

retainers

Congratulations on your new smile! A lot of time, effort and money has gone into getting you to this point. Now it is **very important** to wear your retainers in order to make sure your smile stays this way. Follow these easy steps to insure that it does!

1. Wear your retainers as instructed.

Unless instructed otherwise, our standard wear schedule is as follows:

- 24 hour wear (except eating/brushing) for the first 6 weeks
- 12 hour wear (evenings/sleeping) for the next 4 months
- Regular night wear (8 hours during sleep) after that indefinitely

Warning: Note that it is very common for retainers to be tight and sore when first delivered. This is normal and will go away in 2-3 days **if** worn as instructed. You may be tempted to take them out because of the soreness, but **do not do this**. The more you take them out, the tighter they become, and the tighter they become, the more you leave them out, etc. Eventually the teeth will become crooked again, and the retainer will no longer fit at all – and you will be back to “square one” (possibly braces again!). This situation can easily be avoided by **wearing your retainers as instructed**. As the Nike commercial says, **just do it**.

2. Don't lose your retainers!

The rule here is actually very simple:

If you are not wearing (or cleaning) your retainers, they should be in their case, and their case should be in a very safe place (your pocket, mom's purse, etc.)

Remember: IN THE CASE. THE CASE IN A SAFE PLACE.

Warning: It is very common for patients to lose retainers by leaving them on a lunch tray at school or at a restaurant. Do not do this!*

Warning: Dogs love to eat retainers: your saliva makes them smell like food, and they can easily become the dog's new favorite “chew toy.” Never leave them where dogs can get them (remember that big dogs can reach counters and bedside tables).

***If you do lose your retainers, please call us ASAP!**

3. Keep your retainers clean.

On a daily basis, brush your clear retainers with toothbrush (no toothpaste) using room temperature water (never hot water!).

2-3 times per week, soak them in “Efferdent” denture cleaner (using room temperature water) for approximately 10 minutes. It is safe to use the Efferdent on a daily basis if you desire, but do not soak the retainers for long periods of time (10 minutes is best).

Warning: DO NOT USE TOOTHPASTE ON CLEAR RETAINERS. Most brands of toothpaste contain an acid that will weaken and distort clear retainers over time. It is okay to use toothpaste on metal retainers.

Warning: DO NOT USE HOT (OR EVEN WARM) WATER TO CLEAN RETAINERS. Hot water can distort them very easily.

Warning: Never leave your retainers in a hot car during the summer. High temperatures can very easily distort them as well.

Remember, replacing retainers costs money and means you will have to endure new impressions. Even worse, **not** wearing your retainers can lead to having to get braces again (and cost even more money)

For a lifetime of smiles...

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