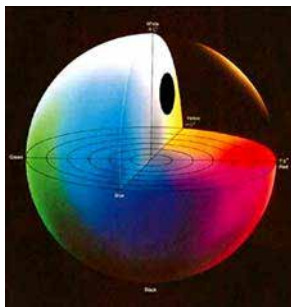


# Tips for Accurate Shade Selection

Technical bulletin from National Dentex  
For more information, please call 800.678.4140



1. The patient should remove any lipstick or bright makeup. Drape the patient with a neutral (grey) bib.
2. Make the shade selection at the beginning of the appointment before the tooth becomes dehydrated and your eyes become fatigued from the other procedures. Whenever possible take a shade prior to tooth preparation.
3. The canines are a good reference point in selecting a shade because they have the highest chroma (intensity) of the dominant hue (color) of the teeth.
4. First impressions are the most accurate in shade selection.
5. Make your final shade selection after comparing your shade selections with those of another team member. This works to double check these very subjective measurements.
6. When making shade selections it is important not to view the comparison for more than 7 seconds at a time to avoid fatiguing the cones of the retina. We recommend you gaze at a neutral grey wall card. In fact, looking away at a grey card between each 7-second shade evaluation will reset the focus of your eyes and depth perception.
7. Compare your shade selection under varying conditions such as with lip retraction versus lip down and when the patient moves their head in different directions or lighting angles. Request the patient sit up or stand up when determining the shade. The tab should be parallel with the tooth being shade matched so to minimize depth perception errors. View the shade under color corrected lighting.
8. Many doctors feel that selecting a shade of slightly lower value from the adjacent teeth helps the porcelain “blend” nicely with the patient’s natural dentition.
9. Keep in mind that you cannot provide too much descriptive information to your ceramist. A properly taken digital photograph with the shade tab and exposed shade number included in the photo provides many of the anatomical characteristics that can help you achieve excellence.
10. Be aware that shade tabs degrade due to aging and disinfection. Have a new guide to compare the consistency of other guides and always designate the name of shade guide used; remember that A-2 may not be consistent between guides. For e.max crowns please include the natural die shade (stumpf shade) to ensure the proper end result.