

Retainers

Patient Advice

Once you have completed treatment, it is important that your teeth remain in their new position. Your dentist will provide you with either removable and/or fixed retainers. It is crucial that you follow the advice below. If you do not, your teeth will gradually move out of alignment.

You will need to wear your retainers:

- First year after treatment completion – every night for 10-12 hours.
- Second year after completion – every other night for 10-12 hours, or alternatively, every night just for sleeping hours.
- Indefinitely – 2-3 nights a week for 10-12 hours.

Discomfort:

- Your appliance may feel tight for the first few days. If the retainer feels tight after this, it may indicate that you are not wearing it enough and your teeth are starting to move. You must increase the hours of wear to ensure your teeth remain in position.
- If you have a bonded (fixed) retainer, it will take your tongue a few days to get used to it, usually up to 3 days.
- If the appliance is giving you prolonged discomfort, arrange a visit with your dentist - your retainer may need a small adjustment.

Diet:

- Removable retainers should be taken out for eating. You should only drink plain water whilst you are wearing your retainers. Sugary or hot drinks may cause tooth decay, and could also stain your teeth and retainers. Fizzy drinks, including sugar-free varieties, must be avoided while you are wearing your retainers as they will cause permanent damage and could, again, stain your enamel.
- If you have a bonded retainer, avoid biting into hard, crunchy, chewy or sticky foods with your front teeth. Cut them up and use your back teeth to chew.

Cleaning:

- It is very important to clean your teeth before wearing the retainers. To clean your retainers, you should brush with a soft brush and regular hand soap, ensuring you rinse properly. This should be done over a basin of water, which will stop the appliance from breaking if you drop it. Do not use toothpaste as this may discolour the retainer.
- Once or twice a week, you should soak your retainer in a cleaning solution and brush it well afterwards. This will keep your appliance fresh and free from bacteria.
- Never use hot water to clean your retainers and keep them away from other sources of heat.
- If you have a bonded retainer, you should ensure you clean around the retainer with your toothbrush. Super Floss can be used as an alternative to traditional floss to clean between your teeth where the retainer has been placed. Alternatively, interdental brushes can be used.

Breakages:

- Do not repeatedly click the retainer in and out with your tongue, as this will break/loosen it. Never press into place with your teeth.
- Ensure your retainers are stored in a rigid container when they are not in use to avoid damage or loss. A charge will be incurred for replacement of lost or broken appliances.
- If you have a bonded retainer that has come loose, do not panic! Simply wear your clear plastic retainer over your bonded retainer. This will keep your teeth in position until your bonded retainer is repaired.

Sports and activities:

- Remove your non-fixed retainer to play sports or exercise.
- A mouthguard should be worn for all contact sports.

Dental-check ups:

- You should attend your dental check-ups, as instructed by your dentist.
- Bring your retainers for regular inspection.
- If you have a bonded retainer, we recommend seeing a hygienist every 3-6 months to remove tartar and keep your teeth and gums healthy.
- If you have a further dental treatment that alters the teeth in any way, you will require a new removable retainer that fits perfectly.

1. I will follow the instructions regarding the retainers and agree to follow the advice provided by my dentist.

2. I understand that retention is a lifelong commitment and that my teeth will move unless I follow this advice carefully.

Signature: Date:

Print name: