1. Palodent
   Dentsply/Caulk

2. Composi-Tight Gold
   Garrison Dental Solutions

3. Contact Matrix
   Danville Materials

4. Composi-Tight
   Garrison Dental Solutions

5. Hawe Supermat/Hawe Adapt SuperCap Matrix
   KerrHawe

6a. HO Bands
    Young

6b. Omni-Matrix
    Ultradent
Unless you have eliminated direct restorations from your repertoire, you will need a product that will provide a temporary wall against which a material can polymerize. This is the basic function of a matrix. While your choice used to be confined to which size band you were going to place into the Tofflemire retainer, the current offerings come in a variety of forms, including self-retained, metal or plastic, regular or pre-contoured, sectional or circumferential.

**Composition**

**Metal**

Typically easier to use and thinner than plastic ones. Due to their malleability, metal bands can usually be sealed at the gingival margin more completely to prevent overhangs and are less likely to lose their contour if aggressively wedged. They can also be burnished against the adjacent tooth to help overcome less than ideal tooth contours.

**Plastic**

The main advantage of the clear plastic matrices is the ability to cure the gingival increment of composite from a position other than the occlusal. Since some researchers believe composite will “shrink toward the light” source (although recent studies refute this theory), curing from a position other than occlusal has been thought to reverse the direction of this shrinkage and thereby reduce microleakage at the more susceptible gingival margin. (It is more susceptible to microleakage due to being in cementum or in poor quality enamel.)

However, the studies showing improved marginal integrity with clear bands (and light-reflecting wedges) are in vitro, have variable results, and do not take into account the contemporary adhesives which are much more effective in resisting polymerization shrinkage. Consequently, we still favor pre-contoured metal matrices for their ease of use and predictability.

### Matrices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Thicknesses</th>
<th>Sizes (occlusogingivally)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Palodent Dentsply/Caulk</td>
<td>$0.36–$0.60</td>
<td>Mini: 0.0015in/38µ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Regular: 0.0015–0.002in/38–51µ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Plus: 0.002in/51µ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$6.03–$9.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mini: 5.0mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Regular: 6.0mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Plus: 9.0mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composi-Tight Gold</td>
<td>$0.35–$0.70</td>
<td>0.0013in/33µ</td>
<td>Pedodontic: 4.0mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garrison Dental Solutions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Small: 4.5mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$16.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>Extended Small: 5.5mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Standard: 6.0mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Large: 8.5mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Matrix Danville Materials</td>
<td>$0.33–$0.60</td>
<td>Stiff: 0.0022in/58µ</td>
<td>Small: 5.5mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Thin: 0.0015in/38µ</td>
<td>Large: 6.5mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$8.48</td>
<td></td>
<td>Subgingival: 8.6mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composi-Tight Gold</td>
<td>$0.35–$0.70</td>
<td>0.0012–0.0014in/30–36µ</td>
<td>Pedodontic: 4.0mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garrison Dental Solutions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Small: 4.5mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$16.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>Extended Small: 5.5mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Regular: 6.0mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Large: 8.5mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawe Supermat/ Hawe Adapt SuperCap Matrix KerrHawe</td>
<td>$0.95</td>
<td>0.0015in/38µ</td>
<td>Pedodontic: 5.0mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
<td>Regular: 6.3mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HO Bands Young HO Bands Young</td>
<td>$0.26–$0.29</td>
<td>0.001in/25µ</td>
<td>Pedodontic: 5.0mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
<td>Universal: 6.5mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>MOD Wide: 9.5mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omni-Matrix Ultradent</td>
<td>$0.90</td>
<td>Included in band cost</td>
<td>Pedodontic: 4.5mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Thin: 0.001in/25µ</td>
<td>Regular: 6.3mm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Retainers
Conventional matrix retainers are not always needed or desirable since overtightening of a matrix band may cause compression of the cusps. When the band is loosened, this releasing of pressure may allow the cusps to rebound with resulting microleakage. It may also cause the cusps to be bonded together under stress and may be responsible for postoperative sensitivity as well as cuspal fractures. In addition, normal Tofflemire-type retainers may tear or deform the less rigid bands in this category.

On the other hand, retaining rings, which are used in conjunction with sectional matrices, are very important in providing stability for the band as well as separating force to ensure tight contacts.

