How to use quick buttons in Open Dental to enter treatment and existing restorations

Learning how to use quick buttons in Open Dental lets you chart missing teeth, existing restorations, watches, cracks, planned treatment, bridges, and endodontic procedures with only a few clicks. This guide walks through each task on a sample patient chart, from customizing the procedure buttons to reviewing the treatment history.

Prerequisites

- Access to Open Dental and the chart of the patient you want to update.
- A procedure button list that matches the services your office offers (see Step 1).

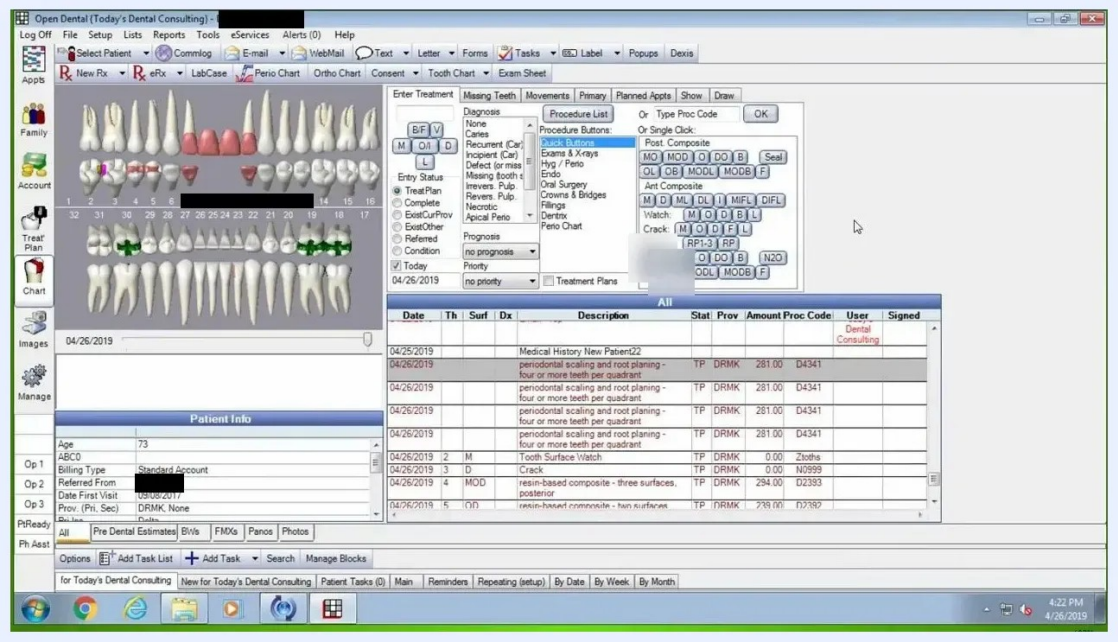
Steps

Step 1: Customize the procedure buttons for your office

Review the buttons in the **Procedure Buttons** panel so they match your office's offerings.

- If your office does not offer nitrous oxide (N2O), remove or disable the N2O button to avoid confusion.

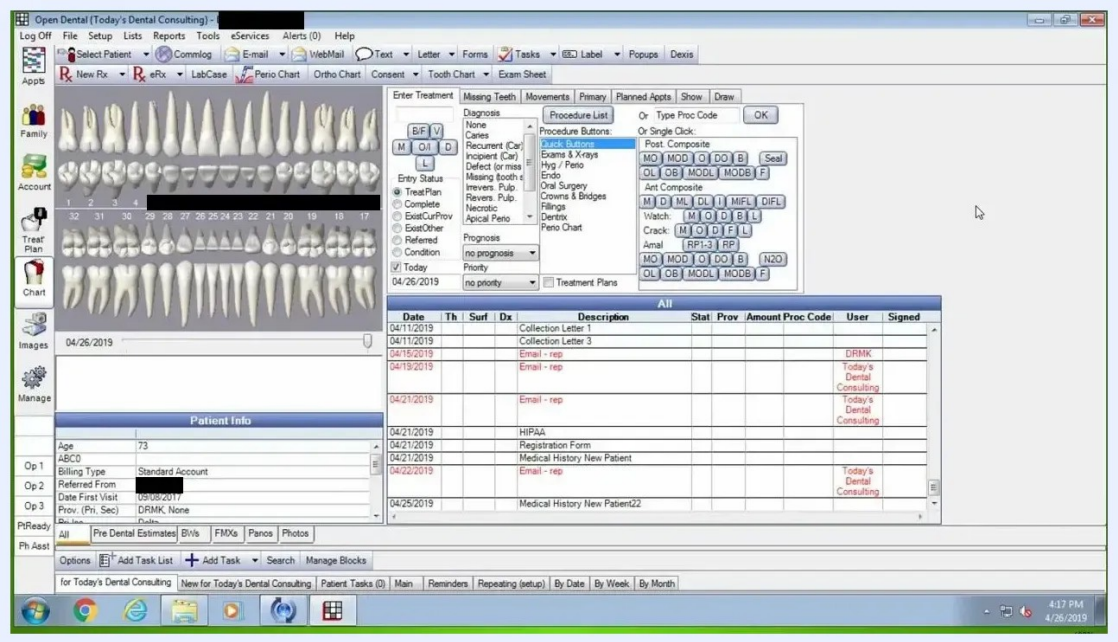
- Make sure the buttons reflect the services you do provide, such as sealants, even if you do not offer nitrous.



