How to take one-step impressions

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We need clear, well-defined impressions of both arches for every case. Accuracy is important, because we'll be using these impressions to create our 3D model and set up your treatment. You can use whichever technique you prefer, but we've seen great results using the "one-step" technique illustrated here.



Make sure you have everything you need: Light body impression material, heavy body impression material (we recommend regular set for both), an impression gun, 2 impression trays, some adhesive, and a timer. Also, you may need scissors (not pictured) for cutting the end of the light body tip. Check the instructions for your impression material to confirm your working and intra-oral set times.



Make sure that you have the right size tray for the patient's mouth. The tray should extend beyond the last tooth in the arch without touching the gums.



When you're sure you have the right size trays for your patient's mouth, apply adhesive to the trays. This will help prevent the impression material from becoming unseated from the tray upon removal from the mouth.



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Place the mixing tip on the heavy body material and load it into the impression gun. **Note: discard the first inch of material on every new mixing tip.** Set your timer for the working time of your material, then squirt the heavy body into the tray. Fill the tray from one side to the other. Don't lift the tip out of the material, or you'll get air bubbles in the impression.



Unload the heavy body impression material from the impression gun and load the light body. Be sure you're using the small tip, because the mixture will flow quickly.

Fill the tray from side to side, completely covering the heavy body material. **Do not over-fill the tray.**



Beginning with the distal side of the last tooth in the mouth and working mesially, cover the arch with the light body material. Stop when you reach the central incisors.



Go to the other side of the mouth and, again, starting with the distal side of the last tooth and working mesially, cover the rest of the teeth in the arch.



Press the tray into the teeth, but not too hard—you don't want the teeth to push all the way through the impression material and touch the tray. Set your timer for the intra-oral set time of your light body material, and keep pressure on the tray until the impression has set.



When you're checking your impression for quality, make sure that:

- All teeth are registered
- At least 5 mm of gum tissue is visible
- There are no voids or tears
- No teeth are hitting the tray

