

CONNECTING DENTAL TECHNOLOGY Laboratory

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LAYERED REALISM



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Five things I can't work without

Jenna Ellis shares the five essential items she needs to create exceptional restorations



JENNA ELLIS

Dental technician and head ceramist, Go Digital Dental

For as long as I can remember, I've always said that, in life, I want to make people smile. Never did I expect that to be quite so literal and within dentistry, but here I am as the head ceramist at Go Digital Dental laboratory based in Nottingham. I was lucky to be able to start my career as an apprentice within an award-winning lab and work alongside some of the best technicians within the field who have taught me so much and continue to do so.

Three years ago, an opportunity came along for some of us to start up a fully digital dental lab and we hit the ground running. I have been working in dentistry for 10 years now and really enjoy passing on knowledge, as well as continuing to develop my own skills and expertise within other areas whenever I can. With that said, here are my top five things I cannot work without.

1. SCALPEL

In my opinion, there is something incredibly satisfying about a scalpel with a new sharp blade. It's an indispensable tool for precision and detail work that I find I use quite often. It can be used for many things, from wax patterns to impression trimming. I tend to find I use it for removal of excess cement when bonding implants, trimming putty keys, removing excess from marginal areas on models, easing off crowns that have been layered, and much more. I find it's one of the better tools for accuracy and fine detail – if not the best – as its sharp blade allows controlled, precise cuts, and it's not bulky either. It definitely earns its place within the dental lab.

2. STEAM CLEANER

If you work in a lab without the use of a steam cleaner, I genuinely do not know how you do it! This piece of incredible equipment is a God send for me. As we are a fully digital



lab, most will learn that not all digital models are easy to clean. However, even for analogue labs, this is a handy thing to have as cleaning off wax, polishing compounds and other residues is super easy and quick when using a good steam cleaner. We currently use one from Renfert, which is a powerful and durable machine. As big and bulky as it looks, it is surprisingly lightweight.

3. MAGNIFYING LENS

On my bench I have two magnifiers – one is a large x3 lens and the other is a smaller x10. They have movable and extendable arms, making it easy to push and pull in and out of my way as and when they are needed. I always use these as they help reduce eye strain while enhancing visibility. For consistency and continuous high standards, magnifiers are essential. Being able to get all those fine details in when contouring, staining or layering is important for accuracy and flawless finishes, as well as ensuring exact margins and proper occlusion. Without my magnifiers, it would be more difficult to detect any sort of microdefects.

4. MIYO PASTE STAINS

When I was first introduced to Miyo some years ago now, I was a little sceptical as it was a new system, and ceramic paste stains



– although not a stain – were a new thing. At the time, I was using another system which was also a paste stain, but I decided to give the Miyo a try and instantly fell in love with it. Now years later, I have never looked back! I no longer use any other staining system, as the micro ceramic system within Miyo ticks all the boxes and is exceptional. Restorations are brought to life, cementing a whole new meaning to full contour. Amazingly, it is also super easy to use.

5. AIRPODS

Life in the lab can be a noisy place to be, especially when there are extractors and handpieces on the go. On top of that, in a big open room, there are conversations, the radio, phones ringing, the doorbell, delivery people in and out, as well as a nursery directly below us with excitable children. I sometimes just need to zone out in my own world so I can focus on getting my tasks done without other distractions.

Don't get me wrong, I enjoy the conversations and laughs with my colleagues, but sometimes there is a need to switch off from all of that, especially when I have intricate cases to complete. 🎧

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