Procedure Buttons panel showing the N2O and Sealant options

Step 2: Open the patient's chart

Open the chart and confirm you are on the correct patient (in this example, Donald Duck). The main screen shows the tooth chart, patient information, and procedure entry options.



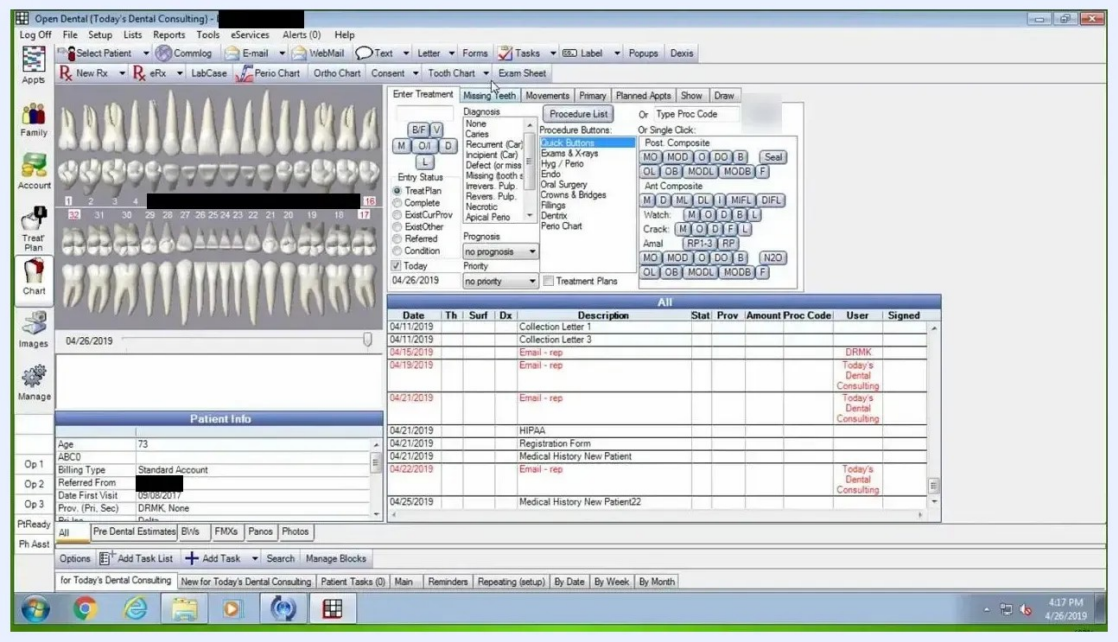
Open Dental chart screen with the tooth chart, procedure buttons, and patient information

Step 3: Mark missing teeth

Review the patient's mouth and determine which teeth are missing. In this example, teeth 1, 8, 9, 16, 17, and 32 are missing.

1. Select the **Missing Teeth** tab at the top of the tooth chart section.
2. Select the missing teeth.
3. Click **Missing** to mark the selected teeth as missing.

If you mark a tooth by mistake, such as tooth 16, select it and click **Not Missing** to restore it.



Tooth chart with teeth 1, 8, 9, 16, 17, and 32 marked as missing and the Missing Teeth tab selected