Prewedging
Achieving a positive contact with all the bands can usually be enhanced by prewedging the restoration and by holding the band tightly against the adjacent tooth with an instrument during curing. However, prewedging can also have deleterious effects on the papilla. Prewedging is not necessary when using a sectional band with a retaining ring.

Sectional Matrices
For the most part, these bands are only necessary when there is no proximal contact, since one of their main purposes is making the restoration of that contact predictable. In other words, if your preparation is very conservative and does not break contact, a more conventional Tofflemire-like matrix is quite satisfactory, less expensive, and easier to place. These bands are difficult to insert if the contact is not broken.

But assuming the Class II lesion or previous defective restoration is wide enough to require opening the contact, these bands will be quite helpful. Your first task is to select the size band that best fits the tooth you are restoring. The small bands are especially helpful for premolars, the standard size fits most molars, and the large bands come in handy when the gingival wall extends onto the root surface.

An individual matrix is used for each proximal box, meaning two are necessary for an MOD restoration. Once you have the matrix in position (with concave edge toward gingiva, notched edge or dimple at occlusal), wedge passively. This wedge is merely placed to eliminate overhangs, not to separate the teeth for a more positive contact. Therefore, place the wedge with just enough pressure to keep the band against the gingival margin. It is sometimes helpful to cut the wedge short so it does not protrude from the gingival embrasure. Cutting the wedge short prepares the area for placement of the retaining ring.

Using a rubber dam or dedicated forceps, engage the bow of the retaining ring and exert opening pressure, which will separate the tines. Once the tines are positioned over the proximal line angles, the expansion pressure from the rubber dam forceps is released, allowing the ring to grab the matrix and hold it against the tooth. This placement of the tines not only minimizes or eliminates excess composite at the line angles, but also exerts pressure on the band against the adjacent tooth to produce a positive and tight contact.

The small rings would be used typically for premolars while the rings with long tines would be used primarily for molars. However, select the ring based on the occlusogingival dimension of the restoration, regardless of what type of tooth is being restored. Once the band and ring are placed, aggressively burnish the contact area against the adjacent tooth surface with the convex back surface of a spoon excavator or any other instrument of your choosing.

Even though there are subtle differences between the brands, they all work similarly. Since the retaining ring can be adjusted, use adjusting pliers to open or close the tines to better fit the tooth if necessary. However, our experience shows adjusting the rings is rarely necessary. Assuming the ring and band are stable, burnish it to further refine its shape and to assure a tight contact. This whole process may sound confusing and laborious, but once learned, progresses quickly and produces a superb contact. However, due to the contour of the bands, composite placement is sometimes more difficult at the gingival floor. Extra care must be taken to prevent voids.

Since they are precut and contoured, it is sometimes difficult to get a sectional matrix through a tight contact, especially if the contact has not been opened during the preparation. However, if you anticipate this problem, the retaining ring can sometimes be placed at the beginning of the procedure, assuming it doesn’t interfere with the cavity preparation. This is one of the main reasons for the elongated bow design by one manufacturer. In this way, the ring will apply pressure at the contact for the time it takes to prepare the cavity and may be able to provide enough separation to allow the matrix to be placed without a problem.

If you still can’t get the matrix through the contact, a conventional band, being thinner and longer, can be see-sawed through it. Once it is in proper position, it can be cut to a convenient length. A retaining ring can also be used with a section of a conventional Tofflemire-type band.

NOTE
Numerous examples of the placement techniques for different matrices are presented in The Techniques, Volume 1.
**RAVES & RANTS**

+ The original sectional matrix
+ Curvature is still the best
- BiTine II not very helpful
- Plus size is difficult to use

**Description**
Kidney-shaped and convex in both faciolingual and occlusogingival aspects. Autoclavable and Chemiclavable.

**Thicknesses**
- Mini: 0.0015in/38µ
- Regular: 0.0015-0.002in/38-51µ
- Plus: 0.002in/51µ

**Sizes (occlusogingivally)**
- Mini: 5mm
- Regular: 6mm
- Plus: 9mm

**Retainer**
Called BiTine Ring. The original version is circular, 19mm in diameter, and exerts substantial force against the adjacent tooth. The BiTine II is more oval in shape and elongated so it can be placed over the tooth to be prepared without interfering with access to the preparation. It also applies less force to the adjacent tooth, a property that could be important if the tooth is periodontally compromised. In addition, there are two notches near the tines for easier engagement with the rubber dam forceps. The actual metal for both rings is rectangular in cross-section.

