

PATIENT GUIDE

Records: photos, scans and x-rays

Why we take a full set of records before planning, and what each one tells us. · 31 Aug 2026

Before we plan treatment we take a set of records: photographs, a digital scan of your teeth, and x-rays. Each one answers a different question, and together they let us plan properly rather than guess. The appointment takes about an hour and asks nothing of you but sitting still.

What we take, and why

RECORD · WHAT IT TELLS US

Photographs of your face and teeth

How your smile and profile look now, and a baseline to compare against later.

A digital scan of your teeth

An exact 3D copy of your teeth and bite. It replaces the old putty impressions for most people.

A panoramic x-ray

Every tooth, including the ones still developing under the gum, the roots, and the jaw joints in one image.

A side-on x-ray of the head

How the jaws relate to each other and to the face. This is the one that guides bite decisions.

About the x-rays

The dose from orthodontic x-rays is small, and we only take the views we need. If you are pregnant, or think you might be, tell us before the appointment and we will adjust what we take.

If your dentist has taken a recent panoramic x-ray, we can often use theirs instead. Ask them to send it through.

What happens next

We study the records together, plan the treatment, and then sit down with you to explain the plan: what we recommend, why, how long it is likely to take, and what it costs. You get that plan in writing to take home.

Common questions

Does the scan feel strange?

A small wand moves around your teeth for a few minutes. It is dry and quick, and you can pause whenever you like.

Do you keep my records?

Yes, securely, as part of your clinical record. We take a new set at the end of treatment so you can see the change.