shape up

A popular procedure for those concerned with the overall aesthetics of their teeth is

porcelain veneers. Dr Druian was the first UK dentist to offer porcelain veneers and can now administer several types. One in particular that has proven popular, not simply for brides but for the entire wedding party, is Lumineers. As well as eliminating discolouration, it fixes a number of dental issues, from tooth damage to crooked teeth. With the average length of treatment being from four to six weeks, it's also a convenient option for achieving the perfect finish. "The obvious benefit of veneers is the increased confidence that comes from a beautiful smile," he says.

While clients would have once come in asking for the perfect Hollywood smile,

Dr Druian notes how, due to social media and the invention of teeth-perfecting apps, clients are increasingly requesting filtered-selfie finishes, as their smiles, he argues, "can sometimes be unrealistic".

Dr Milad Shadrooh (also known as the Singing Dentist) agrees that social media has given rise to the demand for ultimate perfection within cosmetic dentistry and what he refers to as "the insta-smile".

However, rather than simply allowing

patients to go down the easy route of veneers, he'll always urge them to weigh up their options first, as conventional veneers can be damaging to

the actual tooth, due to the enamel having to be removed. He offers several different options, including composite veneers which limit the damage to the tooth structure, along with braces and Invisalign, which Dr Shadrooh argues is "one of the best options for achieving a naturally straight smile".

Dr Rhona Eskander, a leading cosmetic dentist in London who has amassed more than 35,000 followers on Instagram, has achieved fame for her "signature Chelsea look", which she describes as "beautiful and natural, like Kate Middleton's smile". This process includes straightening teeth with Invisalign, followed by whitening and

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—DR SAUL KONVISER, DAWOOD & TANNER



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non-prop veneers. As thin as contact lenses, these provide hardly any damage to teeth. Clients will be given a "trial smile" to assess what shape and colour they want, before photos are sent to the technician and they are fitted two weeks later.

Lighten up

Of course, the most popular treatment in the UK continues to be teeth whitening and when it comes to weddings, Dr Konviser notes the entire bridal party is requesting them: "Bridesmaids and groomsmen all want to look their best for the photos."

While there are now many at-home whitening treatments on the market, Dr Konviser stresses the importance of consulting a dentist before undergoing any whitening treatment. "It's not always as straightforward as popping some whitening strips onto the teeth," he comments. "Many patients get issues with sensitivity that need to be carefully managed."

There are two main types of whitening: at-home and in-surgery. Home-whitening trays are the more cost-effective, while in-surgery whitening, which can leave your teeth up to six shades whiter after just one hour, is ideal for those short of time.

Brush up

Ultimately, though, the first step to pearlescent sparklers is upping your at-home oral-healthcare game. Hygienist Anna Middleton, whose practices are based in Chelsea and Clapham, recommends investing in an electric toothbrush (she recommends the new Philips Sonicare Expert Clean 7500) as this provides a "far superior way to brush away plaque and staining"; brushing twice a day with a fluoride toothpaste and cleaning in between teeth with a floss or interdental brush. She also advises clients to make lifestyle changes in the lead up to a big event. "Try to rinse your mouth with water after consuming dark-coloured foods and drinks," she says. "Remember, if it can stain your carpet, it can stain your teeth." She therefore advises clients to quit smoking, to cut back on red wine or coffee and to keep acids and sugars to mealtimes only, to achieve the best results: "Your body will thank you and so will your teeth." Brides-to-be, it's time to get flossing. 