**Placement Forceps**
Almost identical to Ivory rubber dam forceps, except that the ends, which engage the BiTine ring, have a very slight concavity to more securely hold the ring. They also open slightly wider.

**Packaging**
Small plastic case with rear-hinged lid. The bottom of the case has a piece of foam, which secures the BiTine rings as well as small plastic jars holding the matrices.

**Directions**
Plain paper in five languages, annoying foldout design, and coated paper foldout. The latter features step-by-step, black & white (blue-toned) photos demonstrating its proper use on a manikin. Overall, well-done, but there is a suggestion to place the loop of the BiTine Ring mesially so it can function as a “convenient finger rest” during tooth preparation. However, the loop can definitely interfere with access to the preparation. The paper version basically echoes the foldout.

---

**Complete Kit**
Cost: $114.15/200 ($0.57ea)
Includes:
- 100 Standard Matrices
- 50 Mini-Matrices
- 50 Plus Matrices
- 4 Original Round BiTine Rings
- 2 BiTine II Oval Rings

**Refills:**
- $36.00 for 100 Standard Matrices ($0.36 ea)
- $24.10 for 50 Mini-Matrices ($0.48 ea)
- $30.00 for 50 Plus Matrices ($0.60 ea)
- $24.10 for 4 Original BiTine Rings ($6.03 ea)
- $18.00 for 2 BiTine II Rings ($9.00 ea)
- $52.50 BiTine Ring Placement Forceps
Description
Kidney-shaped and convex in both faciolingual and occlusogingival aspects. Have an electroplated gold coating, with the standard and small sizes being 16% longer. Autoclavable and Chemiclavable.

Thickness
0.0013in/33µ

Sizes (occlusogingivally)
Pedodontic 4.0mm
(Small 4.5mm
Extended Small 5.5mm
Standard 6.0mm
Large 8.5mm

The 8.5mm bands are basically the standard size with a gingival extension for deep proximal lesions. However, it is difficult placing this band if the lesion is subgingival (it is not rigid enough to displace the tissue).

Retainer
Called Gold G-Rings. Made from stainless steel with an electropolished gold finish, they are circular in shape, 23mm in diameter, and the actual metal is oval in cross-section. Available with short and long tines and have flattened ends to prevent accidental dislodgment. Whereas the original G-Ring metal has a diameter about 1.4mm, the oval Gold version has a height of 2.2mm, making it stiffer and allowing it to provide greater separating force. When separated widely, will rebound very well to its original tightness.

However, unlike the original version, the ends of the tines have an extended flattened area with sharp edges that could damage tooth structure or even soft tissue. We suggest smoothing these sharp edges with a stone before using them.

Placement Forceps
Look like Ivory rubber dam forceps, except that the ends, which engage the G-ring, are shorter and have a definitive reverse curve to more securely hold the ring. They also open the G-ring wider for easier insertion over teeth. Can be used with other rings too. Exactly the same as the original version, except for the gold handle.

Packaging
The complete kit comes in a divided black plastic box with a rear-hinged lid. It is well organized and allows easy selection of both the bands and rings. A chart is on the back of the lid for identification of the different bands, but this identification is by product number, not by description, which would be more helpful. The kit is placed inside a plastic black tray which holds the forceps as well. However, when the forceps are autoclaved, you probably won’t use this tray.

Directions
Coated paper, step-by-step, include six color illustrations. These instructions are initially wrapped around the kit but could possibly be torn in the process when removing it from the kit itself. However, it tells you to break contact to use the bands instead of advising you to use another type of band if breaking contact is not necessary.

Cost: $221.00/250 ($0.88 ea)
Includes:
- 3 standard Gold G-Rings
- 3 long tine Gold G-Rings
- 100 standard Gold bands
- 100 small Gold bands
- 25 large Gold bands
- 25 extended small Gold bands
- Ring Placement Forceps

Refills:
$48.00 for 3 G-Rings ($16.00 ea)
$35.00 for 100 small or standard bands ($0.35 ea)
$35.00 for 50 extended small, large or pedodontic bands ($0.70 ea)
Kidney-shaped and convex in both faciolingual and occlusogingival aspects. Autoclavable and Chemiclavable.

