

# Uses of the Dental Mirror

**FPI Module 4**

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# Learning Objectives

Name and describe

three types of dental mirrors



Name

the four uses of the dental mouth mirror



Describe

how to retract correctly on anterior and posterior areas

# DENTAL MIRROR

- A dental mirror is used to view tooth surfaces that cannot be seen using direct vision.
- For example, a clinician needs to view the lingual surfaces of the maxillary anterior teeth using a dental mirror or mouth mirror.
- The working-end of a dental mirror has a reflecting mirrored surface.



# THREE COMMON TYPES

## 1. Front Surface:

- Reflecting surface is on the front surface of the glass
- Produces a clear mirror image with no distortion
- Most commonly used type (good image quality)
- Reflecting surface is easily scratched

## 2. Concave:

- Reflecting surface is on the front surface of the mirror lens
- Produces a **magnified** image
- Not recommended because magnification distorts the image

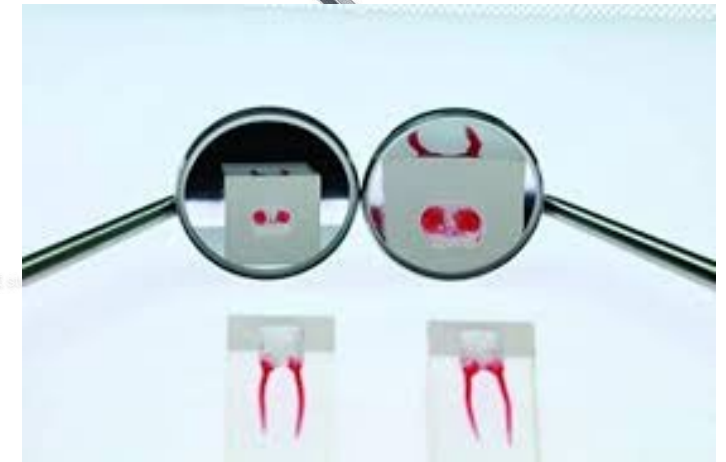
## 3. Plane (Flat Surface):

- Produces a double image (ghost image)
- Durable, resists scratching because the reflecting surface is on the back of the mirror lens
- Not recommended because the double image is distracting



*Front surface mirror*

*Mouth Mirror*



# Stabilization of the Dental Mirror

- During instrumentation, clinician grasps mirror in the non-dominant hand
- The ring and index fingers are used to stabilize the mirror in the mouth
- Insert like a “flying saucer” with the mirror surface parallel to occlusal surfaces of the teeth to avoid trauma
- Clinician may rest fingers on the patient’s chin, cheek, or tooth surface to stabilize the mirror:

**Extraoral fulcrum**—a stabilization point outside the patient’s mouth

**Intraoral fulcrum**—a stabilization point for the hand on a tooth surface (optional with a dental mirror, but recommended when used with a periodontal instrument)



# Uses of the Dental Mirror

## 1. Indirect Vision

The use of a mirror to view a tooth surface or intraoral structure that cannot be seen directly

- For most clinicians the visual sense is the most dominant
- During periodontal instrumentation TOUCH is the greatest asset for the detection and removal of deposits
- Mastery of indirect vision is important for preventing awkward body positions when trying to view teeth "directly"



# Uses of the Dental Mirror

## 2. Retraction

Use the mirror head to hold the patient's cheek, lip, or tongue so that the clinician can view tooth surfaces that are otherwise hidden from view by these soft tissue structures.

Retraction of the lip:

- The index finger is used to retract the lip away from the teeth
- More comfortable for the patient than using a mirror for retraction of the upper or lower lip



# Uses of the Dental Mirror

## 3. Indirect Illumination

Use of the mirror to reflect light onto a tooth or soft tissue structure in a dark area of the mouth

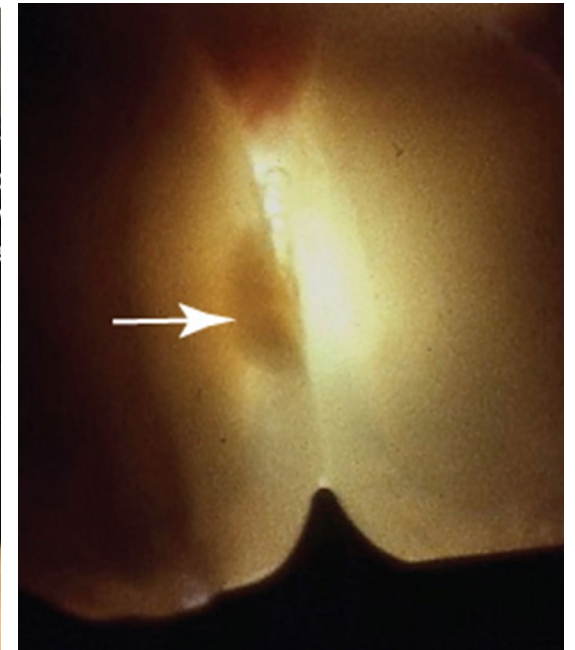




# Uses of the Dental Mirror

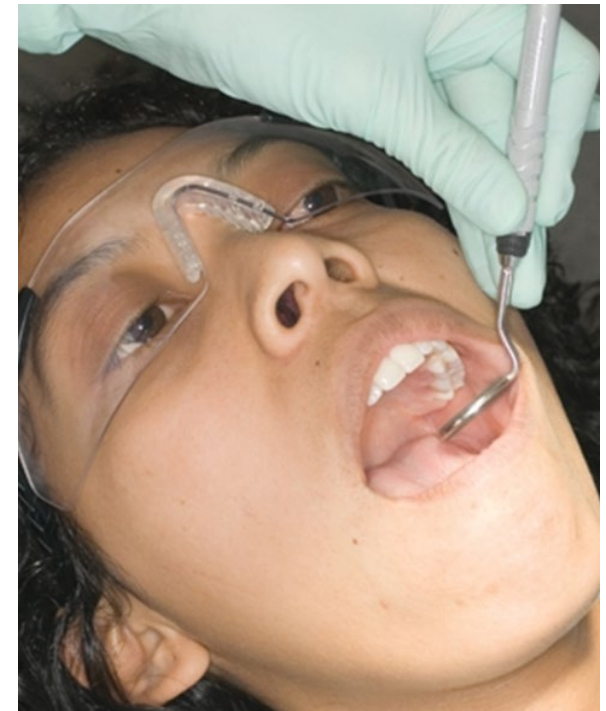
## 4. Transillumination

- The technique of **directing light off of the mirror surface** and **through the anterior teeth**



# Grasp and Place the Mirror

- Grasp mirror
- Place the mirror head in a “Frisbee-position” between dental arches
- Turn mirror until it is parallel to the buccal mucosa of cheek
- Establish **extraoral** finger rest
- Use arm muscles to retract cheek
- When in position, mirror is used for **retraction** and for **indirect vision**



# Relevant videos from FPI

- Clock positions for anterior and posterior teeth (separate for left and right-handed clinicians)
- Instrument grip
- Introduction to mirror use