

# DENTAL HYGIENIST

Dental hygienists clean teeth, examine patients for signs of oral diseases such as gingivitis, and provide other preventative dental care. They also educate patients on ways to improve and maintain good oral health.

## DUTIES

Dental hygienists typically do the following:

- Remove tartar, stains, and plaque from teeth
- Apply sealants and fluorides to help protect teeth
- Take and develop dental x rays
- Keep track of patient care and treatment plans
- Teach patients oral hygiene, such as how to brush and floss correctly

Dental hygienists use many types of tools to do their job. They clean and polish teeth with both hand and powered tools, as well as ultrasonic devices. In some cases, they remove stains with an air polishing device, which sprays a combination of air, water, and baking soda. They polish teeth with a powered tool that works like an automatic toothbrush. Hygienists use x-ray machines to take pictures to check for tooth or jaw problems.

Dental hygienists help patients develop and keep good oral health. For example, they may explain the relationship between diet and oral health. They also may give advice to patients on how to select toothbrushes and other oral-care devices. Other tasks hygienists may perform vary by state. Some states allow hygienists to place and carve filling materials, temporary fillings, and periodontal dressings.



## SALARY INFORMATION

Location	2018				
	10%	25%	Median	75%	90%
California	\$81,390	\$92,450	\$107,530	\$122,520	\$132,930

\*Pay period based on yearly amount.

## EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK



Stable growth rate is estimated to be **17%**



**1,740** estimated annual job openings

