

# ORTHODONTICS

orthodontist | orthodontic specialist | orthodontic and dentofacial orthopedist

# WHAT IS AN ORTHODONTIST?

orthodontist | orthodontic specialist | orthodontic and dentofacial orthopedist

- Orthodontists diagnose, prevent, intercept and treat dental and facial irregularities.

These problems may include teeth that are crowded or too far apart, teeth that meet abnormally or don't meet at all, teeth that stick out, and mismatched jaws. Orthodontists treat existing problems, and can identify problems that are developing, and take timely action to resolve problems before they fully develop. Orthodontists treat patients of all ages, they regularly treat children, adolescents and adults.

- Orthodontists create a custom treatment plan for each patient.

Orthodontists use the full range of “appliances” to correct orthodontic problems. The “appliance” is the term used for the device that moves teeth. It can be traditional braces, clear aligners or braces on the inside of the teeth. The orthodontist is uniquely qualified to recommend the most appropriate type of “appliance” to correct an individual's problem.

# ANCIENT ORTHODONTICS

- The earliest evidence of practices resembling orthodontic work comes from ancient Egyptians, Etruscans, Greeks, and Romans.
- Archeologists have uncovered bodies (including mummies!) preserved with metal or gold wire wrapped around and through their teeth, which were likely used for preservation and burial ceremonies instead of dental application.
- The dead of ancient Egyptians have also been found with metal bands around their teeth made from animal guts, according to [The American of Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics](#). According to Smiles Change Lives, these bands may have been used to [apply pressure to teeth](#), much like modern braces.
- Around 400 B.C., Hippocrates authored some of the first categorizations of tooth ailments. It was not until hundreds of years later that orthodontic progress was made, when the Roman author Aulus Cornelius Celsus used his finger to apply pressure to reposition teeth over time. Around the same period in Rome, Pliny the Elder invented an early version of filling in damaged teeth to their original size.

# MEET EDWARD HARTLEY ANGLE

The Father of Modern American Orthodontics



Edward Hartley Angle, (1855-1930), the founder of the dental specialty of orthodontics, created order from chaos in the study and treatment of positional discrepancies of the teeth, jaws and face, and advanced the cause of dental public health. Angle's innovations that had the most public health impact were his identification of dental occlusion, not simply tooth irregularity, as a prime concern, his development of an uncomplicated classification system for occlusal conditions, his introduction of prefabricated orthodontic appliances and his framing of orthodontics as a dental specialty by organizing the world's first educational program to train orthodontists.

# THREE STEPS IN AN ORTHODONTIST'S EDUCATION

college | dental school | orthodontic school

# HOW TO BECOME AN ORTHODONTIST

college | dental school | orthodontic school

- Orthodontists first complete college and dental school. There is minimal instruction about orthodontics during dental school.
- Dentists may begin practice directly after dental school while orthodontists complete orthodontic residency program for two to three years after [dental school](#).
- Competition for training is stiff: there are about 15 applications for every residency position.
- In the orthodontic residency program, orthodontists receive intensive instruction to learn proper, safe tooth movement (orthodontics) and the guidance of dental, jaw and facial development (dentofacial orthopedics).

## DOES THE EXTRA EDUCATION HELP?

Yes, orthodontists' extra and intensive education makes a big difference. As specialists through education and clinical experience, orthodontists are experts in the diagnosis of orthodontic problems, forms of treatment, the timing of treatment, treatment planning, supervision of treatment, as well as working with patients for long-term stability of their treatment results. The orthodontist's expertise guides them in recommending the type of treatment best suited to correct any specific patients' orthodontic problem. Orthodontists are not limited to a single kind of orthodontic "appliance." Orthodontists are uniquely qualified specialists and have the skills and experience to give you a healthy and beautiful smile.

