

Editorial

Corresponding author

Daniel Kazachkov, DMD
Dental Arts of Westwood
Dentist Serving Westwood
Needham, Dedham
Norwood, MA, USA
E-mail: dr.dan@dentalartsofwestwood.com

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The Smile Solution: Smile! How to Make Yours Perfect

Daniel Kazachkov, DMD*

Dental Arts of Westwood, Dentist Serving Westwood, Needham, Dedham, Norwood, MA, USA

An esthetically pleasing smile is an attractive quality that lures people to you, making them immediately respond positively to a first impression, before you've uttered a single word. The great news is that perfect smiles are no longer limited to Hollywood celebrities (more on that in a minute). With today's technological advancements and software, everyone can achieve the bright-white, glistening smile of their dreams.

What constitutes the perfect smile?

If we study the beauty of nature, art—or teeth—we will discover a common principle running throughout. This common principle is none other than the Golden Proportion, a phenomenon related to beauty. The Golden Ratio (or “Golden Section”) is based on Fibonacci Numbers, where every number in the sequence (after the second) is the sum of the previous 2 numbers:

1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, ...

If you read the bestseller, *The DaVinci Code*, you'll certainly be aware of The Fibonacci Numbers; they lead to the Golden Ratio of 1 to 0.618. It all has to do with beauty and ratios of proportion, and as a dentist, I can use dentistry, both an art and a science which relies on this mathematical principle to make sure that all of your teeth are in proportion to your face, to your lips and to each other. In just one example, without being too technical, the width of your upper central incisor should be in the Golden Proportion to the width of the lateral incisor.

Or, in another example, in an ideal smile line, the edges of your upper teeth should be parallel to your lower lip when you smile. Furthermore, both sets of teeth should look similar and complement your hair, skin and eye color.

The starting point of any smile makeover is the facial midline, an imaginary vertical line drawn between the front 2 upper teeth. For optimal esthetic value, the facial midline should be in the middle of the face. I find it really interesting that, when I look at a photograph of actor Tom Cruise, his midline is way off, as he is missing an upper left lateral tooth on the left side of his mouth. Whenever possible, the midline between the upper front teeth (central incisors) should always coincide with the facial midline and Tom's do not.

Brad Pitt (who lately doesn't have any reason to smile) always smiles with his upper teeth, as he has crowding on his lower teeth. You'll never see him smile with his lower teeth. Google his picture and that's what you'll always find. His smile is a definite award-winner.

Actress Julia Roberts has been banking on her smile for a long time. She has teeth of equal length, color, symmetry and balance. She has what I call “pretty teeth”, in that her teeth are feminine, with rounded edges.

Actor Denzel Washington has a great smile with teeth that are more square at the incisal edges, and his face is one of the most symmetrical in the world.

Are you seeking a smile makeover?

The principles of smile design are divided into 4 parts:

Facial Esthetics: They include how the lips frame your smile when you speak, smile or laugh.

Gingival (Gum) Esthetics: The health and appearance of your gums are essential elements in smile design. Excessive gingival display (having a gummy smile), uneven gum contours, inflammation and exposed root surfaces are common gingival-based esthetic complaints that detract from your smile's appeal.

Microesthetics: This involves the subtle characteristics that make your teeth look the way they do, such as how they reflect light and unique marks or colorations. The ideal restoration is one with qualities closely resembling those of natural teeth.

Macroesthetics: This analyzes the relationships and proportions between front teeth, surrounding tissue landmarks and facial characteristics, in order to ensure natural and attractive restorative care and smile makeover treatment.

DISCLOSURE

This dental article is not intended to defame the mentioned actors/actresses in the above piece and it is presented solely for the purpose of education using broadly known and recognizable faces. We thank the people mentioned for contributing to our study of dental esthetics.