Step 4: Confirm the missing teeth

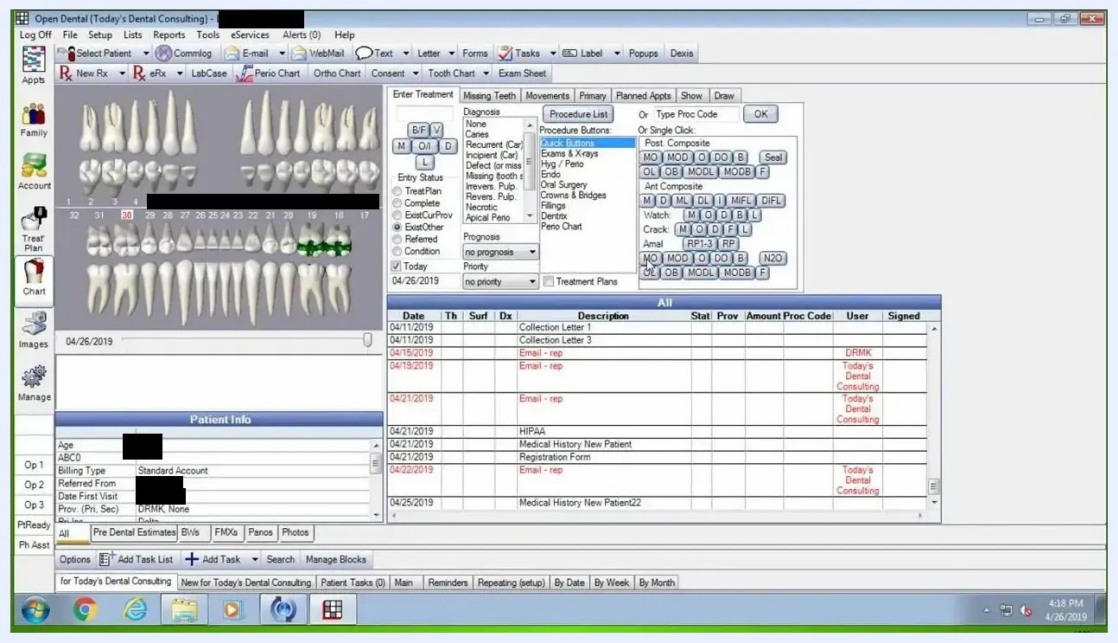
Check that the selected teeth are now visually indicated as missing in the tooth chart.

Step 5: Use quick buttons to enter existing restorations

Entering existing restorations is optional. It is typically used for crowns, bridges, and significant restorations. Routine fillings are not always entered, because photographs and x-rays document them better.

1. Select the relevant teeth in the tooth chart. In this example, select teeth 18 and 19 for MOD amalgams and tooth 30 for an MO amalgam.
2. Select the **ExistOther** status.

3. Click the quick procedure buttons (for example, MOD, MO, DO, B, or F) under the **Post. Composite** or **Amalgam** section to indicate the type and surfaces of the restoration.



Tooth chart with teeth 18, 19, and 30 selected, quick procedure buttons visible, and ExistOther highlighted

Step 6: Switch back to entering treatment

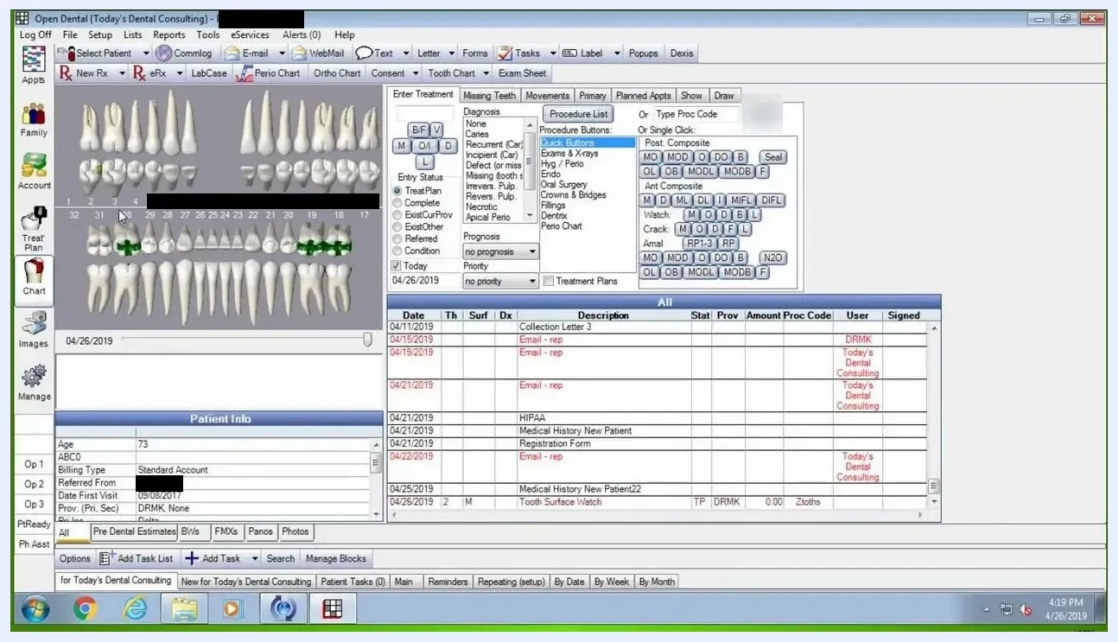
Deselect **ExistOther** and return to the **Enter Treatment** tab. You can now chart new findings and planned treatments.

