

# MOUTH GUARDS

Accidents can happen during any physical activity. A mouth guard can help cushion a blow to the face that otherwise might result in an injury to the mouth. A well-fitting mouth guard can help prevent broken teeth and injuries to the lips, tongue, face, or jaw. Mouth guards may also reduce the rate and severity of concussions. An athlete is nearly twice as likely to suffer harm to the teeth when not wearing a mouth guard<sup>1</sup>.



If you participate in team sports or other activities with risks of injury, it is recommended that you use a properly fitting mouth guard. A well-fitting, comfortable mouth guard will stay in place while you are wearing it, making it easy for you to talk and breathe. While custom mouth guards are considered the most protective and comfortable option, other mouth guards can be effective if they fit well, are worn properly, and stay in place.

1. <http://www.ada.org/en/member-center/oral-health-topics/mouthguards>

## STOCK

Stock mouth guards are inexpensive, come pre-formed, and are ready to wear. Unfortunately, they often do not fit very well. They can be bulky and can make breathing and talking difficult.



## BOIL-AND-BITE

Boil and bite mouth guards can be bought at sporting goods stores and may offer a better fit than stock mouth guards. They should be softened in hot water, then inserted and allowed to adapt to the shape of your mouth. Carefully follow the directions to achieve the best possible fit.



After Fitting



Before Fitting

## CUSTOM-FIT

Custom-fit mouth guards are made by your dentist for you. They are more expensive than the other options, but are fabricated from models of your teeth to provide the best comfort, fit, and protection. They allow for easier breathing and speaking, which leads to better patient compliance and usage.



## ORTHODONTIC

A mouth guard may be especially important for people who wear braces. A blow to the face could damage the brackets or other fixed orthodontic appliances. A mouth guard also provides a barrier between the braces and your cheek or lips, limiting the risk of soft tissue injuries. Our orthodontists recommend the "Shock Doctor Braces Mouth Guard".

