



## Retainers

CONGRATULATIONS on your new smile! In order to keep your new smile great you need to wear your Retainers as instructed. The following is a typical guide however individual instructions may vary depending on your original bite issue.

### When do I wear my Retainers?

Full-time Removable Retainer wear (day and night) for minimum 6 months from the day your braces have been taken off (i.e. at all times *except* when you eat, brush your teeth, play contact sports that you wear a mouth guard for and possibly for some competition swimming if you are concerned about loss of retainers in the pool). After 6 months you should book in for a Retainer Review appointment and discuss your retainer wear with us. If wear has demonstrated stabilisation of your bite/smile it may then be suggested that your removable retainers could be worn nights (minimum 10-12 hours). Please do not alter your recommended wear regimen until you have attended your retainer review appointment. Clinical research shows that no matter how well straightened teeth will show a tendency for movement over many years (i.e. natural aging process). This means wearing your retainers indefinitely, unless otherwise negotiated with the orthodontist, is vital to hold your teeth in their treated position.

### After the 12 months what should I do with the Retainers?

Keep your Retainers forever. You should continue to wear your Retainers as instructed. However, if you decide yourself to reduce wear it is strongly suggested that you at least try in the Retainers regularly (i.e. start of every week), for an indefinite period of time. When trying in your retainers if you notice 'tightening' or changing alignment of your teeth it is advisable that you wear them again full-time for at least two weeks for your teeth to be 'reset'. If you do not do this your teeth may move to a point where Retainers do not fit at all which means you will need to seek re-treatment.

### How do I remove and put in my Retainer?

Ensure your Retainer is 'clicked' into place, by pushing the acrylic parts of the plate (not the wires). To remove gently ease the plates out, otherwise the wires can be distorted and 'push' your teeth out of alignment. Whenever you remove the Retainers place them directly into the case provided. If you accidentally misplace or break the retainers they will need to be newly fabricated, which will incur a laboratory fee. It is important that they be re-made ASAP otherwise your teeth may move back to a crooked position.

### How do I clean my Retainers?

Use a manual toothbrush with toothpaste daily (no paste to be used for 'clear retainers'), holding the Retainer in palm of your hand. Gently scrub your retainer all over for 1 minute





*creating beautiful smiles  
& harmonious bites*

then rinse under tap water. Soak in denture cleaning solution, ¼ of a tablet for 5-10 minutes once a month. Never use hot or boiling water as this may distort the retainers. Care must be taken in handling the retainers, they can break.

**What do I do about my wisdom teeth (if applicable)?**

Over the next few years you will be monitored and referred for the removal of your wisdom teeth if they are not going to erupt into a good position. Alternatively, discuss this issue with your dentist.

**Do I need to go back to my general dentist?** It is important that you book in for a check-up and a clean following the removal of your braces.

**When will I get used to the Retainers?**

Retainers will take time to get used to. At first they may seem bulky, speech may be slightly affected and salivary flow may increase. However, if you persevere, it should not take too long to get used to and they will be hardly noticeable within 1-2 weeks.

If they continue to be uncomfortable you must make an appointment to have them checked as they may require minor adjustment.

**Special note for those issued with 'Aesthetic Clear Retainers' (if applicable):**

Over a variable period of time these Retainers may wear down by natural grinding of teeth together. This is a compromise between strength and the best cosmetic result for an 'invisible look'. If you notice 'holes' in the retainers in the years ahead it is important you book in to have these checked. These 'wear facets' may be fine to be left, but occasionally the plates need to be re-made. It is important that you are careful when handling these Retainers as they are more vulnerable to breakages.

Do not ignore a broken Retainer even if it is years since your braces have been removed. Please wear your retainers. This retention phase you are entering is as important. Please contact our clinic if you have any issues.

It has been wonderful treating you. We wish you all the best.

Take care,  
Elaine Lim and Team

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