Step 7: Add a watch with the quick buttons

Use a watch for a questionable area on a tooth surface. For example, if tooth 2 has a questionable area on the mesial surface:

1. Select tooth 2.
2. Click the **Watch** button.
3. Select the **M** (mesial) surface.

The watch appears in mustard yellow on the chart, which distinguishes it from other conditions.



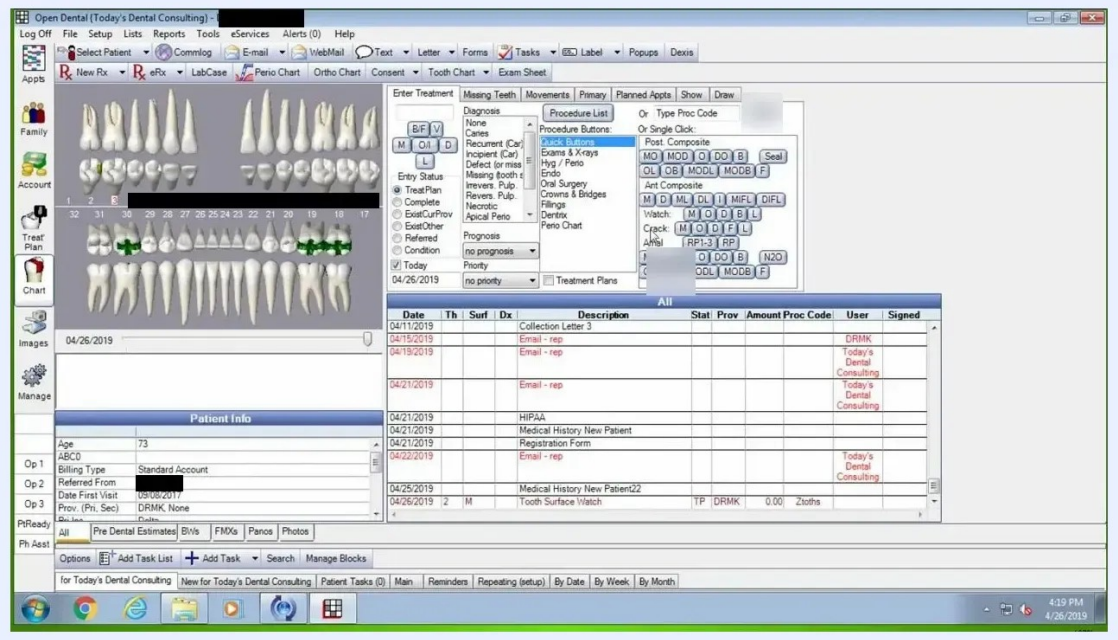
Tooth chart with a yellow watch on the mesial surface of tooth 2 and quick buttons visible

Step 8: Document a crack

If tooth 3 has a crack on the distal surface:

1. Select tooth 3.
2. Click the **Crack** button.
3. Select the **D** (distal) surface.

The crack is recorded and displayed on the chart.



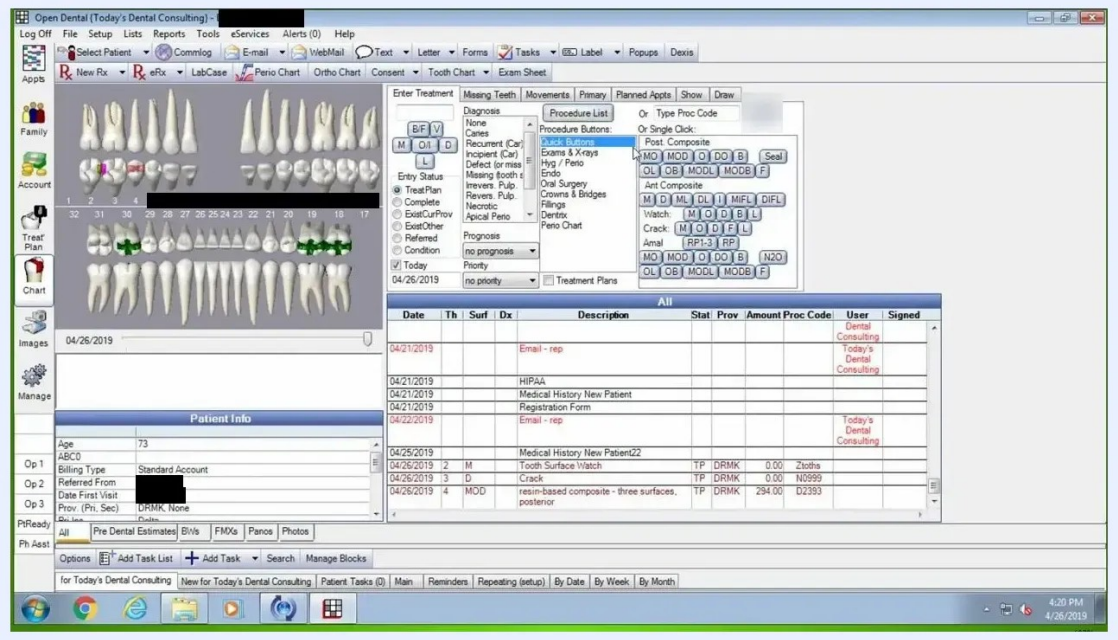
Tooth chart with a crack on the distal surface of tooth 3 and the earlier watch on tooth 2 still visible

