

RETAINERS

Removing braces signals the start of the retention period of your orthodontic care. Please remember that this part of your orthodontic treatment is just as important as the active movement phase in determining the ultimate success of your treatment. Once the teeth have been moved into their desired positions, a period of time is needed to stabilize the teeth so that the surrounding bone and soft tissues can conform to your new dental alignment.

The final observation and retention period of treatment normally spans approximately two years. During this period, appointments are scheduled with decreasing frequency. Usually, retainers are worn at all times during the first twelve months after braces are removed, except when eating, brushing, flossing, or swimming. As retention continues, the retainers are generally worn at night for an additional year, and then progressively less as instructed. Each person's requirements are different and a longer period. Or, a different schedule may be recommended if facial growth is not complete. In some cases, indefinite wear on a part-time basis may be recommended to maintain the desired changes that have been achieved.

The retainer is a removable appliance carefully designed to maintain the teeth in their corrected positions. It is important that it be worn according to instructions.

Key Instructions:

1. Follow closely the instructions you have been given on how to take retainer in and out of your mouth.
2. Wear the retainer at all times (excluding mealtimes) unless you have been specifically instructed otherwise. Remove the retainer when brushing your teeth.
3. The plastics taste to a new appliance will disappear soon, and in two or three days, your speech will be completely normal with the appliance in place.
4. Your new retainers may make your teeth sore for a day or two. After an adjustment, you may experience soreness. If you have a localized sore spot after three or four days, call the office so an adjustment can be made.
5. Clean you retainer by brushing it with liquid hand soap and COLD water. Never wash under hot water. Soaking it periodically in hydrogen peroxide and diluted with water will help keep it clean and fresh. If you are wearing a lower fixed retainer, be extra careful to brush the wire and the inside of the lower teeth. Flossing should also be done every day, as we showed you in the office.
6. Always bring your retainer to each appointment.
7. Avoid flipping the retainer with your tongue. This can cause damage to your teeth or break your retainer.
8. NEVER wrap the retainer in a paper napkin or tissue and lay it on the table. Someone may throw it away. Don't put it in your pocket when playing; you may break or lose it. Your retainer should be removed during vigorous sports, including swimming. Whenever it is out of your mouth, it should be in your plastic retainer case.
9. Keep your retainer away from dogs or cats, as they love to chew them. Avoid storing them near any source of heat. Please do NOT boil your retainer.
10. There **will** be an additional charge to replace lost or broken retainers.