

**CLINICAL
SECTION**

Clinical pearl

TN3 – a bracket positioning instrument

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Positioning orthodontic brackets is a task most clinicians like to do as quickly and accurately as possible. When using the direct bonding technique the choice of instruments is either a measuring device or one of several hand-held dental instruments not usually designed for the task, ranging from a flat plastic to a probe. The TN3™ bracket positioning instrument* was designed specifically for the purpose of positioning orthodontic brackets and cleaning up the excess composite.

It is a simple double-ended hand held instrument (Figure 1) with a bracket positioning blade at one end and a composite cleaning end at the other. It enables the operator to quickly manipulate the orthodontic brackets into the ideal position on the tooth, and then by turning the instrument around allows the excess composite to be removed.

Once the bracket is placed on the tooth it can easily be manipulated into the desired position using either the tip (Figure 2) or the lower edge of the blade (Figure 3) located within the bracket slot. Once the bracket is in the desired position it is compressed against the tooth surface to express any excess adhesive from under the bracket. The 'TN3' can be used to manipulate brackets

with either an 0.018" or 0.022" slot without binding in the slot when lifted away because the 'TN3' blade is parallel sided. The 45° angulation of the blade end of the instrument allows the operator to use the tip of the blade to manipulate brackets on the anterior and premolar teeth, as well those displaced from the line of the arch (Figure 2).

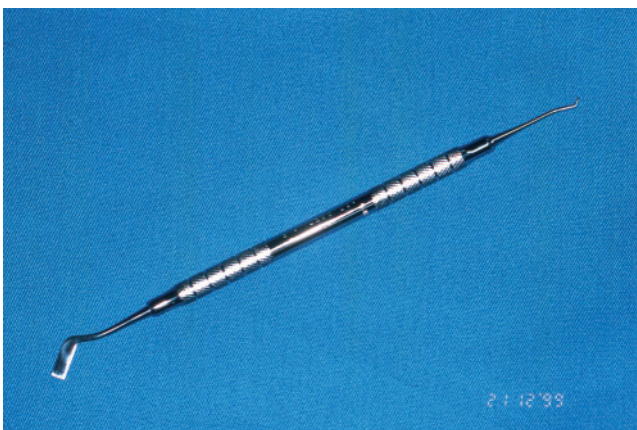


Figure 1 The TN3 has a blade at one end for positioning the brackets, and a small curved end at the other for the removal of excess composite

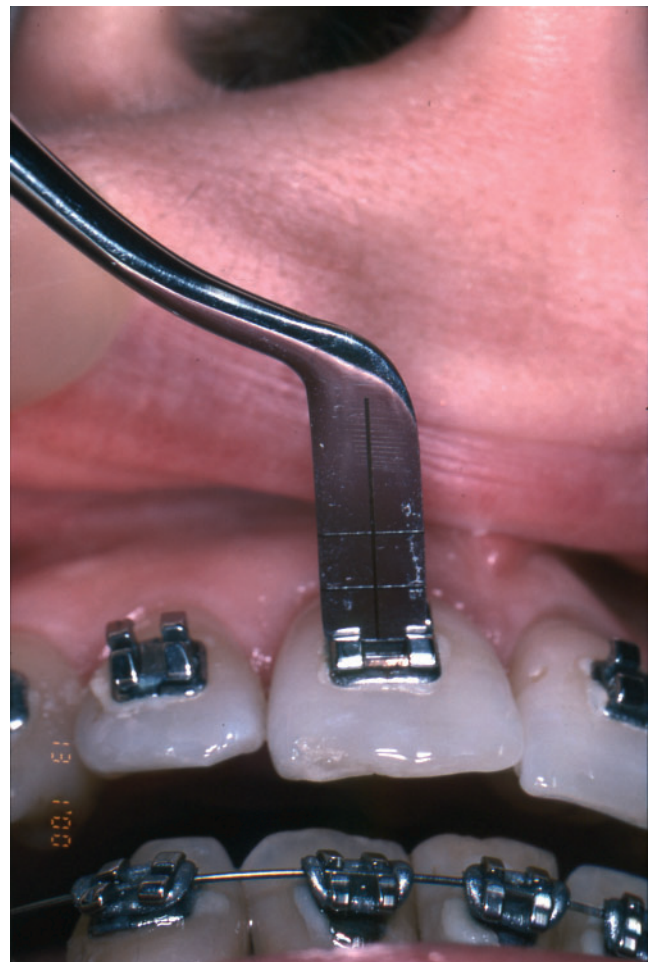


Figure 2 The tip of the blade end placed in the slot can be used to manipulate the bracket on any tooth

