

Hawley Retainers

Understanding Retainers

It is important to understand that there is no “cure” for crooked teeth (malocclusion). Treating a malocclusion is similar to treating a visual impairment. Prescription glasses and contacts improve eyesight, but further visual deterioration is common and indefinite use of eyeglasses is needed. In the same manner, you will be required to wear your retainer indefinitely on a part time basis. **The most common retainer schedule is: full time (20-23 hours per day – retainers can be removed while eating, brushing and contact sports) for 6 weeks, 18 hours per day for the next 6 month, and every night during sleep until facial growth is complete (around age 17 for girls and 19 for boys).** After this time, many patients only need to wear the retainer 1-4 nights per week. It is a good idea to wear your retainer 1 night per week indefinitely to keep your smile beautiful. As long as the retainer fits comfortably, your teeth have not changed. If you ever need your retainer checked, call the office!



Goals

The following guidelines will help you get the most benefit from your retainers.

- Wear your retainer full time for 6 weeks. It can be worn while eating, but if you elect to remove it, replace it as soon as you are finished. If you do not have your retainer case, eat with your retainer in, but it will need to be rinsed after each meal.
- DO NOT chew gum or sticky candy while wearing your retainer.
- After 6 weeks, it is to be worn 18 hours per day.
- After 6 month, it is to be worn during sleep only.
- To remove the appliance, apply pressure on the cheek side of the back clasps.
- When brushing your teeth, brush your retainer. It can also be soaked in a denture cleaner (Efferdent/Polident).
- Your speech may sound funny for a few days. Do not remove the appliance when talking because it will take longer for you to adjust. The more you practice, the quicker you will sound “normal”.
- Store the retainer in the case we supplied, when out of the mouth. Pets love to chew them!
- If lost, call us immediately. There will be a replacement charge.
- If you miss a night or two (naughty, naughty) wear the retainer full time and bite down to seat fully. The teeth may be a little sore but should realign. If they don’t, call the office immediately.
- If at any time you notice your teeth shifting, call the office so we can check your retainer.
- **ALWAYS** bring your retainer with you to each appointment.