## POPULAR ACCREDITED PROGRAMS

- Harvard School of Dental Medicine, Advanced Graduate Education Program in Orthodontics (Boston, MA)
- New York University Langone Health, Advanced Education in Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics (New York, NY)
- Penn Dental Medicine, Postgraduate Program in Orthodontics (Philadelphia, PA)
- University of California Los Angeles School of Dentistry, Orthodontics Postgraduate Training Program (Los Angeles, CA)
- University of California San Francisco School of Dentistry, Postgraduate Program in Orthodontics (San Francisco, CA)
- New York University School of Dentistry, Postdoctoral Program in Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics (New York, NY)

# BOARD CERTIFICATION

- In the United States, orthodontists may opt to become board-certified. The American Board of Orthodontics (ABO) certifies orthodontists who have graduated from fully accredited residency programs. ABO-certified orthodontists are known as Diplomates of the American Board of Orthodontics.
- In the US, board certification is voluntary. Other jurisdictions, such as Canada, require board certification by the Royal College of Dentists of Canada (RCDC) in order to be considered licensed specialists.

**EVERY PATIENT IS DIFFERENT.**

Orthodontists use in-person exams as well as 2D or 3D xrays, photos and molds of the teeth to create a personalized treatment plan for every patient.

## 7 FACTS ABOUT ORTHODONTICS

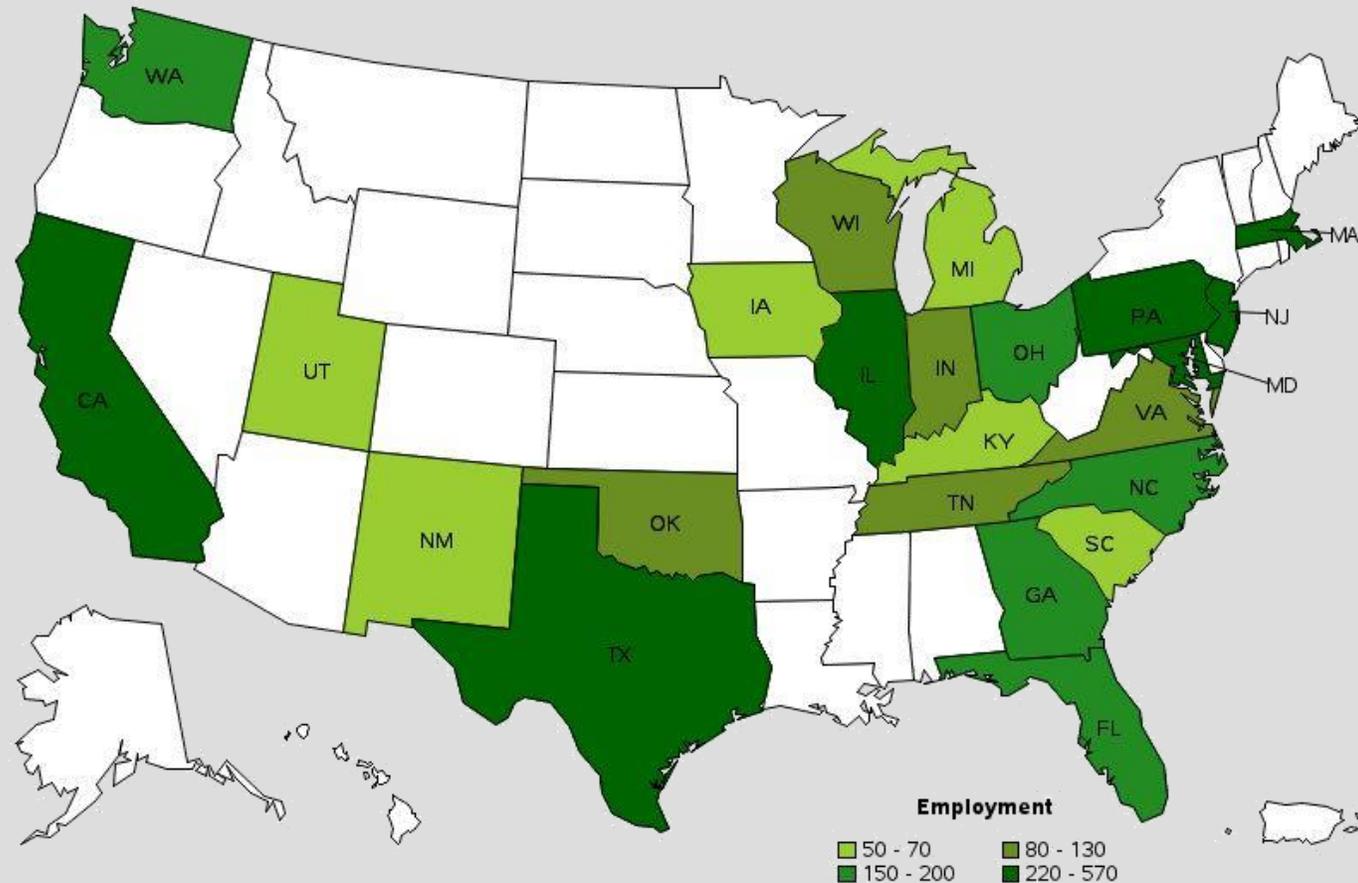
1. The word “orthodontics” is of Greek origin.
2. People have had crooked teeth for eons.
3. Orthodontics became the first dental specialty in 1900.
4. Gold was the metal of choice for braces circa 1900.
5. Teeth move in response to pressure over time.
6. Teeth can move because bone breaks down and rebuilds.
7. Orthodontic treatment is a professional service. It’s not a commodity or a product.