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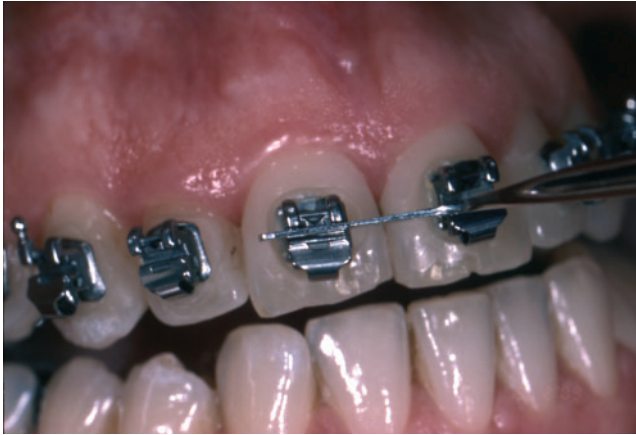


Figure 3 The lower edge of the blade can be used to manipulate the bracket using the slot, act as a horizontal reference line in relation to the crown of the tooth, align the slot parallel with the incisal edge of the tooth, or line up the slot of the bracket with the adjacent one

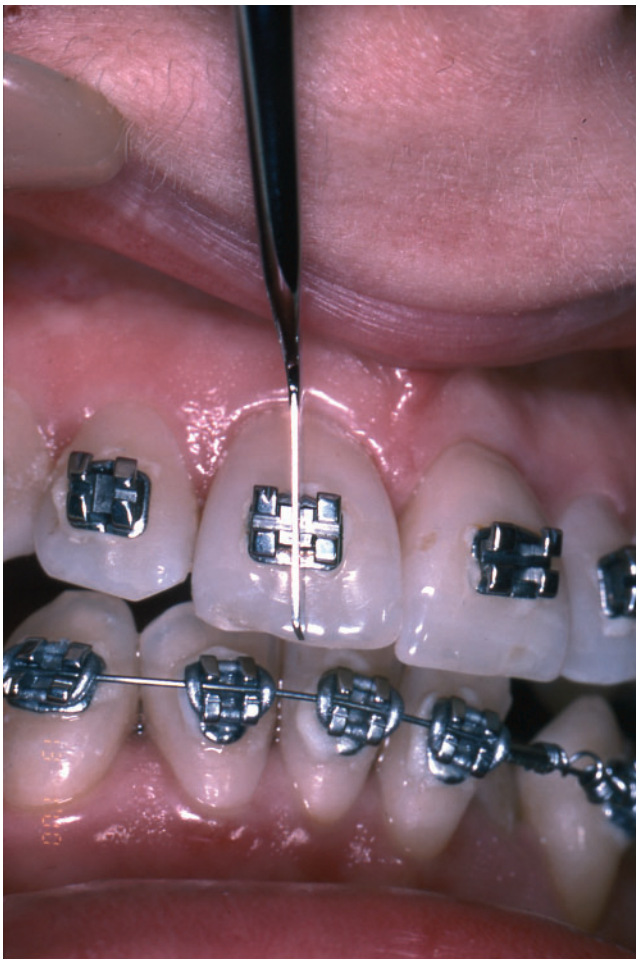


Figure 4 The blade can also be positioned vertically to manipulate the bracket or used as a vertical reference line in relation to the crown of the tooth. (By permission of J. Clin Orthod)

*GAC International Inc., 355 Knickerbocker Avenue, Bohemia, New York, 11716-3103 USA
The author acknowledges a financial interest in the TN3.

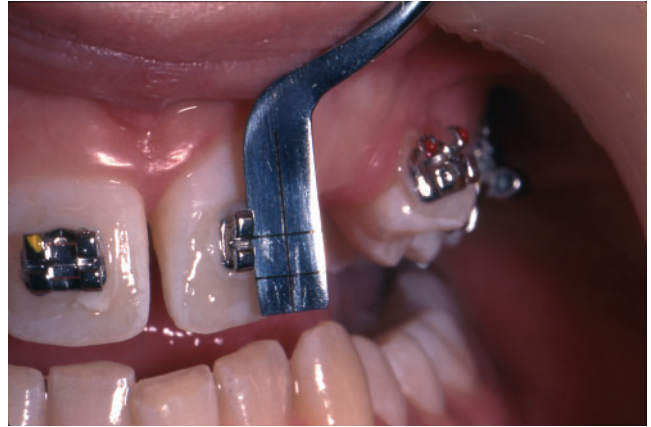


Figure 5 On the flat surface of the TN3 blade are three reference lines to help position the brackets by referencing any part of the structure of the bracket to any edge of the tooth

The long axis of the blade can also be used to quickly reference the horizontal (Figure 3) and vertical (Figure 4) axis of the tooth to assist with accurate bracket placement.

The flat surface of the blade end has three reference lines which can be used to quickly assess the position of the bracket in relation to any edge of the tooth (Figure 5). It also allows the operator to compare the position of the brackets on two similar teeth.

Once the operator is happy with the position of the bracket excess adhesive can be removed with the small cleaning end on the opposite end of the instrument (Figure 6), which is manufactured as a flat edge.



Figure 6 Once the bracket is in position any excess composite can be removed from around the bracket base using the cleaning end of the TN3. (By permission of J Clin Orthod)