



Healthy Lifestyle

Adult health

Is it more effective to floss teeth with a water pick or standard dental floss?

Answers from [Alan Carr, D.M.D.](#)

Standard dental floss is generally considered the most effective tool for cleaning the tight spaces between the teeth. You can also use dental floss to scrape up and down the sides of each tooth.

A water pick (oral irrigator) is a device that aims a stream of water at your teeth. A water pick can help remove food particles from your teeth and might help reduce bleeding and gum disease — but it isn't generally considered a substitute for brushing and flossing.

If plain dental floss gets stuck in your teeth, use the waxed variety. If you have a hard time handling dental floss, try a floss holder. Other options might include special brushes, picks or sticks designed to clean between the teeth.

With

[Alan Carr, D.M.D.](#)

References

1. Jahn CA. The dental water jet: A historical review of the literature. *Journal of Dental Hygiene*. 2010;84:114.
2. Flossing. American Dental Association. <http://www.ada.org/en/Home-MouthHealthy/az-topics/f/flossing>. Accessed Jan. 15, 2015.

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