

## How To Brush Your Teeth

Within your lifetime you will have two sets of teeth. By the age of three years old most children will have a set of 20 milk or baby teeth. At around the age of six, these teeth fall out to make room for 32 adult, or **permanent** teeth. If these adult teeth fall out, or are removed because of damage, no more teeth will grow in their place. It is important to look after your teeth. Imagine trying to cut, grip, tear or chew your food if you didn't have teeth. Teeth also help us to talk, allowing us to **pronounce** different sounds clearly and a mouthful of healthy, white teeth can give us the confidence to smile! You can keep your teeth healthy by brushing them twice a day, by eating a healthy diet which is low in sugary foods and drink, and by visiting your dentist **regularly**. Brushing helps to remove the plaque (a thin sticky film of **bacteria**) from our teeth. Sugary food and drinks **encourage** the bacteria in plaque to create acid, which slowly **erodes** the **enamel** on your teeth, leading to holes and **cavities**. The instructions below will help you brush your teeth properly, and get that dazzling smile!

### Equipment:

- The right sized toothbrush.
- **Fluoride** toothpaste.
- Dental floss.
- Fluoride mouthwash.

### Method:

- Squeeze a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste onto your toothbrush. The whole family can use the same adult toothpaste as long as younger children are **supervised**.
- Place the head of the toothbrush against one of your outward facing teeth. Now **tilt** the bristles to a forty five degree angle (so that it tilts towards the gum line).
- Move your brush in a small, circular **motion**. Now do the same to the next tooth, until all of your outward facing teeth (top and bottom) are clean.
- Repeat this circular brushing motion on the inside teeth, **concentrating** on one tooth at a time.
- Next, repeat the brushing action on the biting surface of your teeth.

- Don't forget to brush your tongue! It helps to freshen your breath and remove bacteria.
- Spit out any **excess** toothpaste. Adults need to supervise younger children to make sure they don't swallow any.
- Brushing should take two minutes to **complete**.
- Flossing can help remove food and plaque between the teeth that a toothbrush might not be able to reach.
- Cut off a thirty to forty-five centimetre (30-45cm) piece of dental floss.
- Hold each end of the dental floss tightly.
- Slide it between a gap in your teeth, until it touches the gum.
- Move the floss backwards, forwards, up and down to help **dislodge** any food or plaque.
- Using a fluoride mouthwash will also help to stop tooth **decay** and freshen breath, however dentists **recommend** that you do not use it directly after brushing. Lunchtime might be a good time to use mouthwash instead.

### Top Tips!

Use an egg timer to check if you have been brushing for two minutes.

Looking in a mirror whilst you brush can help you check if you are doing it correctly.

Do not run around with a toothbrush in your mouth, it could lead to a nasty accident.

Change your toothbrush often to ensure good brushing.

So, if you follow the instructions above carefully (twice a day), and **reduce** the amount of sugar in your diet, you can be sure of having a set of strong, healthy teeth, and a beautiful, confident smile!

By Sue Chattoe

How To Brush Your Teeth – Follow-Up Work

How many milk, or baby teeth does a three year old have? (AF2)

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How many adult, or permanent teeth does the average grown-up have? (AF2)

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Identify three things that teeth help us to do. (AF2)

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What three things can you do, to help look after your teeth? (AF2)

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What is plaque? (AF2)

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Why do you think having clean, healthy teeth helps you to smile with confidence?

(AF3)

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Why is the equipment listed before the instructions? (AF4)

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These instructions are written in chronological order. Why is this important? (AF4)

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How much fluoride toothpaste should you use? (AF2)

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Why should you brush your tongue? (AF2)

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Write down two words or phrases which mean the same as 'supervise'. (AF5)

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How would you use an egg timer when brushing your teeth? (AF3)

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Identify three imperative verbs used in the instructions. (AF5)

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Now that you have read this advice, how are you going to improve your brushing routine? (AF3)

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