

Intraoral scanners – The FAQs

David Claridge, CAD/CAM Product Specialist at Carestream Dental, addresses the key FAQs he is most often faced with when it comes to intraoral scanners.

1. How easy is an intraoral scanner to use?

The short answer is very, when you receive the correct training. My mantra is 'Using an intraoral scanner is not difficult, it's just different'. There is a learning curve, but it is not excessive. Having trained approximately 400 'digital' dentists to date, I verify that this statement is accurate, and they concur.

2. Will it save me time?

If we compare to some polyether impression materials (which have a working/setting time of six minutes) upper, lower and occlusal scans can be completed in the same time using the CS 3600 intraoral scanner. The scan is then sent to the lab – taking about 2-3 minutes.

3. How long does it take to get to grips with in practice?

I can only apply this to the intraoral scanners I work with, but I require only 15 minutes to train a new practice team with the CS 3600. Generally, I consider the 'learning curve' to be the first five patients, but some practices have become very comfortable with the software much faster.

4. Is an intraoral scanner as accurate as a traditional impression?

There are various studies to show that digital impressions are in fact more accurate than traditional methods. What's more, with several intraoral scanners available in the modern market, there has been research into which products are the most accurate, with the CS 3500 coming out on top for trueness and precision in a study conducted by Mangano *et al.*¹

5. Can I try before I buy?

Of course. You need to establish that intraoral scanning is right for you – our sales team all carry intraoral scanners for demonstrations.

6. Would an intraoral scanner double up as a camera?

Yes. The automatic system captures intraoral 2D colour photos as it scans. These can be used to enhance communication with the lab and with your patients, plus they can be kept as evidence should they be needed for medico-legal reasons. Of course, an intraoral scanner is not a cost-effective option if all you need are the photos, but if you are considering digital impressions, it offers the flexibility of both.

7. Is it compatible with short-term orthodontic appliances?

For the latest list of orthodontic systems compatible with the CS 3600 scanner, give Carestream Dental a call. Another benefit of our scanners is that our software is totally compatible with OrthoTrac for a seamless workflow – other scanners require the purchase of additional programmes in order to interact with the system, increasing costs and hassle.



8. Is it worth the investment?

As with any new technology, an initial investment is required to purchase and set up an intraoral scanner but this can be undertaken via lease finance etc. It's also worth considering a return on investment calculation, which shows when the scanner has paid for itself. For example, an orthodontic practice taking ten sets of study models per day at £10 per set, purchases an intraoral scanner on finance over five years. The lab bills for one week of gypsum study models will pay for the monthly repayments of the scanner. So the other three weeks are pure profit. Not to mention gypsum model storage issues!

9. Do I have to work with a specific lab to utilise digital impressions?

If the intraoral scanner produces open .STL or files, then you can continue working with your current lab without any problems at all as long as they have 'open' CAD systems. With the CS 3500 and CS 3600, you can simply send the open files to your chosen lab, who can view and manipulate the images using their CAD software without ever needing to purchase new or upgrade their existing systems.

10. How do I choose the right intraoral scanner for me?

Do your homework, try the different scanners on the market. A 'try' could be defined as a live scan either on a patient or a member of staff. Find out as much as you can about the support that will be available to you once your purchase a product and any ongoing fees. Digital impressions are certainly the way forward, so the most important thing now is not to get left behind!

For more information please contact Carestream Dental on 0800 169 9692 or visit www.carestreamdental.co.uk

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1. Mangano F G, Veronesi G, Hauschild U, Mijiritsky E, Mangano C. Trueness and precision of four intraoral scanners in oral implantology: A comparative *in vitro* study. *PLoS One* 2016; 11: e0163107; DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0163107.