

# Teeth Whitening



Dentist vs. Do-It-Yourself

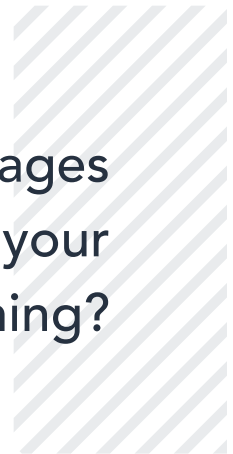
# How Whitening Can Go Wrong

With all the teeth whitening products on the market today it's tempting to want to go solo, leaving the dentist behind. And we all like to try a little do-it-yourself at some time or another, right? Whether it's to save time, your cash, or your ego, there's a certain satisfaction in completing a task that would otherwise require a professional.

But just because you have the tools to do something yourself, doesn't always mean you should. Things can go wrong, and they do. You probably know – or have seen - someone who has had an unfortunate interlude with boxed hair coloring. They look more like they lost a bet rather than made an innocent attempt at covering the gray. And if you're not careful, self-whitening can leave you looking like you woke up on the wrong side of a bet, too.

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So, what are the advantages  
to teaming up with your  
dentist for whitening?



## Gum Control

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The truth is your gums aren't fond of bleaching solutions. Even minor exposure can irritate and cause pain, and that irritation can last for days or even weeks. When you use over-the-counter whiteners, you don't have control over the contact it has with your gums. But your dentist will protect your gums from the bleaching solution, leaving them comfortable and happy.

# Soothing the Savage Bleach

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Your gums aren't the only part of your mouth sensitive to bleach; your teeth are as well. It's not uncommon for people to experience painful tooth sensitivity after bleaching. However, your dentist can add a desensitizing solution to the mix to prevent that provocation. You don't have that comfort blanket when doing it yourself.



## Blue Tooth



Let's say you begin a whitening session with your store-bought product that has a 30-minute maximum application time...and doze off for over an hour waiting for the kids to come home. Now, you may be waking to blue teeth, not white. Over-bleaching can induce discoloration and this can't be as easily corrected as a bad hair dye-job. You can also do permanent damage to the enamel, causing it to prematurely erode.

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## Leveling the Bleaching Field

Your dentist will create a custom-fit whitening tray that molds perfectly to your teeth, ensuring a thorough and uniform result. However, mass-market whiteners are a one-size-fits-all, so unless your teeth are perfectly aligned like a box of Chiclets, the bleach won't get into every stained nook and cranny. Even the flexible strips can't guarantee gaps and crevices won't be missed.



# The Cost of Convenience

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You may think it's more convenient to whiten your teeth on your own time and schedule, but there are two things to consider: Your dentist can do a bleaching in about an hour, and it lasts for roughly one year. Because off-the-shelf whiteners are not as potent as the dentist's concoction, the effects don't last as long. They also require multiple applications to achieve the same results as 60 minutes in the dentist's chair - requiring you to buy the product, more frequently. This can add up. Ask yourself which is truly more convenient and cost-effective.



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If you try whitening on your own, you may succeed and be giddy with the results. But for a glass-half-empty moment, think about the possibility of failing. What are the consequences? Pain, damage, discoloration, and uneven results.

