

# PEARLS

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## Seating an Archwire into a Self-Ligating Bracket for Initial Alignment

**W**hen a tooth is overlapped by an adjacent tooth at the start of treatment, I sometimes have trouble seating even a superelastic archwire far enough into the bracket for “self-ligation”. Full access with an instrument may be impossible because of tooth interference. I solve this problem by using the following “floss technique”.

Heavier, waxed dental floss works best. I thread the floss through on the gingival side of the wire and “floss” it through the interproximal contact of the overlapping teeth. Next, I pass the labial portion of the floss over the incisal side of the wire. This usually allows me to pull the wire completely into the slot from the lingual.

The photograph shows the technique being used on an upper right lateral incisor, but it works equally well with posterior teeth. In this case, the wire was then easily inserted into the canine bracket.\* In a more challenging situation, I ligate the least accessible bracket first. If that doesn't work, an elastomeric thread may need to be used until the teeth are better aligned.



WILLIAM M. MONTGOMERY, DMD, MS  
989 Brighton Ave.  
Portland, ME 04102

\*In-Ovation, GAC International, Inc., 355 Knickerbocker Ave., Bohemia, NY 11716; www.gacintl.com.