

Looking after your new smile Private



We hope that you've enjoyed your experience so far with Total Orthodontics and are thrilled with your new smile. Although most of the hard work is over, there is still a very important part of your treatment to go – retention.

For a variety of reasons including continued maturation of your face, your teeth will have a tendency to move back to their original position, if left to their own devices. Therefore it's critical that you wear your retainers on a long-term basis.

Removable Retainers

These are clear, thin plastic 'mouth guard' type retainers which, after a brief period of full-time wear, usually only need to be worn in bed at night. Wear your retainers every night for 6 months or as directed by your orthodontist. Wear is gradually reduced further once instructed by your orthodontist until you are just putting them in once every now and then.

It is extremely important that you increase the level of wear of your retainer if you find that it is tight or uncomfortable as this indicates that your teeth have started to move.

Remember to remove your retainer for eating and drinking. To look after your retainer keep it safe in a protective box and soak it once a week in a product such as 'Retainer Brite', this will keep it looking and feeling fresh. You can also clean your retainer with a toothbrush and water, but don't use toothpaste as it will cause discolouration.

Removable retainers also act as a 'back up', in case your fixed retainers come off or break. This is unusual, but if it happens, wear the removable retainers as much as possible until you can come in to see your orthodontist.

Remember to bring your retainer to every appointment, so that any adjustments can be made. If you lose or break your retainer please contact your practice as soon as possible. A small charge may be made for replacement retainers.

Fixed Retainers

These consist of fine braided wires that are glued to the back surfaces of your front teeth. They are not visible, and it will only take your tongue a day or two to get used to them. You will soon forget that they are there.

These retainers take an extra bit of looking after, and a bit more care must be taken during toothbrushing. You can also use



Insertion of Superfloss

Cleaning with Superfloss

Superfloss or small brushes (in your aftercare pack), which will help to keep the area clean.

We recommend that you see your dentist or hygienist on a regular basis. They will help you to keep this area clean.

We like to leave fixed retainers in place on a long-term basis, and as long as they are not causing you any problems it is best to leave them on the teeth. As with anything in the mouth, they will need some maintenance from time to time but in most cases, fixed retainers will last for many years. When they eventually come off you may choose to have them replaced, or to continue with the removable retainers.

Some care must be taken when eating in order to avoid putting too much force onto the wire. In the event that the wire becomes debonded from one or all of the teeth, make an appointment to see your orthodontist as soon as possible and bring the wire with you if you can. Wear your removable retainer full time until you see the orthodontist.

Your orthodontist will supervise your retainer wear for 2 years. We like to keep an eye on your teeth to make sure the retainer is doing its job properly, and identify any problems early on. After 2 years we will leave you in the capable hands of your dentist, who will keep an eye on your fixed retainers. If you do have any problems in the future, you are always more than welcome to come back and see us if your dentist is unable to help you.

If you would like to have your teeth whitened after they have been straightened, please speak to your dentist. If they cannot help you, we will be delighted to carry out this simple procedure for you. Please contact reception for details.

We hope that you have enjoyed your experience with Total Orthodontics, and that you enjoy your new smile for many years to come!

If any of your friends or relatives would like to get straight teeth, please ask any member of staff and we will arrange an appointment – there is no need for a referral from your dentist!

Removable Retainer FAQ's

1. How important is it to wear my retainers?

If you do not wear your retainers as instructed, your teeth will move back towards how they were before treatment. If you cannot wear your retainers for any reason, please contact your Total Orthodontics practice.

2. How often do I wear them?

Full-time except for meals for 1 week, then every night after that. Your orthodontist will tell you when you can start to reduce the night time wear.

3. How long do I have to wear them?

The only way to guarantee keeping your teeth straight is to continue wearing the retainers at night. This is because we now know that teeth move throughout life.

4. How do I keep them clean?

Clean your retainers with a toothbrush and water but **do not use toothpaste** on the retainer. Toothpaste will discolour the retainer. The retainers can be freshened up by using the special cleaner called "Retainer Brite". This is available for sale in your Total Orthodontics practice.

5. Can I eat and drink whilst wearing my retainer?

You should never eat or drink when you are wearing the retainer.

6. How do I keep them safe?

When you are not wearing the retainer, keep it safely in a protective box.

7. What do I do if I miss wearing it for a night?

You must try and wear the retainers every night. If you do forget, then wear the retainer full-time except for meals for 2 days. This is usually enough to squeeze the teeth back into place.

8. What do I do if I lose a retainer?

If you lose a retainer, wear the spare if you have one. Contact your Total Orthodontics practice and you can have a new retainer or another spare retainer made. There will be a charge to make the replacement.

9. What do I do if the retainer rubs?

If the retainer rubs, you can smooth it with an emery board used to file nails. If this doesn't work, contact your Total Orthodontics practice.

10. Should I bring my retainers with me to my appointments?

It is important that you bring your retainers to every surgery appointment, so that we can check and adjust them if needed.

I have read and understood the above instructions.

Name of patient: _____

Signature: _____ (patient/parent/guardian)

Name (If not patient): _____

Relationship to patient: _____

