



# Taking risk with do-it-yourself orthodontia

Do-it-yourself (DIY) orthodontia may sound like a great way to save money on teeth straightening, but at what cost to your oral health?

Moving teeth without a thorough examination of the overall health of your teeth and gums could create permanent tooth loss and expensive lifelong dental problems.<sup>1</sup> People have used rubber bands and paper clips to help with their dental concerns, or mail-order impression kits and photos to create aligners and retainers.

The American Association of Orthodontists reports that nearly 13% of its member orthodontists have had patients who have tried DIY teeth straightening, with some attempts causing irreparable damage.<sup>1</sup>

DIY methods may seem easy, but many lack the important detailed care that your smile deserves. With an in-person exam, dentists and orthodontists can better help with your concerns and health needs, and establish a personalized treatment plan. DIY care through an online source might also not be covered by your dental benefits plan.

Seeing a dentist or an orthodontist in-person is the safest way to ensure a healthy and happy smile.

## Did you know?

Ages of people attempting DIY orthodontia range from 8 to 60.<sup>2</sup>



# Quick bites

**Using an online vendor for DIY orthodontia may sound appealing, but this route lacks personalized care.**

- Individuals may not get a face-to-face exam with a licensed professional.
- Devices are not delivered or fitted by a professional.
- Treatment progress may not be monitored in an office—a concern if teeth do not track as planned.
- Appliances designed to move teeth may have unintended effects on the teeth, supporting tissue and jaw joints.



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1. American Dental Association, "ADA discourages DIY orthodontics through resolution," web. 2. California Association of Orthodontists, "Patient Warning: Do Not Attempt DIY Teeth Straightening," web.