**Thicknesses**
- **Stiff Flex** 0.0022in/58µ
- **Thin Flex** 0.0015in/38µ

**Sizes (occlusogingivally)**
- **Small** 5.5mm
- **Large** 6.5mm
- **Subgingival** 8.6mm

**Retainer**
Called Contact Rings. Made from stainless steel, they are circular with a diameter of 19.3mm, are very stiff for tighter contacts, and come in standard and reverse tines for easier placement on either side of a preparation. The standard is silver while the reverse is gold-plated for quick identification. Use the one that fits your specific preparation better. Rectangular in cross-section. However, when separated widely, they do not rebound very well.

**Contact Ring Pliers**
Called Contact Ring Pliers Plus, this instrument looks like a very heavy duty Ivory rubber dam forceps, except that the ends, which engage the Contact Ring, are shorter and bent outward slightly, and are serrated for better retention. They also work with all rings.

**Matrix Pliers**
Called Mega Grip, these are stainless steel forceps designed mainly to remove sectional matrices, but can also be used for placement. Contra-angle serrated jaws operate forward and backward instead of side to side. At rest, jaws are open. Using a palm grasp, squeeze the handles to close the jaws on the matrix to grab and remove it. Release the pressure and they open again, releasing the matrix. This instrument is heavy duty and resembles wire cutters more than cotton pliers. There is a single flat metal bar that provides the necessary separation between the arms of the forceps. Autoclavable. Packaged in a small envelope-style plastic pouch with one blue side and one clear side, with a clear, tuck-in flap to secure the forceps.

**Packaging**
Plastic box with rear-hinged lid and a divided white plastic tray segregating the contents. It is well organized and allows easy selection of both the bands and rings. The bands themselves are in small plastic boxes.

**Directions**
Small coated paper booklet with seven color photos showing the use of the system on a model. Information is well-presented if rather brief. There are also four line drawings on a label adhered to the inside of the clear plastic lid.
**Description**

Kidney-shaped and convex in both faciolingual and occlusogingival aspects. Autoclavable and Chemi-clavable.

**Thicknesses**

0.0012 in - 0.0014 in / 30 - 36 µ

**Sizes (occlusogingivally)**

- **Pedodontic**
  - 4.0 mm
  - (we did not receive these for verification)
- **Small**
  - 4.5 mm
- **Extended Small**
  - 5.5 mm
  - (we did not receive these for verification)
- **Regular**
  - 6.0 mm
- **Large**
  - 8.5 mm

The 8.5 mm bands are basically the standard size with a gingival extension for deep proximal lesions. However, it is difficult placing this band if the lesion is subgingival (it is not rigid enough to displace the tissue).

---

**Retainer**

Called G-Rings. Made from polished stainless steel, they are circular in shape, 23.6 mm in diameter, and the actual metal is circular in cross-section. Available with short and long tines and have flattened ends to prevent accidental dislodgment. They are made with a round wire to permit placement of the tines alongside the wedge instead of on top of it. When separated widely, they will rebound reasonably well to their original tightness.

**Placement Forceps**

Look like Ivory rubber dam forceps, except that the ends, which engage the G-ring, are shorter and have a definitive reverse curve to more securely hold the ring. They also open the G-ring wider for easier insertion over teeth. Can be used with other rings too.

**Packaging**

The complete kit comes in a divided black plastic box with a clear plastic, rear-hinged lid. It is well organized and allows easy selection of both the bands and rings.

**Directions**

Coated paper, step-by-step, include two-color illustrations. However, it tells you to break contact to use the bands instead of advising you to use another type of band if breaking contact is not necessary.

