

# Clear Retainer Info

## How Long to Wear Your Retainers

Your retainers should be worn every single night. You must take out your retainers when eating or drinking anything besides water. During post-treatment time, called retention, your teeth may still have some mobility as they settle into their new position. This mobility is normal at the end of treatment, which is why you must continually wear your retainer - to get everything stabilized!

Your oral healthcare provider will provide you specific instructions should your unique needs rely on a more specific schedule.

## How to Properly Remove Your Retainers

Your retainers are rigid - meaning they aren't flexible. This is to ensure that your teeth do not shift while you're wearing them. Because of this, retainers must be removed very carefully in order to prevent them from fracturing during removal.

- Simultaneously grab the retainers from the posterior (farthest back) teeth on both sides of your mouth
- Use your fingers to pull up from the gum line until some air appears, and grab with both hands.

This universal motion will limit any flex in the retainer, and reduce the possibility of fracture. If frequently removed from one side, a fracture may occur in the middle of the retainer.

## Soreness

If you are beginning the full-time wear of your retainers for the first time, or transitioning to a brand new set, some soreness may occur. While it may be uncomfortable, it is normal! This soreness is due to the rigidity of the retainer material. They're far less flexible than Invisalign trays and far sturdier than a well-worn retainer, all because they're designed to keep your teeth firmly in place. So long as you do not have any medical restrictions, Advil or Tylenol (ibuprofen or acetaminophen) may help calm the soreness.

It's normal to experience about 20 minutes of soreness when putting in your retainers for the night. You may also feel soreness or discomfort if you haven't been wearing your retainers as directed. This is a direct sign that your teeth are trying to shift out of position quickly and the retainers are bringing them back where your treatment has placed them. If this occurs, keep your retainers in full-time until the soreness dissipates completely and then be consistent about retainer wear.

It's also normal to have your teeth touch slightly more in the front when taking out your retainers in the morning. It's not because your teeth have moved, as the retainer is keeping them in place, but more to do with positioning of your jaw at nighttime. This should return to normal within 30 to 90 minutes. Chewing gum, or resting your chin on the palm of your hand (in a thinking pose) can help the jaw reposition faster.

If you have gone through Invisalign treatment with us, then you may use chewies and munchies from your treatment with your retainers to get them to seat properly and help move the shifted teeth back into position.

## How to Properly Clean Your Retainers

Retainers should be cleaned regularly using a toothbrush and toothpaste.

Over time, stains and build-up develop. In these situations, you may also use denture cleaner, "Kleenite" retainer cleaner, or a dilution of 1:10 white vinegar and water. Please do not place your retainers in the dishwasher or use any heat or hot water solutions of any kind to clean your retainers. This will cause irreparable damage to the retainer, and will result in replacement at an additional cost as well as the risks that come with being without your retainer for an extended period of time.

## How Do I Know When I Need a New Retainer?

Each retainer has a lifespan of 1-2 years which varies on many factors, including:

- Manner of removal
- Amount of time worn
- Grinding
- Cleaning and care

As you near the 1.5 year milestone of wearing your current retainer, it may be time to start thinking about the next one.

If you have a second retainer on hand, follow these steps to verify whether your current retainer still fits properly:

- Try on the second set the morning after removing your current set and verify the fit is the same
- If the second retainer feels the same as the current set you are using, then continue to wear the current set for another 6 months, or until you feel the material is fatigued. Then repeat the above test.
- If the second retainer feels much tighter, this is an indication the current retainer material is fatigued. You're ready to change into the next set!

If you don't have a second retainer, it's more difficult to judge the retention of your current retainer. Plan ahead to make sure you're ready to replace your current set at the 2-year mark!

It's highly recommended to order a new retainer once you move on to your next set, as it's important to have at least one additional retainer as a replacement or back up. If you've gone too long without a retainer if you've lost your only set, or continue wearing one that is worn out, you'll need to visit our office to do a new scan of the teeth to ensure the best fit, as teeth can shift rapidly without proper retention. Not only does it take up to 3 weeks for new retainers to arrive from our digital off-site laboratory, but the longer you go without proper retainer wear means a higher chance of requiring additional treatment at an additional cost.

## Future Dental Work

Since retainers are made to fit snugly over teeth, having new dental work done may require new retainers to fit the changes to your teeth.

When having your dental work performed at 425 Dental, we utilize technology to help reproduce the shape of dental restorations, thus minimizing the need to get you into a whole new set of retainers. While we do our best to make this happen, it is not a guarantee and, depending on the work or procedure performed, may not even be possible.

Be sure to always bring your retainers when having any dental work done with 425 Dental! We can inspect them and verify the fit after any dental work. If the retainers no longer fit, we will be able to discuss your options going forward. If any new dental work interferes with the fit of your retainers, you will be responsible for the cost of new retainers.

### **Lost or Damaged Retainers**

425 Dental offers a 9-month warranty on any retainers/wires that fail due to material or fabrication. After that 9-month period has ended, there will be a cost to replace the retainer.

If you feel like the retainers you were provided aren't properly retaining your teeth even with great compliance to our retention protocol, please let us know ASAP and we will discuss other retainer options that will ensure you preserve the healthy/beautiful smile we both worked hard to achieve.

In the event of a lost/damaged retainer please contact our office immediately so we can make sure you have the right retention to keep your teeth properly aligned. Replacement retainers due to loss or damage will result in an additional charge.

### **425 Dental Invisalign Patients:**

If your teeth shift out of place because of a lost retainer or failure to properly adhere to the retainer protocol, there WILL be a charge to realign your teeth during the first 3 years post-treatment. After the 3-year period, any realignment will be considered as a brand new case.

If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact our office!



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