

Know your Retainer

How do I wear my retainers?

A retainer is worn to hold your teeth in position while the gums and bone settle after tooth movement. Retainers need to be worn every night for 10-12 hours. This means that you go to sleep wearing them. It is normal for the appliance to feel tight in the first few days. If afterwards the retainer feels tight at any point it may indicate that you are not wearing it enough and your teeth are starting to move. In this case you must increase the hours of wear of your retainer to ensure your teeth remain in position. When wearing your retainers please avoid “flicking” the lower retainer with your tongue. This can become a habit and you may do this when sleeping which can cause your retainer to fall out. If you do not wear your retainers properly your teeth may move. **Retention of your teeth is a lifetime commitment.**

If you have also had a bonded retainer you will feel it stuck on the back of your teeth. It is normal for this to feel strange for the first few days. Please make sure you keep this retainer clean by spending a little more time brushing around the area.

When to be seen?

You will be seen 6 months after you have had your retainer fitted, we will check that you have been wearing them as instructed today. You will then be discharged from our care. This is an important appointment. If you do not attend we are not responsible if anything goes wrong as a result of non attendance.

Eating and Drinking

You cannot eat or drink with your retainers in. The plastic is not suited to biting pressure and will be damaged. You may only drink plain water with your retainers in. If you do want to eat or drink after you have started wearing your retainers for the evening you will need to remove them first. If you have a habit of grinding your teeth this may wear your retainers out more quickly.

Keeping your retainers clean

You need to keep your retainers clean by brushing them under cold water. Do not use detergents or use warm/hot water to clean your retainers. They will become distorted and not fit. Please do not use toothpaste as this can be abrasive for your retainers. To keep your retainers fresh we recommend Retainer Brite Tablets. Leave your retainers soaking in a small glass of water with half a tablet for about 15 minutes.

Breakages

When the retainers are out of your mouth please keep them in a small plastic box to keep them safe. If at any point the retainer feels different or you suspect it may be broken you must let us know as soon as possible. The first set of retainers are provided free of charge by the NHS. Any pair after this is chargeable as the NHS will not fund further retainers. If you would like to keep your teeth straight after your first pair of retainers have worn out, please come back to see us and we can make replacements. Bonded retainers are guaranteed for a year and we strongly recommend that you come back to see us straight away if it has become loose or broken.

And if you have any problems?

Please do not hesitate to ring the practice if you have a problem of any kind. If you suspect something is wrong with your retainers please contact us straight away.

Please be aware that you need to carry on seeing your general dentist for exams throughout your orthodontic treatment. We are not your dentist and will only look after your orthodontic treatment.