



Retainer Instructions

Orthodontic retainers are just as important as the orthodontic treatment you received to straighten your teeth! Retainers are what maintain your correction and prevent your teeth from shifting back to their original position.

HOW LONG ARE RETAINERS WORN? You may stop wearing your retainers when you no longer want straight teeth. Lifetime retainer wear will ensure that your teeth do not move (as studies have shown they do in those patients who do not wear their retainers).

The first **three months you need to wear your retainers full-time**. This means you should wear them approximately 22 hours/day, taking them out only when you eat, or brush your teeth. You should sleep with them.

TAKING CARE OF YOUR REMOVABLE RETAINERS:

The first three months you need to wear your retainers full-time. This means you should wear them approximately 22 hours/day, taking them out only when you eat, or brush your teeth. After three months of excellent retainer wear we will instruct you to wear them every night while sleeping.

TAKING CARE OF YOUR RETAINERS:

- If you lose or break your retainer, please call our office immediately so that we can replace it as soon as possible so that the teeth do not shift.
- Please notify our office right away if your retainers do not fit or do not feel right. If you were given retainers, you must call us within 48 hours of getting your retainers for it to be our responsibility. If you notify us after 48 hours it will be your financial responsibility if your retainers need to be re-made.
- If you take your retainers out to eat, put them in their retainer case!
- Keep your retainers clean. In the morning and at bedtime, gently brush your teeth and your retainers with toothbrush and toothpaste. Rinse with cool water only.
- Efferdent or other orthodontic appliance cleaners can be used once a week to keep your retainers fresh, but should not be used in place of brushing them daily.

- Keep your retainers out of the reach of you cat or dog. They make excellent chew toys!
- When retainers are not in your mouth they should ALWAYS be in your retainer case. Storing them in your pocket, purse, or backpack is the most common way they are broken.
- Initially, you may find it difficult to speak. This will get better in about a week. Be patient.
- Do not put your retainers in the dishwasher, hot water or any hot surface.
- No chewing gum while wearing retainers.
- ALWAYS bring your retainers to your appointments.

TAKING CARE OF YOUR BONDED RETAINERS:

Bonded retainers place on the top teeth require that you do not bite directly into hard or crunchy foods. Bagels, pizza crust and very stick foods may cause the retainer to break.

It is extremely important that you wear the clear Invisalign-type retainers that we gave you at night to maintain your dental arch form and to protect your bonded retainer.

Your family dentist may recommend more frequent cleanings if he/she decides that you need increased help in cleaning around your retainer.

If the retainer becomes loose or breaks, call our office immediately. If the retainer is broken, then it is not holding the teeth in place and your teeth may shift. The clear Invisalign-type retainer we gave you to wear at night will keep your teeth from shifting in the interim until you can get into the office to have the retainer fixed. So wear it!