

How to Prepare for Your Child's Orthodontic Visit Now



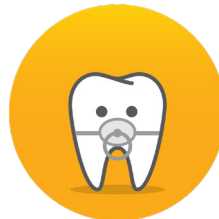
1. Call ahead.

Ask the orthodontist if your child should be seen in person or virtually.



2. Establish Expectations.

Give your child a preview of what's to come. Ask the office about masks, toys, and protocols for parents and siblings in the waiting and exam rooms. Share this information with your child.



3. Understand insurance coverage.

Review your dental benefits coverage and ask your orthodontist to submit a prior authorization so you know in advance what will be covered.



4. Talk about the visit.

Talk with your child and let them know that the visit is an evaluation to see if they need orthodontic treatment. It is an exciting milestone and many kids look forward to getting braces.



5. Avoid the "Hangry Monster."

Children are more easily upset when they're hungry or thirsty. Reduce the odds of this occurring during an office visit by feeding them beforehand. Remember to have your child brush and floss before the appointment.



6. Embrace the wait.

Toys and magazines may not be available. Try alternate games, like "I spy" or ask your child about their favorite movies and books to help distract their mind.



7. Describe the orthodontic environment.

The orthodontist and staff may look different. They will be wearing extra protective gear. If your child is frightened, you can describe the gear as new costumes, like an astronaut or scuba diver. Remind your child that they will take good care of them.



8. Be encouraging.

Your demeanor during a visit to the orthodontist can have an enormous impact on your child's behavior. Be positive, encouraging, cheerful and attentive.

Early orthodontic visits are a learning occasion.

The main purpose of an orthodontic visit is to have a team of professionals look at the function and alignment of your child's teeth. The American Association of Orthodontics recommends children get their first check-up no later than age 7. This allows the orthodontist to evaluate existing orthodontic issues or if one may develop. This information helps you understand proposed treatment and is an important part of your child's lifelong oral health.