Step 9: Enter planned restorations with quick buttons

Select a tooth and click the matching quick button to add planned treatment.

1. Select tooth 4, which requires an MOD composite, and click **MOD** under the **Post. Composite** section.
2. Select tooth 5, which requires a DO restoration, and click **DO**.

Each planned procedure is added to the treatment plan list below the chart.



Tooth chart with an MOD composite planned for tooth 4 and a DO planned for tooth 5, with entries listed below

Step 10: Review the chart and treatment plan list

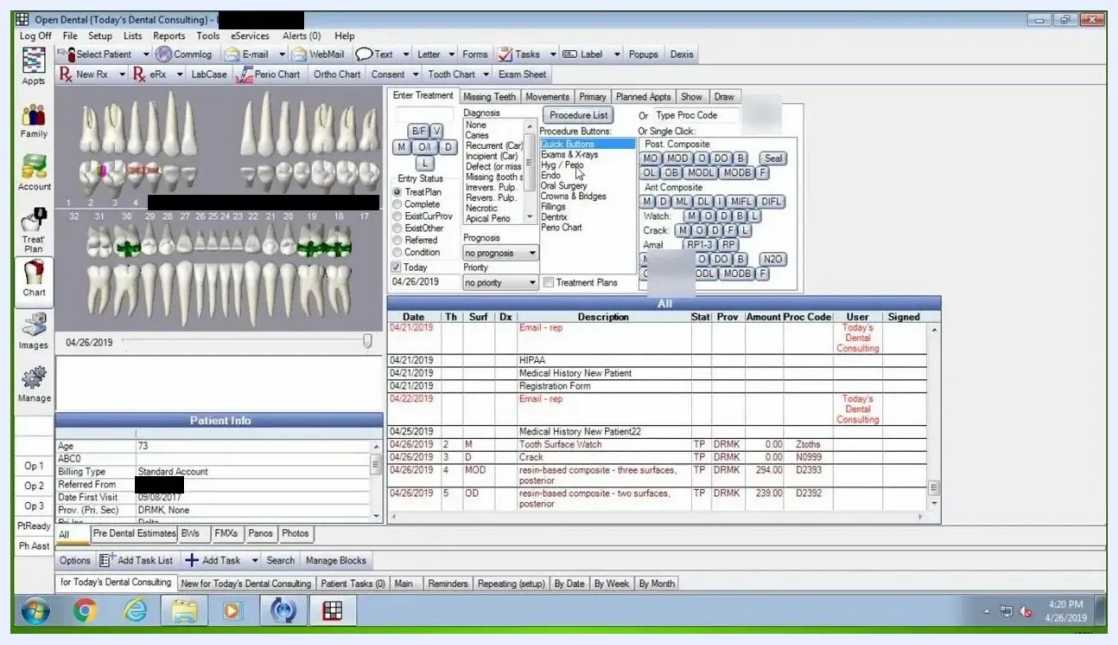
Confirm that the watches, cracks, and planned restorations appear correctly on the tooth chart and in the treatment plan list. Double-check that each entry matches the clinical findings and intended treatments.

Keep these points in mind while you work:

- Quick buttons for common procedures speed up data entry.
- Watches and cracks are distinguished by color and chart symbols.
- Always verify that the correct status (existing or planned) is selected before you enter data.
- The treatment plan list at the bottom of the screen summarizes all entered procedures, including surface, type, provider, and codes.

