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# PUTTING A SMILE ON YOUR FACE

Confidence, strength and warmth are all conveyed by a smile. But according to Dr Ernest Rex Tan, founder of leading dental establishment Smile Inc.® Dental Surgeons, there's no such thing as a one-size-fits-all version. What can a skilled dentist do? Design a smile that's uniquely yours, bringing out your natural beauty.

A few years ago, the Hollywood grin was all the rage. What it was: dazzlingly white teeth, large and evenly sized. It was so popular that just about every celeb sported one. But the inevitable backlash came when people realised that these LA pearl-ies-whites appeared unnatural and cartoonish. Worse, they all looked the same.

Ask leading cosmetic dentist and prosthodontist Dr Ernest Rex Tan about the perfect smile, and his

“Every smile is unique and possesses individual characteristics that reflect your personality.”

– Dr Ernest Rex Tan

response is that there is no such thing. “Every smile is unique and possesses individual characteristics that reflect your personality, preference, facial features and of course, showcases the teeth, lips and gums in well-balanced proportion.”

But that’s not to say you have to settle for the gnashers that genes and life gave you. According to Dr Tan, there are four things all good smiles have in common.

#### **SYMMETRY**

Facial symmetry is one of the things we subconsciously assess when we’re deciding how beautiful someone is. The same is true of teeth. Says Dr Tan: “The left and right of the teeth and smile should be mirror images of each other. Irregularly shaped and crooked teeth need to be corrected to achieve this.”

#### **PROPORTION**

The size of your pearl-ies whites in relation to each other is another important factor that affects the look of your smile. “Teeth need to be proportionate and

“A stark white smile with no characteristics will appear artificial.”

– Dr Ernest Rex Tan

in addition, the amount showing needs to be proportionate to the gums and lips,” says Dr Tan.

#### **BRIGHTNESS/COLOUR**

It might be tempting to go for a paper-white shade, but that’s a mistake. Dr Tan says: “Generally speaking, whiter teeth are more appealing but they must be balanced against your skin tone and appear natural. A stark white smile with no characteristics will appear artificial.”

#### **HARMONY**

This is where the artistry of an expert dentist comes in. He or she needs to look at the whole face in order to create the most appealing smile. “The curvature needs to harmonise with the shape of the face. The fullness of the smile also has to be in harmony with the lips, gums and face. Too full a smile can make you look toothy, and vice versa,” says Dr Tan.

#### *Choosing your dentist*

Dentists are not unlike medical doctors; they have specialties too. Choose someone who focuses primarily on cosmetic and restorative dentistry. And don’t be shy to ask for important factors like his experience and credentials, and to view his previous work to ascertain the quality of his results. Finally, make sure that you feel comfortable with him – it’s crucial that you feel your dentist listens to and understands your concerns and priorities. That way, you get the smile you want.



Dr Ernest Rex Tan (pictured left), has 19 years of experience as a specialist prosthodontist (an expert in aesthetic dentistry). He founded Smile Inc.® in 1997, which specialises in The Smile Inc.® Makeover®, a bespoke set of treatments and procedures from instant straight white teeth to laser teeth whitening to aesthetic dental implants. The aim is to address any inadequacies in the patient’s smile. Each solution will be specially tailored and customised, and involves detailed planning, artistry and the expertise and experience of the entire team.

Branches are at #04-18 Mandarin Gallery (tel: 6733-0660), #01-02 Marina Bay-The Sail (tel: 6222-2900), #09-02 One Raffles Quay, North Tower (tel: 6733-0220) and #02-326/7 Suntec City Mall, (tel: 6733 1802). Visit [www.smileinc.com.sg](http://www.smileinc.com.sg) for more information.