

E.max or zirconia?

Both make excellent crowns. The right choice depends on where the tooth is, how hard the patient bites, and how much the result needs to blend in.

E.max

Lithium disilicate glass-ceramic

- ✓ Lifelike translucency that blends with natural teeth
- ✓ Can be adhesively bonded, so preps can be more conservative
- ✓ Thin enough for veneers, onlays and inlays
- ✓ Strong for single crowns (pressed, about 400 MPa)

Best for: front teeth, premolars, veneers and short anterior bridges where looks matter most.

Zirconia

Zirconium oxide ceramic

- ✓ The strongest option (about 900 to 1,200 MPa)
- ✓ Handles heavy bite forces and bruxism
- ✓ Masks dark stumps, posts and metal cores
- ✓ Suits longer-span bridges

Best for: molars, grinders, long bridges and cases that need to hide a dark base.

At a glance

	E.MAX	ZIRCONIA
Flexural strength	About 400 MPa (pressed)	About 900 to 1,200 MPa
Translucency	High, very natural	Moderate; high-translucency grades available
Seating	Bonded or conventionally cemented	Conventionally cemented
Hiding a dark base	Limited	Good
Bruxism	Use with care	Recommended
Typical cases	Anterior and premolar crowns, veneers, onlays, inlays, short anterior bridges	Molar crowns, implant crowns, long-span bridges

Layered or monolithic?

Either material can be made as one solid piece, or as a strong core with porcelain built up by hand on top.

Monolithic

One solid piece, stained and glazed

- ✓ Strongest result, with no porcelain layer to chip
- ✓ Needs less tooth reduction
- ✓ Consistent fit and shade
- ✓ Faster turnaround and better value

Best for: back teeth, bruxism and everyday crowns.

Layered

Strong core with hand-layered porcelain

- ✓ Most natural depth, colour and translucency
- ✓ Fine detail like mamelons and incisal halo
- ✓ Ideal for matching a single front tooth
- ✓ Needs a little more room for the porcelain

Best for: visible front teeth and high-aesthetic single units.

Not sure which to choose? Write "lab to advise" on the job form, or send us the case details, and we'll recommend the best option. Call 1300 907 497 or email info@thetoothlab.com.au.