Step 11: Select the teeth for a bridge

To chart a bridge for a patient who is missing front teeth, click the missing teeth in the tooth chart. In this example, select teeth 7, 8, 9, and 10. The selected teeth are highlighted.

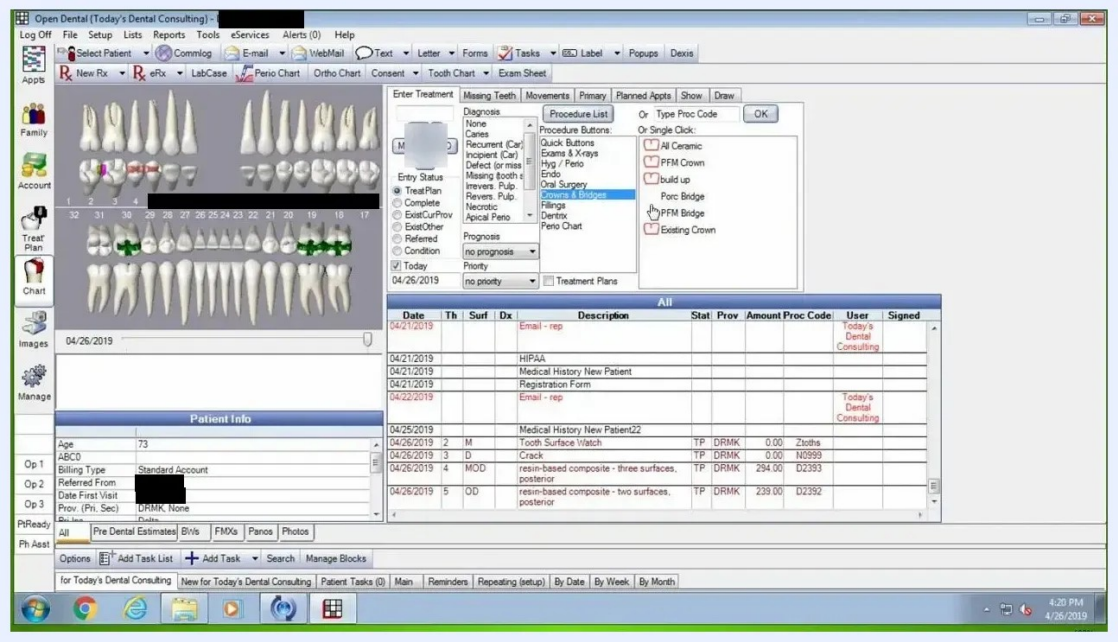


Tooth chart with teeth 7, 8, 9, and 10 selected for a bridge, with patient information and the treatment plan list visible

Step 12: Choose a bridge from Crowns & Bridges

1. In the **Procedure Buttons** panel, switch from **Quick Buttons** to **Crowns & Bridges**.
2. Review the available options: **All Ceramic**, **PFM Crown**, **build up**, **Porc Bridge**, **PFM Bridge**, and **Existing Crown**.

3. Click **Porc Bridge** for an all-porcelain bridge (not porcelain fused to metal).



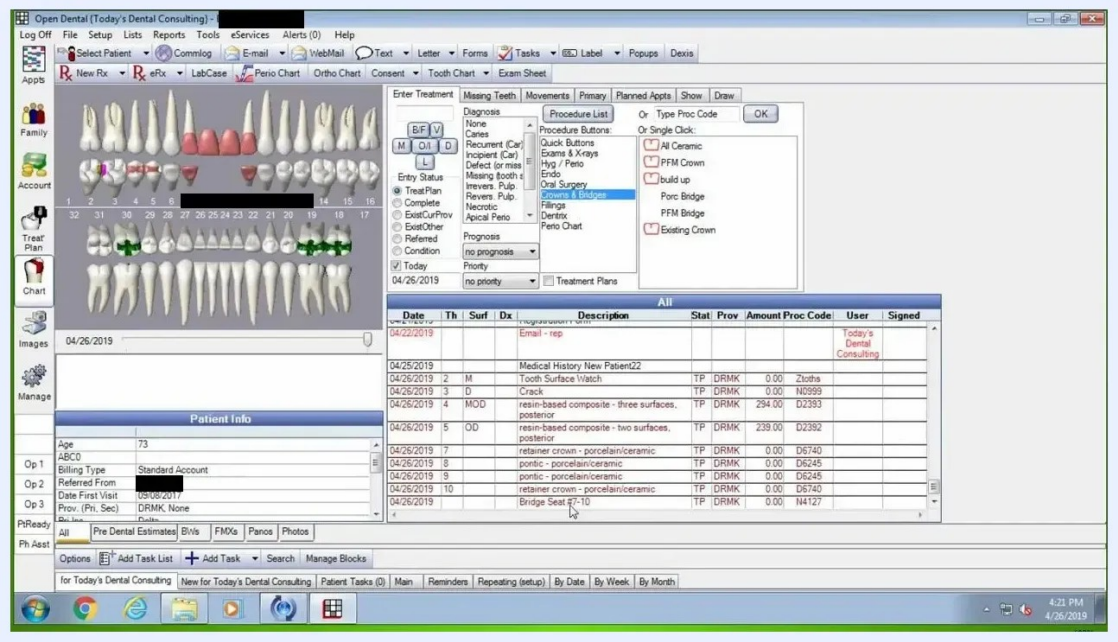
Crowns & Bridges list with Porc Bridge highlighted and teeth 7 to 10 selected in the chart

