

Retainers



Purpose: Retainers hold your teeth in a corrected position. Retainers are placed once treatment is complete to stabilize the teeth as new bone forms around the roots. If retainers are not worn as instructed, the teeth will always move. Since retainers are removable, their use is entirely dependent on you.

Use and Care: Wear your retainers full time (at least 22 hours/day). You may remove your retainers while eating and brushing but you must replace them as soon as you are finished. When the retainer is not in your mouth, it should be in the case provided. If you follow this simple rule you will greatly reduce the probability of losing or breaking your retainer. The most common way to lose a retainer is to leave it in a napkin in a restaurant or at school.

The retainer will typically be worn full-time for 3 months followed by nightly wear as directed.

Your retainers should be cleaned after every meal and before going to bed. Keep retainers clean by using a toothbrush and water. Do not use hot water or this may distort the retainer.

What to expect: Initially, your retainers may feel bulky and affect your speech somewhat. In a few days, once the tongue adapts, speech will return to normal. Sometimes the teeth feel a bit sore the first couple of days with retainers. This will resolve quickly with consistent wear.

Tips:

- Bring your retainers to every appointment (even if you're wearing them at night only).
- If you do not wear your retainers as instructed, your teeth WILL MOVE. If they move too far you may need a new retainer or additional treatment to realign the teeth.
- Keep retainers away from pets. Dogs love trying retainers on or using them as a chew toy.
- Retainers should always be in your mouth or in the retainer case. If you follow this simple rule, the chance of losing or breaking your retainer is greatly reduced.
- Do not flip your retainers up and down. Doing this with a Hawley retainer (wire in front) will cause the wire to "work harden" and eventually break. If this happens you will either need a repaired retainer or a new retainer (with a repair or replacement fee).
- The retainer will only "stop fitting" if you don't wear it as instructed. If you lose or break your retainer, call our office right away to come in for an appointment.
- The stability of your final orthodontic result depends on retainer wear so please wear them consistently to maintain your bite and smile!

For more information on retainers, please see "Ask Joe" at nelsonsmiles.com