

# ORTHODONTIC RETAINERS



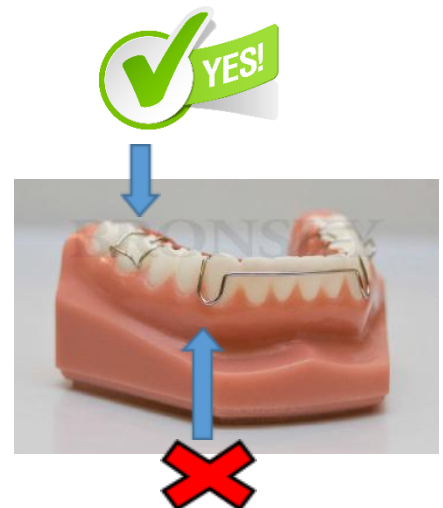
Congratulations on your new smile! First, we would like to thank you for your efforts in helping us create your great smile! We hope you feel proud to show others your new look. Here are some tips for keeping that smile looking good long term.

Your retainers are worn after the braces have been removed to hold the teeth in their new positions. They are only effective if you wear them regularly.



## THINGS TO REMEMBER:

- The retainers may feel awkward at first and make speaking clearly a little difficult. Keep speaking and after a few days you will sound normal again.
- Retainers should be worn full time for 6 months for full treatment and continuous full time for Phase I until a Phase I check has been completed.
- For full treatment cases, after the first 6 months, you will move to nighttime wear and then gradually decrease wear over time. We recommend nighttime wear for lifetime; or as long as you want to keep your teeth straight!
- Remove your retainers for eating and brushing.
- The retainer case is the best place to keep your retainers when you are eating. NEVER put them in a napkin or a pocket, otherwise it is easy to throw them away or break them accidentally.
- Remember that vacations and summer camps will change your normal routine – these are high risk times for losing or not wearing your retainer properly.
- Keep retainers away from pets – they love to chew on them!
- Dr. Felty will check the fit of your retainers at each retainer check appointment, so make sure you bring them with you.
- Do not wear your retainer during contact sports, instead wear a mouthguard.
- When inserting or removing your Hawley retainers, use the clasps in the back. Do not pull on the loops in the front as this may distort them.
- Do not attempt to remove retainers “hands free” with tongue or cheek pressure as this can also distort the retainers.



## CLEANING YOUR RETAINERS

- Brush your retainers twice a day when you are normally also brushing your teeth. You can just use your toothbrush and a little bit of toothpaste.
- Never use hot or boiling water as it can warp or melt the retainers.
- In addition to brushing you can soak the retainers in a diluted mouthwash solution for about 10 minutes to keep them fresh.
- If you notice white mineral deposits on your retainers soak them for about 20 minutes in effervescent denture cleaners, or a ½ water and ½ vinegar solution, and then brush with toothpaste.

**If your retainer should break or become lost, please contact our office immediately.** Additional costs may occur for repairs or replacements. Like eye glasses and other personal items, it is possible for retainers to wear out over time. Replacing a worn-out retainer is a wise investment in protecting your smile and the long term stability of your teeth.

