



Veneer Fact sheet

Fractured, discoloured teeth or slightly mal-positioned teeth can be treated easily and quickly using veneers.

What is a veneer?

Veneers are thin “laminates” made of a porcelain ceramic material, which are attached to the tooth and unlike crowns, do not cover the entire tooth. They are digitally designed and manufacture it to have a micron fit over the front surface of a tooth. The colour is matched perfectly to the colour of your existing teeth so that the only person who knows that you have a veneer, is you.

How do they work?

A small amount of the existing tooth structure is removed to make room for the veneers. The veneer is then fixed to the existing tooth to provide a complete” true-to-nature” in appearance in the same size and colour as your natural neighbouring teeth.

Why would I need a veneer?

A veneer can make a chipped tooth look intact, misaligned teeth straight, or fill gaps between teeth. If you have a miscoloured tooth, a veneer can be used to cover this and provide you with a completely natural looking tooth.

For broken teeth, the porcelain covers the whole of the front of the tooth with a thicker section replacing the broken part.

Veneers can also be used to close small spaces, when orthodontics (braces) are not suitable. If one tooth is slightly out of alignment, a veneer can sometimes be fitted to bring it into line with the others.



What are the advantages of veneers?

Veneers give the appearance of naturally beautiful, perfectly aligned teeth. They look natural and healthy. The veneer is held in place by a specially created dental adhesive, so very little preparation of the tooth is needed.



How are teeth prepared for a veneer?

A micro-thin layer of your tooth's shiny outer enamel surface will be removed, to make sure that the veneer can be bonded permanently in place later. (The amount of enamel removed is tiny and will be the same as the thickness of the veneer)

A local anaesthetic will be used to ensure that there is no discomfort, although occasionally this is not necessary.

Once the tooth has been prepared, the dentist will take an 'impression' (mould) of your teeth. This will be given to the dental technician, along with any other information needed to make the veneer. The colour of the surrounding teeth is matched on a shade guide to make sure that the veneer will look entirely natural.

How long will it take?

A veneer takes at least two visits:

In the first visit the dentist will prepare your tooth, take the impressions and match the shade.

During the second the dentist will fit your new veneer. Before finally bonding it in place, your dentist will show you the veneer on your tooth to make sure you are happy with it. Bonding a veneer in place is done with a special adhesive, which holds it firmly on your tooth.

Will I need a temporary veneer between visits?

As the preparation of the tooth is so slight you very unlikely to need a temporary veneer. The tooth will look very much the same after preparation, but will feel slightly less smooth.

What happens after the veneer is fitted?

Only minor adjustments can be made to the veneer after it is fitted. It is usually best to wait a little while to get used to it before any changes are made. Your dentist will want to check and polish it a week or so after it is fitted, to make sure that you are happy with your new veneer.

How much will it cost?

Costs for this treatment can vary from practice to practice, so it is important to discuss charges and treatment options with your dentist before you begin treatment.

How long will a veneer last?

Veneers should last for many years; however they can chip or break, just as your own teeth can. Your dentist will tell you how long each individual veneer should last. Small chips can be repaired, or a new veneer fitted if necessary.



What about alternatives?

A natural-coloured filling material can be used for minor repairs to your front teeth. This is an excellent solution if the tooth supports a filling, but may not work so well for a tooth that has broken corners. There will always be a join between the tooth and the filling material as it is much harder to match the filling material exactly to your own teeth's natural colour.

Crowns are another alternative for teeth which need to be strengthened - either because they have broken, have been weakened by a very large filling, or have had root canal treatment.