



smilefocus

tel 6733 9882 (Cosmetic) & 6834 0877 (Family)

COSMETIC DENTISTRY

FAMILY DENTISTRY

IMPLANT & RESTORATIVE DENTISTRY

## Terminology your Orthodontist might Use

**Crossbite:** crossbite is when one or more upper teeth close on the inside of the lower teeth in the front and/or the sides of the mouth.

Early correction of crossbite is recommended because it can cause:

- premature wear of the teeth
- asymmetrical development of the jaws
- dysfunctional chewing patterns

Correction of a crossbite involves wearing braces to either move a single tooth into the correct position, or, where multiple teeth are involved, wearing braces or other intra-oral appliance to expand the arch. In some instances a retainer will be required.

**Openbite:** openbite is an absence of vertical overlap of the teeth, caused by habits such as tongue thrust or finger sucking. It can also occur when the jaws don't grow evenly. Timing of treatment is critical to the overall success of the therapy.

Early correction of openbite is recommended because it can:

- cause improper functioning of your front teeth
- result in the lower front teeth biting into the gum tissue of the upper palate leading to tissue problems
- cause unusual wear of the lower front teeth
- prevent the normal development of the lower jaw

Correction of an openbite involves encouraging growth modification of the jaws using braces, extrusion of the front and anterior teeth, or in some cases surgical correction of the jaws. Breaking these oral habits will facilitate the correction of an openbite.

**Overbite:** overbite occurs when the upper front teeth overlap the lower front teeth in the vertical plane. Often you cannot see the lower incisors. Overbite is due to an over eruption of the front teeth or over development of the bone that supports the teeth. Overbite is also known as a deep bite.

Correction of an overbite requires moving the front teeth up and/or bringing the back teeth together, which will "open" the bite so the teeth are properly aligned and the deep bite is eliminated. This is achieved through wearing braces and, in some instances, surgical correction of the jaws.



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**Overjet:** overjet, or protrusion, is where the upper teeth are too far forward of the lower front teeth (commonly known as “buck teeth”). This can be caused by an improper alignment of the molars, a skeletal imbalance of the upper and lower jaw, flared upper incisors, missing lower teeth or a combination of all the above. In addition, oral habits such as thumb or finger sucking or tongue thrusting can exacerbate the condition.

Early correction of overjet is recommended because it can:

- prevent proper functioning of the front teeth
- lead to premature wear

Overjet can be corrected through growth modification using a functional appliance and/or elastics to reduce the skeletal imbalance.

**Underbite:** underbite is when the lower teeth protrude past the upper front teeth, and is usually caused by undergrowth of the upper jaw, overgrowth of the lower jaw, or a combination of the two. It can also be caused by flared lower incisors, missing upper teeth or a combination of all the above.

Correction of the underbite is recommended because it can:

- prevent proper functioning of the front teeth or molars which can lead to premature wear of the teeth
- cause chewing or eating problems
- cause jaw or joint problems

Underbite can be corrected through growth modification of the jaws, extraction of teeth and in some cases, surgical correction of the jaws.

The most important thing is to make sure you have an assessment at around the recommended age of 7 years. Early correction is the best solution to achieving a healthy smile that makes you feel and look great.