



## **GETTING TO KNOW THE AAO**

The American Association of Orthodontists (AAO) has more than 18,000 members in the U.S., Canada, and abroad. About 88 percent of educationally-eligible orthodontists in the U.S. are members of the AAO. With male and female doctors, from recent graduates to 45-year practice veterans, the AAO is the foremost authority on orthodontic treatment. Ever since the invention of the mirror, humans have been looking for ways to improve their smiles. Today, gifted orthodontic specialists study for years to learn the best ways to shape smiles while creating optimal form and function. Children, teenagers, young adults, middle-aged men and women, and seniors are all taking advantage of the technological innovations and simplified patient experience that distinguishes today's orthodontics.

In fact, if you are looking to obtain the healthy, beautiful smile that you may have wanted all your life, there are more reasons today than ever before to see an orthodontist. Orthodontists are highly trained specialists who receive an extra 2-3 years of specialized education beyond dental school to learn the proper way to align and straighten teeth. That means to become an orthodontist, dental school graduates need additional full-time education at an accredited orthodontic residency program supervised by orthodontists. Only about 1 applicant in 15 is accepted. The residency program lasts at least two years, often more.

During this time, orthodontists learn about tooth movement (orthodontics) and the guidance of dental, jaw and facial development (dentofacial orthopedics). It's this education and training in straightening teeth and aligning jaws that make orthodontists the alignment and straight-smile experts.

By selecting a member of the AAO, you can feel confident knowing you've chosen an orthodontic specialist who is an expert in orthodontics and dentofacial orthopedics and the treatment of improperly aligned teeth and jaws. It's why only orthodontists can become members of the AAO. It's also why our expertise will make you smile®.

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