---

**Cost:** $211.00/225 ($0.94 ea)

**Includes:**
- 4 standard G-Rings
- 3 long tine G-Rings
- 100 standard bands
- 100 small bands
- 25 large bands
- Ring Placement Forceps

**Refills:**
- $48.00 for 3 G-Rings ($16.00 ea)
- $35.00 for 100 small or standard bands ($0.35 ea)
- $35.00 for 50 large, extended small, or pedodontic bands ($0.70 ea)

**RAVES & RANTS**

- Easier to get ring over tooth
- Bands are not as rigid as Palodent
- Contacts not quite as automatic as Palodent
- Rings are expensive

**The Ratings**

4
Matrices

Hawe Supermat/Hawe Adapt SuperCap Matrix
KerrHawe

**RAVES & RANTS**
- No retainer
- Nice contour on bands
- Learning curve with tightener
- Difficult to get bands through tight contacts

**Description**
Matrices with an attached plastic spool that is tightened with a special tool to secure the band around the tooth you are restoring. No additional matrix retainer is necessary. Available in metal or Mylar.

**Thickness**
0.0015in/38µ

**Sizes (occlusogingivally)**
- Pedo 5.0mm
- Regular 6.3mm

**Retainer**
Attached spool.

**Use**
Place the matrix around the tooth, using the tightener to secure it. The tightener has a blue plastic handle that fits comfortably in your hand. Immediately in front of the handle is a circular knob that slides forward to open the “jaws” of the instrument. These “jaws” engage the spool of the band. Once engaged, you move the knob back to lock the “jaws” onto the band. Then, after the band is in place on the tooth, rotate the knob to tighten the band and then move it forward to disengage the tightener from the band. Even though this seems cumbersome, it really isn’t after minimal practice. After use, loosen the auto-lock spool and remove the band.

**Packaging**
Divided white plastic tray with recesses for the various sizes of bands and the tightener. Clear plastic cover. Each recess is clearly marked for the size of the band.

**Directions**
Plain paper, four languages. Easy to follow, good hints on use. There is also a plastic-coated card featuring color illustrations on how to place and remove the bands. Somewhat helpful, but the lack of words obstructs its full utilization.

**Introductory Package**
Cost: $165.85/20 ($8.29 ea)
Includes:
- 5 Metal (5mm hgt., 0.03mm thick)
- 5 Metal (6.3mm hgt., 0.03mm thick)
- 5 Clear (5mm hgt., 0.03mm thick)
- 5 Clear (6.3mm hgt., 0.03mm thick)
- 1 Superlock Tensioning Instrument

**Refills**
Cost: $47.35/50 ($0.95 ea)

HO Bands
Young

**RAVES & RANTS**
- Virtually no learning curve
- Inexpensive
- Still requires heavy wedging
- Can create overly flat contours

**Description**
Conventional Tofflemire-like design. They are available in regular and deadsoft.

**Regular**
Cost: $26.00/100 ($0.26 ea)

**Deadsoft**
Cost: $28.95/100 ($0.29 ea)

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White plastic, disposable, Tofflemire-like matrix retainer with an integral metal band. It has a clean, contemporary appearance and weighs 0.1oz compared to 0.5oz for a conventional Tofflemire-type retainer. Has been improved from original design by being much stronger — it holds the bands very tightly.

**Thickness**
0.001in/25µ

**Sizes (occlusogingivally)**
- #13 Pedo 5.0mm
- #1 Universal 6.5mm
- #2 MOD Wide 9.5mm

**Retainer**
None.

**Packaging**
Small cardboard box specifically designed for dispensing one band at a time. Color-coding on the boxes differentiates between regular and deadsoft.

**Directions**
None.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>RAVES &amp; RANTS</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✨ Ultimate in asepsis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✨ Good selection of sizes and thicknesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>🎨 Expensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>🎨 Retainer still gets in the way</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description**
White plastic, disposable, Tofflemire-like matrix retainer with an integral metal band. It has a clean, contemporary appearance and weighs 0.1oz compared to 0.5oz for a conventional Tofflemire-type retainer. Has been improved from original design by being much stronger — it holds the bands very tightly.

**Thicknesses**
0.001in/25µ
0.0015in/38µ

**Sizes (occlusogingivally)**
- Pedo 4.5mm
- Regular 6.3mm

**Retainer**
Looks like a solid white Tofflemire, with a color-coded tightening knob. The front end has a unique swivel that can be locked in either a left or right position or merely allowed to assume its most natural position when tightened around a tooth. There are also two plastic projections at the very end of the tip of the matrix, immediately adjacent to the exit slot of the band. These projections help stabilize and orient the swivel against the tooth when the matrix is not locked.

