

Snap!

The instant answer to a sexier smile

WE'VE had everything from acrylic nails to hair extensions. Now the latest must-have accessory is... instant teeth. Just like the false nails you have glued over your own to create a perfectly manicured hand, these are a specially-crafted set of ultra-thin acrylic false teeth that slip over your own, adding instant Hollywood glamour to a lacklustre smile.

So, if you're curious about getting your teeth whitened, or contemplating a spend of up to £1,000 a tooth for permanent veneers — or if you just want to be able to wear a dazzling smile for special occasions — these could be just the thing. The snap-on smile can last for years if properly cared for. You can't eat with them, but they are kept clean with a regular toothbrush and toothpaste and stored in a little box.

To prepare for my acquisition of a perfect set of gnashers, imprints of my teeth are taken. This takes less than half an hour and the moulds are then sent to a specialist dental laboratory in the US where a set of acrylic covers is

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painstakingly crafted. Closing the gap between my front teeth was, I'm told, a huge technical challenge.

Fitting the covers, three weeks later, takes a few minutes. Dr Uchenna Okoye, who performs this task, wrinkles her nose a bit because while the acrylics fit neatly over my teeth, they bulk out my upper lip a bit more than necessary.

At first I can't pronounce the letter S without slurring, but I'm soon talking properly. I actually think they are rather fabulous. They're a couple of shades lighter than my real teeth and they photograph brilliantly — but others aren't so sure. My husband, not usually the most observant man, recoils when I smile winningly at him and shouts: "WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO YOUR TEETH?"

No one else notices until I point them out. One friend said they were a bit goofy, then dug himself into a hole by saying he thought I'd lost weight and maybe that made my teeth appear more prominent.

My daughter Beth looked hard at them, then gasped, "Your teeth are all square!" and burst into giggles.

By the evening I was feeling more at home with my new smile and took it out for drinks with colleagues. (You can't eat wearing snap-on teeth — "They're just for smiling, really," says Dr Okoye).

Again, people failed to notice and then I bumped into a sharp-eyed friend who I've known for 20 years. "What on earth have you done now?" she asked, characteristically blunt. "Because whatever it is, it makes you look like a horse."

I guess you can't please, or fool, everyone. These are easy to use and they're fun, but for a serious, long-term improvement, real veneers are the only answer.

● Snap-on Smile, from £550 at the Gloucester Road Smile Centre (020 7373 374, londonsmiling.com)

