

Troubleshooting: Tracking Issues

When teeth are moving on schedule, as planned in the treatment setup, we say that treatment is “tracking”.

However, even if aligners appear to fit properly and comfortably, that doesn't guarantee that the teeth are actually moving as intended.



Some common causes for tracking issues are:

- Non-compliant patients
- Insufficient space
- Insufficient pressure

1 Check Compliance

The patient should be wearing the aligners for 22 hours per day. Signs of non-compliance include missed appointments, usually clean aligners, and a persistent tight fit after weeks of wear.

2 Increase Wear Schedule

Get the patient to wear aligner for another week to see if anything improves. If the patient is on 10 day wear schedule, increase to 2 weeks.

3 Chewies

Ask the patient to use chewies every time they insert the aligner and for 10 -15 mins each day. This action activates cAMP, signalling Osteoclasts, essential for tooth movement.

General Tip: Advise patients to change their next aligners at bedtime to allow sufficient cAMP levels.

4 Backtrack

Often, when the teeth have gone off-track, they need additional time in a previous aligner to move fully into position. Ask the patient to wear their previous aligner for another week.

General Tip: Patients should be educated to keep (do not throw away) their previously worn aligners through treatment.

Ensure all engagers are seated correctly in the engager wells.

5 Check Space

Use an IPR gauge to check the available space and accurate IPR. Always use a light force on the gauge to check space created and to check contact points as the teeth may move causing an inaccurate measurement. Use a fine diamond strip to break any tight contacts, particularly when backtracking.

6 Use dimple/torque pliers

Use dimple/torque pliers to add pressure points in targeted areas. This increases retention and force driven tooth movements that complement the shape moulding forces of the aligners. Search for “dimples” on the support site for more information about their placement. This will help to increase the predictability of less predictable movements.

7 Use Auxiliaries

For large rotations, translation and extrusions that are not tracking as planned consider the use of elastics. Punch pliers can be used to create space for the placement of buttons and elastics.

General Tip: For cases with large movements, consider use of additional auxiliaries in future case set ups.

8 Take New Impressions/ Scans and Revise

If all the above doesn't get back on track, please submit the case for revision and the case will be re-staged to target the original treatment goal starting from the current position. This can be requested for specific teeth in the Dr Portal. Identify the tracking issue and make appropriate changes. Consider using overcorrection as a method for providing sufficient pressure on a tooth and consider additional anchorage. Make sure you check the predictability of the original set up and the revised set up to prevent similar tracking issues.