

Career Choice

When you choose a career, you're making a big commitment. For some, a career choice is something that comes easily. For others, it takes a lot more thought. No matter which is the case for you, your career choice should be made carefully and wisely. Ask yourself: will this career use my skills, knowledge and abilities? Will it match my personality and interests? Not all careers challenge your personal qualities.

Choosing to be an orthodontist

So what does it take to be an orthodontist? An orthodontist is a specialist in the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of dental and facial irregularities. All orthodontists are dentists, but only about six percent of dentists are orthodontists. Admission to orthodontic programs is extremely competitive and selective.

It takes many years to become an orthodontist and the educational requirements are demanding.

An orthodontist must complete college requirements before starting a three- to five-year graduate program at a dental school accredited by the American Dental Association (ADA). After dental school, at least two or three academic years of advanced specialty education in an ADA-accredited orthodontic program are required to be an orthodontist. The program includes advanced education in biomedical, behavioral and basic sciences. The orthodontic student learns the complex skills required to manage tooth movement (orthodontics) and guide facial development (dentofacial orthopedics).

Only dentists who have successfully completed these advanced specialty education programs may call themselves orthodontists.

Orthodontists receive an additional two to three years of specialized education beyond dental school to learn the proper way to align and straighten teeth. Only those who successfully complete this formal education may call themselves "orthodontists," and only orthodontists can be members of the American Association of Orthodontists.

If you have any questions or concerns throughout your treatment or in the future, please consult your orthodontist or visit mylifemysmile.org.

American Association of Orthodontists®

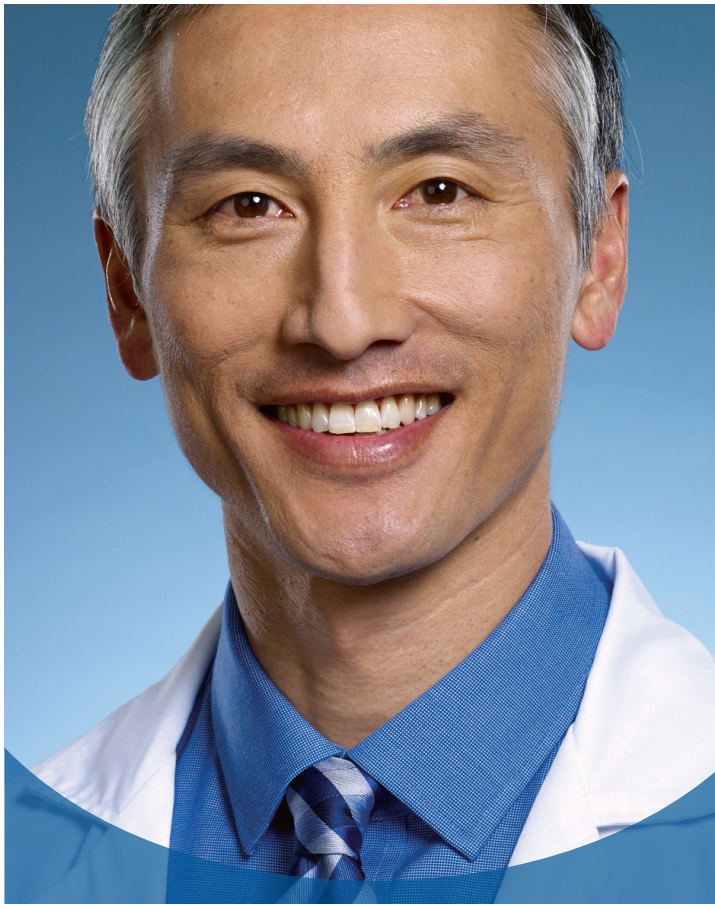
My Life. My Smile. My Orthodontist.®

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Orthodontics

The Career of a Lifetime



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Personal and Professional Satisfaction

A rewarding investment

Becoming an orthodontist requires many years of education and dedication. But once you finish your classroom training, you'll join a field where experience, resources and reputation translate into personal and professional satisfaction.

Orthodontics offers a wide range of career opportunities. As an orthodontist, you can practice independently, in a partnership with one or more colleagues, or for a corporation. You can dedicate yourself to research or teaching. Or you can invest time working with public health agencies or the military.

Orthodontics is also a career that lets you choose where and how you want to live. You can practice almost anywhere. And if you are your own boss, you have the freedom to enjoy family, hobbies and community activities, as you desire.

Just ask the 10,000 or so orthodontists who are practicing in North America today. Being an orthodontist is rewarding. Orthodontists are trusted, valued members of society who have the chance to build a career that can support a comfortable lifestyle.

Perhaps the most important reward is seeing someone's smile change gradually before your eyes. As their teeth and jaws shift into alignment, patients' personalities change too. Their self-confidence blossoms. Children, teens and adults with healthy, beautiful smiles are ready to confidently meet the world face-first.





What does it take to be an orthodontist?

Being an orthodontist takes a unique combination of skills, a steadfast commitment to long-term goals and a desire to excel. But if you:

- have an interest in science
- thrive on creativity and challenge
- have excellent manual dexterity
- have the patience to wait for tangible results
- want to manage your own career path, molding it to fit your lifestyle
- would enjoy the respect that comes with being a member of a profession that has the capacity to change people's lives for the better

...then consider a career as an orthodontists!

What does it take to join the orthodontic team?

As an orthodontist or orthodontic staff member, orthodontics can put you on a career path that provides the satisfaction of helping patients improve their smiles, their dental health and their self-esteem. It's a positive, upbeat career that lets you deal with generally healthy, motivated people who are on the road to better lives.

Are there other opportunities in the field of orthodontics?

The orthodontic field is full of opportunities, whether you choose to become an orthodontist or an orthodontic staff member. Orthodontic practices offer a variety of professional and clerical positions, such as:

- Treatment Coordinator
- Scheduling Coordinator
- Financial Administrator
- Clinical Coordinator
- Orthodontic Technician/Assistant
- Orthodontic Laboratory Technician

The various positions on the orthodontic team require different levels of education and experience. Ask an orthodontist for information regarding your orthodontic career interests.