

Fixed Braces

This is the most commonly used type of brace in the UK. This type of brace is glued onto your teeth and as result is not removable. It consists of a number of parts (see figure 1):

- A bracket – this is the metal square that is stuck to the tooth with the glue. Whilst there are different varieties of brackets the only ones we are able to offer to our NHS patients are silver.
- A wire – we use lots of different wires during treatment and these are changed regularly when you come and see us. We use different wires for different people depending on the treatment we are carrying out. As a general rule we usually start with thin, flexible wires and then move onto thicker, stiffer wires as treatment progresses.
- An elastic module – this ties the wire into the bracket. These come in a variety of colours and will be changed at most visits.

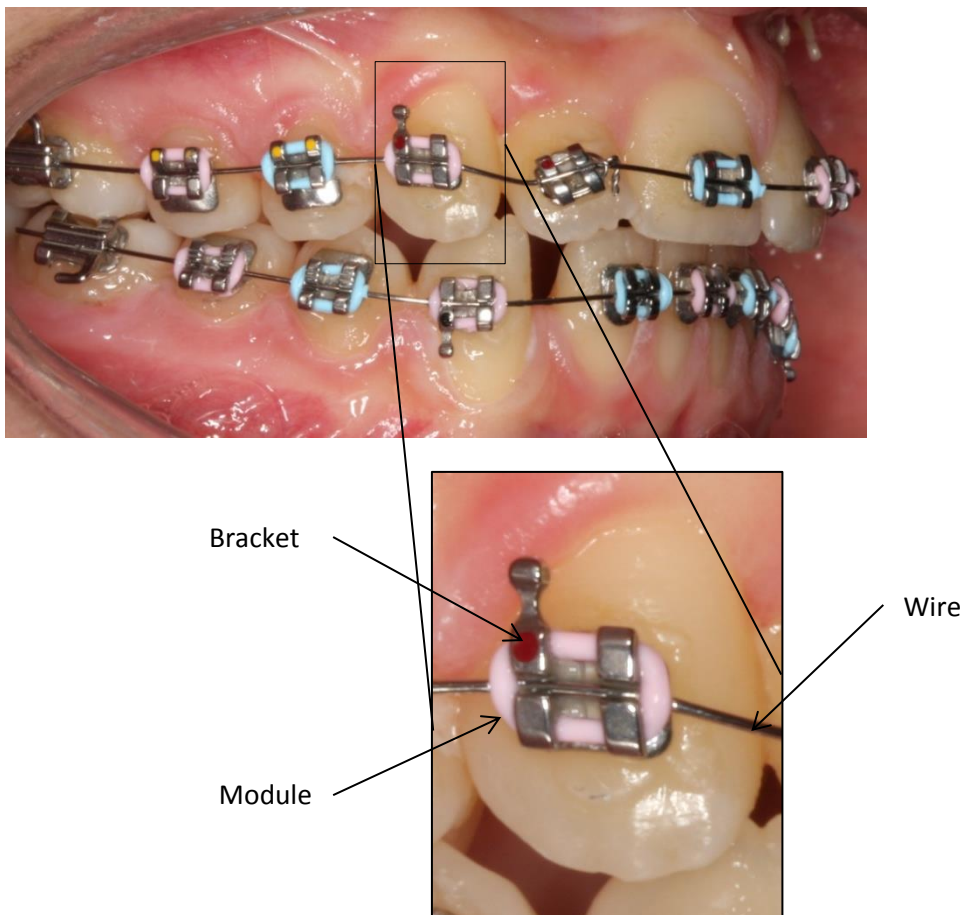


Figure 1: The parts of a fixed brace.

How are they put on?

Once your treatment has been fully planned we will book you back to place the brace. The first thing we will do is check that the tooth brushing is good enough to allow the brace to be fitted. If it is then we will give the outsides of the teeth a clean with an electric tooth brush to make sure our glue sticks well. We then put some pieces of equipment in to hold the cheeks and lips out of the way. We then put each individual bracket on to the tooth one by one and set them with our blue light. Once all the brackets are on the teeth we will then put in our first wire and tie it in with the elastic modules.

Sometimes it is possible to do all of this at one appointment but sometimes it takes several, depending on your individual teeth. The appointments to place the braces generally take between 30 and 60 minutes.

How long are they on for?

This depends entirely on your individual treatment. Some treatments are straight-forward and can be completed in 12-18 months whilst some are more complex and may take in the region of 3 years. These treatment lengths are very dependent on the patient. If you look after your brace well, minimise any breakages and turn up to all your appointments then your treatment will be finished in these timescales. If you do not then treatment can last considerably longer.

We will usually need to see you every 6-8 weeks during the treatment to adjust the brace.

Will they hurt?

The placing and adjustment of a brace in the clinic is relatively painless. You can feel what we are doing and sometimes when we are placing wires it may feel tight. However, once the teeth start to move, approximately 2-3 hours after each appointment, the teeth will ache. We would advise that you make sure you have some painkillers, such as paracetamol or ibuprofen, at home to take if you need them. This ache usually lasts for about 2-3 days after each appointment and you will want to plan to eat relatively soft foods during these periods.

How do you take them off?

This is more simple than many think! We have special instruments that are designed to remove the brackets and each bracket only takes a second to be removed. Once the brackets have all been removed we then polish off the remaining glue. We usually then take some impressions of the teeth to make retainers. [Show me more information on retainers.](#)

How do I look after my fixed brace

[Show me more information on caring for braces.](#)