Step 13: Confirm the bridge in the treatment plan

Open Dental automatically enters the bridge components for the selected teeth:

- Retainer crowns for teeth 7 and 10.
- Pontics for teeth 8 and 9.
- A bridge seat for 7-10.

These appear in the treatment plan list below the chart, and the bridge is shown in a distinct color on the tooth chart. Selecting multiple teeth and clicking one procedure button lets you enter a complex treatment like a bridge quickly.



Tooth chart showing the bridge on teeth 7 to 10, with retainer crowns, pontics, and bridge seat in the treatment plan list

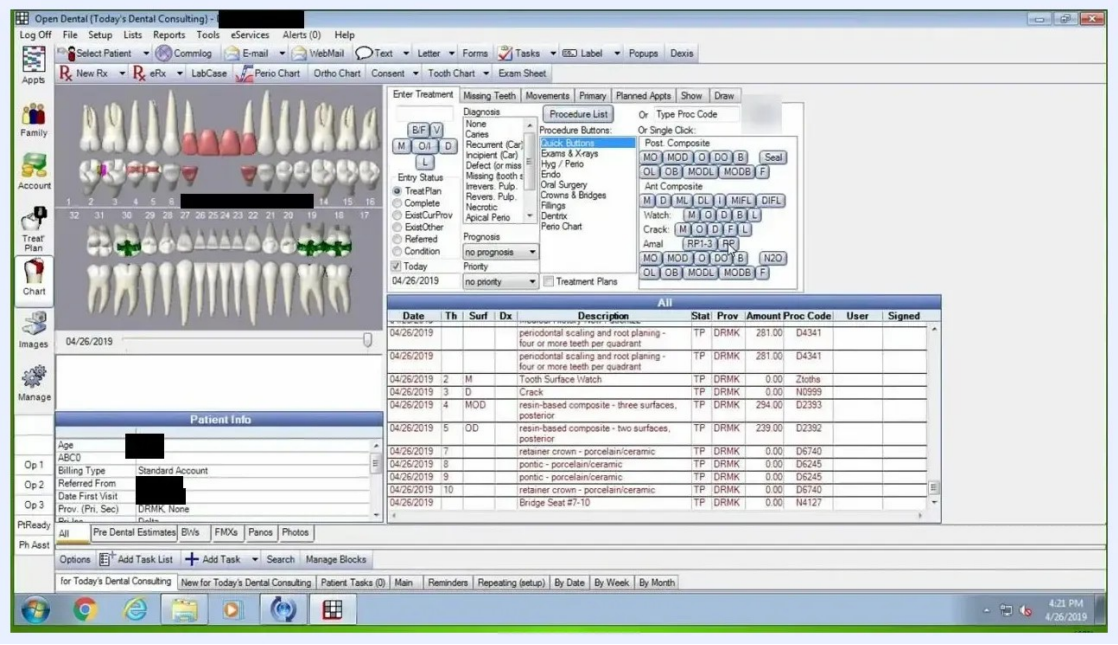
Step 14: Return to quick buttons for periodontal treatment

Switch back to the **Quick Buttons** panel in the **Procedure Buttons** section. Some hygiene procedures may be listed under sections labeled for other procedures, such as **amalgam**.

To enter scaling and root planing for all four quadrants:

1. Locate the **RP** (root planing) button.
2. Click **RP** four times.

Each click adds a separate entry labeled "periodontal scaling and root planing - four or more teeth per quadrant" with the appropriate code (for example, D4341).



Treatment plan list with four periodontal scaling and root planing entries, the bridge on teeth 7 to 10, and quick buttons visible

Step 15: Specify the quadrant when you start treatment

When you begin performing the treatment, for example by marking a procedure as started or completed, Open Dental prompts you to specify the quadrant for the periodontal scaling and root planing. Select the appropriate quadrant when prompted.

