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## Crowding

Crowded teeth can occur for a number of reasons. Many times, there is a tooth-size, arch-length discrepancy. The space needed for positioning the teeth is limited. Crowded teeth are more difficult to maintain in terms of effective brushing and flossing. Food gets trapped between rotated/crowded teeth.

While crowding is fairly common within the patient population the orthodontic approach to crowding can differ. A “traditional” bracket system relies on elastics to bind the archwire into the bracket slots, creating friction between the archwire and bracket slot making tooth movement more difficult. Moving teeth with the resultant friction requires more force. This leads to more discomfort and most likely involves the extraction of permanent teeth.

Damon Brackets are part of a “self-ligating” system. The archwires are actually secured by a little door in each bracket that can be opened and closed thereby nearly eliminating the friction between the archwire and the bracket slot. Along with high-tech archwires (made of mainly nickel, titanium, copper) very little force is needed to move the teeth. This self-ligating system is actually more efficient and consistent with healthy, biologic tooth movement. Moreover, in my experience, it is actually rare to remove permanent teeth.