**Use**
Works similar to a Tofflemire. If you want to lock it, swivel the head all the way to the right or the left and push on the locking device. The tip will snap into the locked position. Then place the matrix over the tooth and tighten just like you would a Tofflemire. After the preparation is filled, loosen the matrix and remove the band and retainer.

**Packaging**
Cardboard box holding six divided white plastic trays with recesses for eight matrices. Each recess is sealed with a paper cover that identifies the type of band inside. The paper cover and the tightening knob are color-coded. In addition, the white plastic tray holding the matrices is solid. We would prefer it to be perforated so you could tear off one matrix at a time and put it on your tray, ready to be opened when needed. As it is now, you either have to take out a matrix at the beginning of the procedure or take out the entire tray and retrieve one matrix when you need it. However, you will be in the middle of the procedure when it is time to retrieve it and, no doubt, have contaminated gloves. If you pick up the tray with contaminated gloves, you will in turn contaminate it. Since asepsis is one of the main reasons to use this product, this packaging oversight is uncharacteristic.

**Directions**
Coated paper sheet. Four illustrations and that’s it — there are no words.

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Palodent has been our top-rated matrix band since we started publishing in 1986. The reasons for this achievement include the automatic creation of anatomically correct proximal surfaces and predictably tight contacts. Once you learn how to use this system, it is difficult to practice without it. The Mini size comes in handy when the regular size is just too large, but the larger Plus and BiTine II have not been very useful.

Composi-Tight Gold is the second generation of the original product that, at least for now, is still available. Its advantages over its stablemate include longer bands for wrap-arounds in two sizes, stiffer G-Rings made out of rectangular rather than the original round wire, and the cool, gold color. These stiffer rings give you more separation leading to tighter contacts as well as being retained more securely. And the rings still have both long and standard tines. The placement forceps also drew praise for more secure, non-slipping grip when placing and removing them. However, there are sharp spicules of metal on their ends that should have been removed and polished by the manufacturer. As it is now, you would have to do it. And their larger size compared to the competition was not universally appreciated.

With the best selection of sizes, you would be hard pressed not to find one of these matrices to fit virtually any case, although you will probably find yourself still using the standard size most frequently. On the other hand, the extended band created for subgingival restorations is more difficult to use and creates bleeding at times during application. They also still seem somewhat fragile and get dented easily when fitting into tight areas. These are not the bands to use unless the contact is already broken.

Contact Matrix gives you the option of three sizes of matrices, two thicknesses, and two different angles to the Contact Rings’ tines, even though one will probably suffice. These rings are very stiff and provide superb contacts, but they don’t rebound back into their original shape when opened widely compared to BiTine and G-Rings. However, the appeal of this kit is hard to resist. The placement forceps work well, as do the Mega Grip removal pliers.

Composi-Tight has been trumped by its own offspring, Composi-Tight Gold. However, it still offers five different sizes, but the G-Rings do not provide as much separating force compared to the competition and they are also much more expensive. In addition, despite their convexity, Composi-Tights do not have as much curvature as Palodent. This does not, however, affect their performance, except that the more definitive curvature of the Palodent bands gives them more inherent stability and possibly a slight edge in ease of placement.

Hawe Supermat/Hawe Adapt SuperCap Matrix gives you circumferential contoured bands combined with a unique retainerless device that is identical to the discontinued Automatrix II system, which was marketed by Dentsply several years ago. Without any type of retainer or ring system, you can easily restore multiple teeth at the same time. However, contacts are not as automatic as when you use a sectional band/ring system and handling the tightening tool can be cumbersome.

If you want the familiarity of a classic Tofflemire-like band, but want it to be thinner for easier contacts, then HO Bands are for you. The only learning curve is their thinness requires extra care when placing them. They are also inexpensive and have convenient dispensing without contaminating bands remaining in the package.

Omni-Matrix is designed for the Tofflemire crowd, since it is basically a disposable version of the conventional retainer and band. The band itself comes already attached to an ultralight plastic retainer, all of which is disposed after use. You have your choice of metal or Mylar. With metal, there are two thicknesses and two sizes. With the Mylar, however, if contacts are tight, it is still difficult to get these bands through them. In addition, despite their anatomic contours, it is still more difficult achieving contact with Mylar bands compared to the metal ones.
## OTHER PRODUCTS IN THIS CATEGORY

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