[Read more ...](#)

# WHERE ORTHODONTISTS PRACTICE

according to the *Bureau of Labor Statistics*

Texas: 570  
Massachusetts: 480  
Illinois: 480  
California: 420  
Maryland: 400



# STAND FOR THE SILENT

[#bullyingbites](#)

**7/10**

Americans admit to feeling self-conscious about their teeth.

**57%**

of Americans cover their mouths when they laugh due to insecurity over their teeth.

**70%**

of young people say they have seen bullying in their schools.

Over the years, teeth have been reported as a main feature targeted by bullies.

+++++BRACES+++++

What do Miley Cyrus, Faith Hill, Emma Watson, Gabrielle Union,  
Tom Cruise and even Prince Harry all have in common?

# ORTHODONTISTS SCORECARD

according to the [US News](#)



- [#5 in Best Paying Jobs](#)
- [#7 in Best Health Care Jobs](#)
- [#8 in Best STEM Jobs](#)
- [#11 in 100 Best Jobs](#)

# JOB SATISFACTION

according to the US News

## Upward Mobility

Opportunities for advancements and salary

---

**Average**

## Stress Level

Work environment and complexities of the job's responsibilities

---

**Below Average**

## Flexibility

Alternative working schedule and work life balance

---

**Above Average**

# MEET GAYLE GLENN, DDS, MSD

The First Female President of the American Association of Orthodontists



- Dr. Gayle Glenn broke the glass ceiling in 2013 as the first woman to lead the AAO as President in the 114-year history of the association. Dr. Glenn paved the way for Dr. Nahid Maleki, who four years later would become the second female president of the AAO.
- An experienced leader in organized dentistry and orthodontics, Dr. Glenn is a past president of the SWSO and the Texas Association of Orthodontists (TAO). She previously served as a member of the AAO House of Delegates and represented the SWSO on the AAO Council on Orthodontic Practice. On the state level, Dr. Glenn served on the Council on Membership of the Texas Dental Association (TDA).

# ORTHODONTICS IN THE NEWS

- [The Braces Guy – TikTok](#)
- [Trailblazing Women in AAO Leadership: Paving the Way for Women in Orthodontics – AAOINFO.org](#)
- [Why the Number of Adults Seeing an Orthodontist Is at an All-Time High – AAOINFO.org](#)
- [4 Ways Your Smile Changes as You Age – AAOINFO.org](#)

## RESOURCES



- American Association of Orthodontists  
[www.aaoinfo.org/](http://www.aaoinfo.org/)
- American Dental Association  
[www.ada.org/en](http://www.ada.org/en)
- American Student Dental Association  
[www.asdanet.org/](http://www.asdanet.org/)
  
- [The Angle Orthodontist](#)
- The Edward H. Angle Society  
[Eastern](#)  
[North Atlantic](#)  
[Northwest](#)  
[Midwest](#)

LAST UPDATED FEB 2021

- This resource was developed by the [Office of Health Professions Advising at Princeton University](#) and may be shared for educational purposes.

