

Ask Style: What Will Give Me Pearly Whites?

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Which at-home teeth-whitening kits are most convenient and effective?

—Carrie A., Pembroke Pines, Fla.

style
test
drive

Unfortunately, when it comes to home whitening, convenient and effective can be mutually exclusive. It's also fairly

relative: Convenient can mean taking one's teeth from zero to supernova white in an hour or so, or it can mean minimizing the number of steps or

precautions one has to take for the magic to happen. So let's go over our favorites. We tested several whitening products, and found that...



- The least complicated products usually take the longest to deliver. But hey, they're easy to use. [Listerine](#), for example, offers a fluoride rinse designed specifically for whitening. According to dentists, it's not so effective as a product with directly applied hydrogen peroxide, but it can be used with minimal effort. Ditto with a capsule product like [GoSmile](#), which lets you whiten on the go with disposable applicators. They work, but they take time.

- Light treatment combined with special solutions isn't just for the dentist's office anymore, thanks to brands like [Luster](#). Again, many of them won't be as effective as a visit to the dentist, and they can be complicated to use, but they're the next best thing to an expensive in-office treatment.

- Some systems use customizable trays combined with powerful gels. A test of the [Icing by Bling](#) system delivered noticeable results with minimal mess.
- If price is an issue, a simple strip system may be your best bet. "The peroxide is held against the teeth better than most trays," cosmetic dentist [Jason Olitsky](#) tells me. "I've been recommending Crest whitening strips."
- And a final thought: For true recessionistas, did you know that strawberries can help whiten teeth? According to dentist-to-the-stars [Dr. Kevin Sands](#), "Strawberries contain natural teeth-whitening agents. Cut strawberry and rub directly on teeth. It is very important to brush with toothpaste immediately after as strawberries also contain sugar and acids."

Shine on!

