Die Another Day

What is your favorite die material and why?

That was the question we asked five randomly selected Certified Dental Technicians after Rick Knecht, CDT, e-mailed us this question to pose to his fellow CDTs in this month’s Tech Savvy. “With the emphasis on precision, expansion, hardness, durability and working properties of die material, what is your preference and why? I am currently using Die-Keen and Miles Stone. Poly-Die by Vident is nice to work with too.”

William Fletcher, CDT

Fletcher is a lab technician at LAH Dental Lab, an in-house laboratory at a dentist’s office in Greenville, S.C. He became certified in crown and bridge in 1978.

“We have used Silky Rock (by Whip Mix) for about 20 years because of the consistent fit of copings and gold work and it’s prepackaged (no need to measure). It can be used with any impression material – polyvinyl (rubber base), hydrocolloid or alginate (for opposing models). The Stalite is a liquid that increases the hardness and smoothness of die stone. It is used in place of water and does not affect the expansion.”

Gary Clark, CDT

Clark is the owner of Clark Ceramics Laboratory in Winston-Salem, N.C. He became certified in ceramics in 1980.

“We use Die-Keen. That’s the only one we use because we hardly ever had a need for an epoxy here and it would go bad before we could use it. Die Keen is easy to use. It doesn’t require anything special to use. It’s hard enough that we can do anything we need to do; yet it’s soft enough to trim. We’ve used the same material for 15 years. (Cost) doesn’t really matter all that much to me. If something works for me, I don’t think about cost that much.”
Stephen Garber, CDT

Garber is the owner of Miles Dental Studio in Phoenix, Ariz. He became certified in ceramics in 1977.

“I use Whip Mix’s Prima-Rock because of its accuracy. We use the water powder ratio and Prima Rock is accurate. (Accuracy is more important than cost) because then I don’t have remakes and that costs me money in the long run. It’s the only die material I’ve used for the last three or four years.”

Roger Hoot, CDT

Hoot is the owner of Dental Arts Laboratory, Inc., in Laotto, Ind. He became certified in ceramics in 1979.

“I like Miles Stone. Heraeus Kulzer makes it under the name Modern Materials. We use the light buff color. Since it’s sort of a light yellow, it tends to work better when you’re working on all-ceramic porcelain units. It’s a very strong material and has all of the other desirable characteristics. I’ve been using Miles Stone for about three years. We started about the same time we went to all-ceramic porcelain units. The light color helps make a good presentation. The dentist can take the model and show it to the patient. For that reason we steam clean those models.”