

# Crowns

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## What is a crown?

A crown is an artificial restoration that fits over the remaining part of a prepared tooth, making it strong and giving it the shape of a natural tooth. A crown is sometimes called a 'cap'.

## Why would you need a crown?

Crowns are an ideal restoration for teeth that have been broken, or have been weakened by decay or a very large filling. A crown could be used for a number of reasons:

- You may have discoloured fillings and would like to improve the appearance of the tooth
- You may have had a root filling which may need a crown to protect what is left of the tooth
- It may help to hold a bridge or denture firmly in place

## What is a crown made of?

Crowns can be made from a variety of different materials:

**Porcelain bonded crown:** This is what most crowns are made of. A precious or non-precious metal base is made and then porcelain is applied in layers over it.

**Porcelain crowns:** These crowns are strong and look very natural, and are made entirely of porcelain

**Gold alloy crowns:** Gold is one of the oldest filling materials. It is used with other metal alloys to increase its strength, which makes it a very hardwearing restoration.

## How is a crown prepared?

Keval will prepare the tooth to the ideal shape for the crown. This will involve removing most of the outer surface, and leaving a strong inner core. The amount of the tooth removed will be the same thickness as the crown.

Once the tooth is shaped, Keval will take an impression (mould) of the prepared tooth, one of the opposite jaw and possibly another to mark the way you bite together.

The impression will then be given to the dental technician, along with an appropriate shade, and any other information required for the crown to be made.

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## What is a post crown?

In root-filled teeth (teeth that have had root canal treatment) it may be necessary to insert a post before placing a crown. A post provides support and it helps the crown stay in place. The weakened crown of the tooth may be shortened to gum level.

A post can be made of prefabricated stainless steel which the Dental Practitioner can fit directly into the root canal, or a custom made post can be constructed by the dental technician to accurately fit the shape of the prepared root canal.

The post is placed into the root canal and cemented in position, ready for the crown to be attached.

## What will happen between visits?

A temporary crown or temporary filling will be placed so that you can use the tooth while you wait for the crown to be made. This crown may be more noticeable, but it is only a temporary measure.

## How is the crown fitted?

When you and Keval are happy with the fit and appearance of the new crown, it will be fixed in place with special dental cement or adhesive. The cement forms a seal to hold the crown in place.

## How long does the treatment take?

You will need to have at least 2 visits for the first of the preparation, impression, shade-taking and fitting the temporary crown, and the second to fit the permanent. There will usually be about 1 to 2 weeks in between appointments.

## Caring for your crown

How long your crown lasts depends on how well you look after it. The crown itself cannot decay, but decay can start where the edge of the crown joins the tooth. Therefore, to prevent decay affecting the crown, it is important to keep the area just as clean as you would your natural teeth. Brush for 2 minutes twice a day with fluoride toothpaste and clean between your teeth with interdental brushes or floss.

## How long with the crown last?

Properly cared crowns should last for many years.