

Make ‘em Shine: A Guide on Brushing Your Teeth

This is an instruction manual detailing the steps involved in brushing your teeth to ensure utmost dental hygiene. These instructions are ideally read and followed by everyone as dental hygiene is a vital part of your overall health. There is no specific certification nor technical background required to understand these instructions. Having the capability of holding a toothbrush should suffice. You may follow these instructions any time you feel you need a quick brush, although the recommended number is at least twice a day. The instructions are segmented based on areas of the mouth. For example, brushing the front teeth will be detailed in a different section from the back teeth.

Equipment & Supplies

1. Toothbrush
2. Toothpaste
3. Mirror
4. Water
5. Mouthwash (optional)

Instructions

1. Retrieving supplies

Ensure that you have the required supplies necessary to begin this endeavor. Grab your toothbrush, toothpaste, mug of water (if you don't have access to a sink), and mirror (if you have one).

Caution: Make sure your toothpaste is ADA approved!

2. Head to the restroom

Use your own restroom if you have access to one. Else head to a school's or local establishment's restroom or ask a friend if you may use theirs.

3. Apply toothpaste to your brush

You can go ahead and apply a dab of toothpaste to your toothbrush. Normally, a dab is around the size of a pea, but you are welcome to apply more if you like. Just know that you may run out of toothpaste rather quickly if you are not prudent with your portions.

4. Wet the brush

Pour some water over the head of your brush to moisturize the toothpaste to help lather better when you go to brush.

5. Brush your front teeth

It is conventional to start brushing your front teeth first. Take your brush and apply pressure to the head of your brush against your front teeth. Move the brush in a round motion to allow the toothpaste to lather against your front teeth. Continue this motion for about 15 seconds. This will help disrupt any biofilm and remove remaining food on your teeth.

6. Brush the left side of your teeth

After 15 seconds, move your brush to the left side of your mouth. Apply the same motion that you did to your front teeth. Continue this motion for 15 seconds. Make sure to move your brush laterally (side to side) along your teeth as you do this motion.

7. Brush the right side of your teeth

Move your brush to the right side of your mouth. Repeat the same motion you made in steps five and six. Move your brush laterally as you do this motion. Continue for 15 seconds.

8. Brush the underside of the top teeth

You must brush the underside of your top row of teeth. Open your mouth slightly so there's enough space to brush. Turn your brush so that the head is pointing upwards. Move the brush in a lateral motion against the underside of your upper row of teeth. Make sure to brush along the entire row. Brush for 15 seconds.

9. Brush the upper side of the bottom teeth

Turn your brush 180 degrees, so that the head is facing downward. Move the brush in a repetitive, lateral motion against the topside of your bottom teeth and go along your entire row of bottom teeth. Continue for 15 seconds.

10. Check your teeth in the mirror

To make sure you brushed properly, check your teeth in the mirror. Repeat any step between five and nine, if necessary.

11. Rinse your mouth

To cleanse your mouth of any remaining toothpaste, rinse your mouth with water. Swish some water from the sink into your mouth for five seconds and spit into the sink. Repeat three to four times.

12. Wash toothpaste off brush

This is necessary for the next step. Run some water over your toothbrush to clean off the remaining toothpaste.

13. Clean your tongue

Much of the bacteria in your mouth resides on your tongue. You must, therefore, clean your tongue with your toothbrush. Gently, swipe your tongue with your toothbrush to clean off the remaining bacteria.

14. Clean your brush

You want to have your brush last up to four months. As such you should clean your brush every time after brushing. Pour warm water over your toothbrush while rubbing the brush with your thumb to get rid of any vestigial bacteria.

15. Rinse your mouth with mouth wash (optional)

Mouth wash helps rid your mouth of any remaining bacteria. If you have mouthwash, rinse your mouth with a small amount. Swish it in your mouth for about 30 seconds and spit.

16. Repeat step 14 (optional)

If you rinsed your mouth with mouthwash, it would be a good idea to rinse your mouth with water once again to prevent yourself from accidentally swallowing any remaining mouthwash.