

DENTIST

What Dentists Do

Dentists diagnose and treat problems with patients' teeth, gums, and related parts of the mouth. They provide advice and instruction on taking care of the teeth and gums and on diet choices that affect oral health.

Duties

Dentists typically do the following:

- Remove decay from teeth and fill cavities
- Repair or remove damaged teeth
- Place sealants or whitening agents on teeth
- Administer anesthetics to keep patients from feeling pain during procedures
- Prescribe antibiotics or other medications
- Examine x rays of teeth, gums, the jaw, and nearby areas in order to diagnose problems
- Make models and measurements for dental appliances, such as dentures
- Teach patients about diets, flossing, the use of fluoride, and other aspects of dental care

Dentists use a variety of equipment, including x-ray machines, drills, mouth mirrors, probes, forceps, brushes, and scalpels. They also use lasers, digital scanners, and other technologies.

In addition, dentists in private practice oversee a variety of administrative tasks, including bookkeeping and buying equipment and supplies. They employ and supervise [dental hygienists](#), [dental assistants](#), [dental laboratory technicians](#), and [receptionists](#).

Specializations

Most dentists are general practitioners and handle a variety of dental needs. Other dentists practice in a specialty area, such as one of the following:

Dental anesthesiologists administer drugs (anesthetics) to reduce or eliminate pain during a dental procedure, monitor sedated patients to keep them safe, and help patients manage pain afterward.

Dental public health specialists promote good dental health and the prevention of dental diseases in specific communities.

Endodontists perform root canal therapy, removing the nerves and blood supply from injured or infected teeth.

Oral and maxillofacial radiologists diagnose diseases in the head and neck through the use of imaging technologies.

Oral and maxillofacial surgeons operate on the mouth, jaws, teeth, gums, neck, and head, performing procedures such as surgically repairing a cleft lip and palate or removing impacted teeth.

Oral pathologists diagnose conditions in the mouth, such as bumps or ulcers, and oral diseases, such as cancer.

Orthodontists straighten teeth by applying pressure to the teeth with braces or other appliances.

Pediatric dentists focus on dentistry for children and special-needs patients.

Periodontists treat the gums and bones supporting the teeth.

Dentists also may do research. Or, they may teach part time, including supervising students in dental school clinics.

Work environment

Some dentists have their own business and work alone or with a small staff. Other dentists have partners in their practice. Still others work as associate dentists for established dental practices.

Dentists wear masks, gloves, and safety glasses to protect themselves and their patients from infectious diseases.

<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/dentists.htm#tab-1>

What Do Dentists Do?

Spread smiles, that's what dentists do.

Dentists diagnose and treat problems with teeth and tissues in the mouth, along with administering care to help prevent future problems.

Dentists typically do the following:

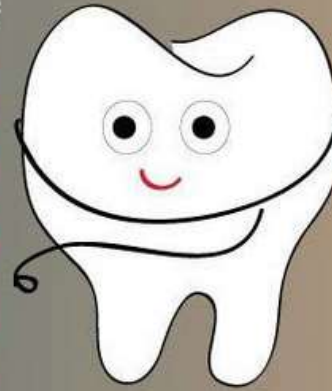
Remove decay from teeth and fill cavities.

Repair cracked or fractured teeth.

Straighten teeth.

Write prescriptions for medications.

Teach patients about dental care.



DENTIST



ORAL HYGIENE



HEALTHY TEETH



DENTISTRY