



Choosing your cosmetic dentist

Choosing which cosmetic dentist is the one for you can be quite daunting.

How do you know they offer what you want? How do you know you can trust them to do the best for you? How do you know if they have the relevant training to give you the service you require? Using the 9 steps below should ensure you avoid any pitfalls and that you find a reputable cosmetic dentist that you feel happy and secure to have treatment with. Don't be afraid to ask questions a reputable dentist will be happy to provide all the answers you are seeking.

Here are the 9 top items to look for when selecting your cosmetic dentist:

1. Open, honest and up to date:

Your cosmetic dentist should:

- Listen to what you want
- Answer all your questions to your satisfaction
- Be honest about what they can do for you
- Discuss with you which treatments are in your best interests
- Want what is best for your teeth and your specific aesthetic goals
- Inform you which treatment would look good and why it will work for you
- Be up to date on current treatment options available
- Inform you how long your treatment will take
- Inform you in writing how much it will cost - before the start of your treatment
- Inform you how long your work will be guaranteed and what you need to do to ensure your guarantee is valid

2. Education and training:

Please be aware that although Dental schools offer good training in general dentistry they offer very few courses in cosmetic treatments at anything other than basic level. A good cosmetic dentist will regularly attend workshops, seminars and conferences in order to keep up to date with research, development and new products - including hands on training at workshops. This investment in their skills cost money, only the dentists that regularly commit time and money to their continued education have the commitment and skills required to ensure your dental satisfaction.

Check your cosmetic dentist is a member of either:

- The BACD (British Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry) or
- The BAAD (British Academy of Aesthetic Dentistry)

Dentists who keep at the top of their field will be more than happy to tell you what memberships they hold and what courses they attend.

3. Up to date technology:

Cosmetic dentists should be using the most high-tech equipment and offering the most recent treatments available in dentistry today. Computers, intra-oral cameras, imaging and lasers are indicators of an up to date clinic.

Check whether they have a website, if so, is it a basic one page website with very little to offer, or are they happy to share their information with all their readers and are you able to read about most if not all of the treatments they offer.



4. Laboratory work:

An experienced dentist will be happy to promote the laboratory that produces their work. The lab technicians who want to provide excellent porcelain veneers or cosmetic crowns are highly skilled and also need to be regularly attending seminars and courses.

5. Form and function:

Your cosmetic dentist should explain to you how your treatment would affect the aesthetics of your mouth and your bite and gums. Your treatment should leave you with a comfortable mouth and be long lasting as well as looking good.

6. Before and after Photos:

All good cosmetic dentists should have before and after photos that you can view, these should be real patients that saw your dentist for treatment, not just stock photos.

7. Cost:

Does your cosmetic dentist offer a finance plan? Don't use the cheapest dentist just to save a few pounds, they are cheap because they cut corners and use inferior products. Cosmetic dentistry is for everyone, but remember, you get what you pay for.

8. Experience:

Ask your cosmetic dentist how much experience they have in the treatment you are interested in. Ask them if they are aware of any other options available to you and whether they offer them.

9. Tour the facilities and your free consultations:

Have a good look around the clinic, ask about the procedures and technology available, check out the sterilization areas and general cleanliness - ask about cross infection control procedures. A good clinic will offer you a free consultation with a team member (not the dentist). This is where you can explain your wish list and discuss your requirements. Available treatment options and general costings should be forthcoming.

Profile of the author -

Dr Teresa Day graduated from Guys Dental Hospital in 1980. Teresa is one of the earliest members of the Association of Dental Implantologists and her main interests in dentistry are Implants, Orthodontics (straightening teeth) and Cosmetic Reconstructions. Established since 1990 and with locations in both Milton Keynes and Binfield Berks, Appledore provides orthodontics including Invisalign, dental implants, full mouth reconstruction, veneers and smile enhancement. Appledore also offer the Cerec one day crown and painfree injection. Teresa is a member of:

- The British Dental Association – BDA (1980)
- The British Academy of Aesthetic Dentistry – BAAD (1998)
- The Association of Dental Implantologists - ADI (1990)
- The International Team for Implantologists – ITI (2007)
- The British Periodontal Society (2004)
- The Faculty of General Dental Practice (2006)
- The Clinical Foundation of Orthopaedics and Orthodontics (1982)
- Fellow of the International Congress of Oral Implantologists - ICOI (1998)
- Founder member of the Functional Orthodontics Support Group –FOSG (2005)



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