

# A simple technique for marking the ala-tragal line

Suresh Nayar, BDS, MDS<sup>a</sup>

Charles Clifford Dental Hospital, Sheffield, United Kingdom

During complete denture fabrication, it is often necessary to use facial landmarks to assist in the proper contouring of the occlusion rims. One of the parameters in determining the maxillomandibular relationship is identification of the occlusal plane. This may be achieved by using an occlusal plane guide, which, after adequate and proper contouring of the maxillary occlusion rim, is made parallel to the Camper's plane<sup>1</sup> (ala-tragal line). Rough visualization of the ala-tragal line is a method of determining parallelism of the wax occlusion rim with the Camper's plane, but this may be difficult to determine when holding a ruler with one hand and attempting to keep it stationary. A simple, quick, and predictable method of visualizing the Camper's plane is proposed in this article.

## PROCEDURE

1. Take a piece of string and immerse it in a container of talcum powder or plaster of Paris (Surgical plaster; BPB Formula, Newark, UK), after verifying that the patient is not allergic to the substance.
2. Hold the string with the incorporated talcum powder/plaster of Paris against the patient's cheek at the level of the ala-tragal line and press it against the skin. Remove the string in a clean motion. Repeat on the other side of the face.
3. The marked line is then compared with the occlusal plane guide (Fig. 1). Adjust the wax occlusal rim accordingly.
4. Remove the marked line with a piece of gauze.

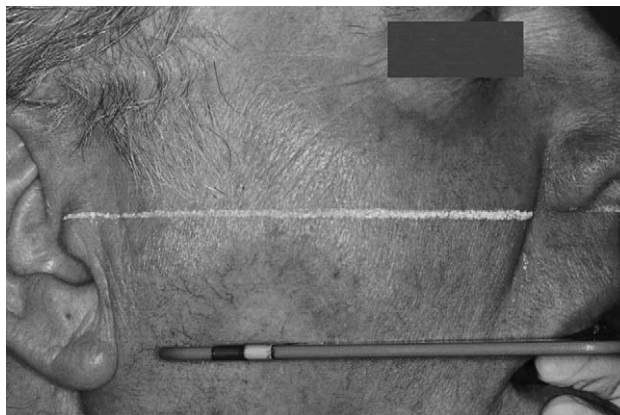


Fig 1. Ala-tragal line marked on side of patient's cheek.

## REFERENCE

1. The glossary of prosthodontic terms. *J Prosthet Dent* 1999;81:56-7.

Reprint requests to:

DR SURESH NAYAR  
DEPARTMENT OF RESTORATIVE DENTISTRY  
CHARLES CLIFFORD DENTAL HOSPITAL  
WELLESLEY RD  
SHEFFIELD  
UNITED KINGDOM  
S10 2SZ  
FAX: +44 114 271 7993  
E-MAIL: [suresh.nayar@sth.nhs.uk](mailto:suresh.nayar@sth.nhs.uk)

0022-3913/\$30.00

Copyright © 2005 by The Editorial Council of *The Journal of Prosthetic Dentistry*.

doi:10.1016/j.prosdent.2005.05.028

<sup>a</sup>Specialist Registrar, Department of Restorative Dentistry.  
*J Prosthet Dent* 2005;94:304.