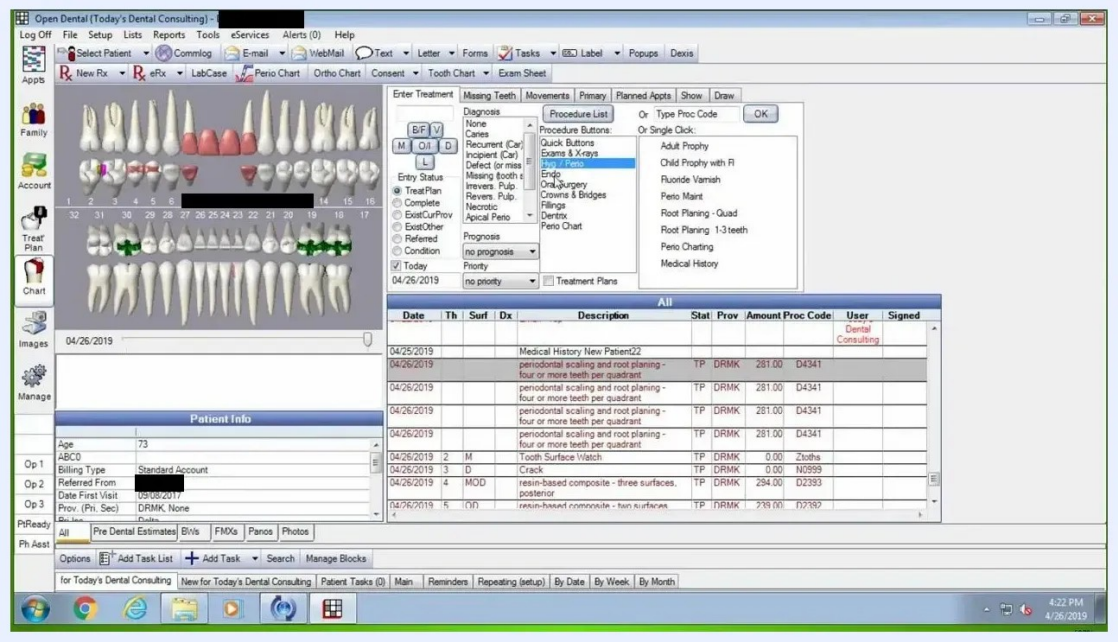
Step 16: Review the treatment plan list

Confirm that all procedures, including the bridge and the periodontal treatments, are correctly listed. Scroll through the list if necessary to verify every entry. Also check that the planned procedures appear on the tooth chart.

Step 17: Enter endodontic procedures

1. Select the teeth you want to treat.

2. Select the **Endo** category. The right panel displays options such as **RCT** (root canal therapy), **Endo/Post/PorcCr**, and **Endo/Post/PFM**.



Endo procedures in the right panel with teeth selected in the chart

Step 18: Apply Endo/Post/PFM

Click **Endo/Post/PFM** to apply a root canal, post, and porcelain-fused-to-metal crown to the selected teeth. Open Dental recognizes the type of each tooth (for example, bicuspid or molar) and applies the correct procedure code. The treatment history table updates with the correct codes and descriptions for each selected tooth.



Treatment history updated with endodontic and crown procedures for the selected teeth

Step 19: Review the updated treatment history

The table now lists multiple procedures, including endodontic therapy for anterior, premolar, and molar teeth, plus PFM crowns and seats. Verify that the correct teeth, procedure codes, and amounts are displayed.



Expanded treatment history listing multiple procedures

Step 20: Enlarge the treatment history table

Click once on the treatment history table to expand it. This lets you review all procedures at a glance and is helpful for quickly verifying or editing multiple entries.



Treatment history table enlarged for easier review

Step 21: Collapse the table to return to the standard view

Click the treatment history table once more to toggle it back to its original, smaller size. You can switch between the expanded and standard views as needed to manage screen space and focus on different parts of the patient chart.



Open Dental with the treatment history table in standard view, showing the tooth chart, patient information, and procedure list

Summary

You now know how to use quick buttons in Open Dental to chart missing teeth, existing restorations, watches, cracks, planned restorations, bridges, periodontal scaling and root planing, and endodontic procedures. You also know how to review the results in the treatment plan list and treatment history.

What's next

- Review your **Procedure Buttons** panel regularly so it reflects the services your office provides.
- Before you enter data, check that the correct status (existing or planned) is selected.
- Verify that every planned procedure appears both on the tooth chart and in the treatment plan list.