

Retention Schedule

This is our best advice to you in order to preserve your wonderful new smile! These recommendations are based on both scientific evidence and experience.

1. **For the first 3 months** wear your retainers for 14 hours-a-day. Put them on when you get home and wear them all evening and all night while you sleep. Take them out briefly to eat and to clean your teeth.
2. **For the second 3 months** wear your retainers 10 hours-a-day, e.g. put them on about 2 hours before you go to bed and continue to wear them whilst sleeping.
3. **Thereafter**, wear your retainers at night during sleep time for at least another 12 months and preferably until you are sure you have finished growing.
4. **And then...**If you want to preserve perfection, continue to wear your retainers on alternate nights for as long as possible! Re-crowding can be a normal aging process.

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- The team at the Orthodontic Centre are pleased to offer you this advice sheet containing important information about the care and use of your orthodontic retainers.
- Please read this information leaflet carefully to avoid complications and disappointment.
- Following these instructions will improve the performance of your orthodontic appliances and maintain your beautiful new smile.
- If your retainers become loose, let us know and we will tighten them for you.
- If the worst happens and you break or lose your retainers, let us know **quickly** before your teeth start moving. There will be a charge for replacement retainers

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HOORAY!

At last all the fixed braces have been removed!

- No more regular adjustments!
- No more tender teeth!
- No more elastic bands and headgear!

Your active treatment is finished!

However, there is still one more important phase called *retention*. This is the final stage of your treatment which helps ensure a lifetime of beautiful smiles.

Retention or Relapse?

Your retainers are designed to hold your teeth in the corrected position until your jawbone and gums adapt to the changes. You must wear your retainers exactly as instructed to prevent your teeth moving towards their original positions—a process termed *relapse*.

Relapse and Re-treatment

Once your teeth relapse the retainers will no longer fit and you may require re-treatment with fixed appliances to re-align the teeth.

Fact

About 1 in 5 people will experience significant re-crowding of the teeth (mostly the lower front teeth) during the late teens and early twenties. This is thought to be a normal 'aging' process due to growth of the teeth and jaws.



Your retainer is made by carefully moulding a hot sheet of plastic over a model of your straight teeth under a vacuum.



N.B. At the time of going to press, the cost of a pair of replacement retainers is about £120.



Please remember to bring your retainers to all your appointments! They may need adjusting.

The retention phase does take some time, so be patient. It's your responsibility—the orthodontist's work is over but it is up to you to maintain your beautiful smile for a lifetime by following this advice.

1. **Wear Your Retainers**

This means in your mouth and not in your pocket! Retainers are effective only when worn as instructed.

2. **Keep Your Retainers Clean**

Clean all parts of your retainers with cold water and a toothbrush but do not use toothpaste, as this may scratch the surface of the plastic. If your retainers become discoloured then you may wish to purchase a retainer cleaner, which is available from the practice reception and larger chemists.

3. **Warning 1**

Don't put your retainers in hot water, as they will distort and become very loose.

4. **Handle Retainers With Care**

Retainers are easy to lose. When not in your mouth, they should be kept in a retainer case or sturdy box.

5. **Warning 2**

If you take your retainers out, don't put them in a tissue or napkin and accidentally throw them away. This is the commonest cause of lost retainers.

6. **Also...** When they are just lying around, retainers have a habit of falling on the floor and being stepped on, or even being eaten by pets (the commonest cause of broken retainers).

7. **Beware...** Do not wear your retainers for eating and drinking, as residues left under the retainer can permanently damage teeth and in extreme cases can cause severe tooth decay.

Retainers are expensive to replace

The plastic used to make your retainers is very hard wearing and if treated with care will last a long time.

Great Result

You have done a great deal of hard work so far to get your teeth looking great. Don't risk losing what you and your orthodontist have achieved by not wearing your retainers as instructed.

The Best

From our own experience and scientific research we believe the clear plastic retainer is the best removable retainer for patient tolerance and comfort. Additional benefits include:

- No need for regular adjustments every three months
- Nearly invisible if filled with a little water before inserting
- Very hard wearing and almost indestructible—very few breakages