

PHOTOS NEEDED TO PLAN YOUR ESTHETIC CASE

Renstrom Dental Studio

Here at Renstrom Dental Studio we often face the challenge of attempting to create life-like dental restorations without photographs of the patient. Although study models, facebow registrations and stick-bites provide valuable information, photos are necessary to provide necessary information about the facial structures which are the “frame” for the dental artwork that the doctor and lab are trying to create. The position and fullness of the lips, the shape of the face, the position of the eyes and the facial profile as viewed from the side are all critically important to the success of your esthetic cases. Without this information, the technician must “guess” the relationship of the teeth to the face and guesswork is the enemy of predictable esthetic dentistry. Photos are the only way to accurately communicate this information to the laboratory. Examples and instructions for five basic esthetic photos are shown below. Use your professional judgement about the need for additional photos to communicate the specific esthetic information about each case.

Have the patient stand with their head in a vertical position in front of a wall with one or more horizontal reference lines visible behind the patient’s head. These lines can be venetian blinds, tape or any other lines that are parallel to the floor.

With the patient gently pulling to the side and forward on the retractors, take a photo of the full face (from forehead to chin only) with the teeth apart so that the both upper and lower incisal edges are visible.

This photo gives us information about the incisal plane, occlusal plane, midline and inter-pupillary line. It also shows how each of these relates to the horizontal reference lines on the wall behind the patient.



Have the patient remove the retractors and take a photo with the lips at rest (have the patient say “Emma” just before you take the photo).

This photo provides information about the amount of incisor display at rest and the position of the incisal edges relative to the lower lip. It also provides information about lip length and fullness.



Have the patient turn sideways and take a relaxed profile photo (have the patient say “Emma” just before you take the photo).

This photo shows how the lips are being supported by the antero-posterior position and inclination of the incisors.



Have the patient turn toward you and move in to get a close-up of the patient’s widest possible smile, with the camera looking straight down the occlusal plane.

This photo gives us information about the smile line, gingival crest levels, incisal edge levels, midline discrepancy and midline inclination.



Have the patient re-insert the retractors and get a close up with the teeth slightly apart and the camera looking straight down the maxillary plane. If treatment will include the canine or posterior teeth, retract that side more and take the photo from that side.

This close-up photo reveals incisal wear patterns, recession patterns, gingival and bony architecture, incisal translucency, characterizations and surface texture.



For more information, or for help with any photography issues, please feel free to contact me.

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