

## Retention Phase of Treatment

### What are retainers?

Retainers are custom-made orthodontic appliances constructed from a special plastic and designed to be easily removed by you.

Your retainers may be completely transparent and/or a color of your choice.



### Why do I need retainers?

Your teeth will shift and become crooked again if you do not wear your retainers! Bone remodeling around the roots of your teeth allows the braces to move your teeth. Research demonstrates that remodeled bone requires up to six months to regain original strength. (You may notice your teeth feel wiggly.) As the bone restores its strength, your retainers maintain your beautiful smile by holding the crowns of your teeth in their proper position.

Retention is an important part of your orthodontic treatment. Please keep your appointments and remember to bring your retainers!

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**BEL AIR**  
**ORTHODONTICS**  
*Shaping Smiles - Shaping Lives*



**Retainers:  
Keeping  
Everything  
Straight**

**Stephen L. Godwin, DMD, DMSc**

## Retainers Help To Maintain Your New Healthy, Happy Smile

### How long do I need to wear my retainers?

Length of retainer wear varies from person to person. Typically, you will need to wear the retainers full-time (24 hours every day) for the first six months after your braces are removed. During this first six months, you should only remove the retainers when you're eating and brushing your teeth. After six months of full-time wear, you will be asked to wear the retainers every night while you are asleep. As the retention phase of your treatment progresses, Dr. Godwin will gradually reduce the amount of time that you are required to wear your retainers.

### Should I ever throw my retainers away?

As we age, our body changes. The muscles and bone that support our teeth changes too. To maintain your healthy, happy smile, Dr. Godwin encourages you to continue to wear your retainers on a regular basis. Usually, after a couple of years of tapering down, wearing the retainers one night per week is sufficient to maintain your fantastic smile.

### How quickly will my teeth move if I don't wear the retainers?

Without proper use of the retainers, your teeth can shift within 24 hours! Don't take a chance. . . you've worked hard for your great smile!



### How do I insert and remove the retainers?

Dr. Godwin and his staff will demonstrate how to properly insert and remove the retainers. If at any time you have difficulty wearing your retainers, call our office immediately.



### Is it normal for my retainer to feel tight?

Expect the retainers to feel tight and your teeth to be sore for a couple of days after you begin wearing your retainers. Your teeth may also feel sore after Dr. Godwin adjusts your retainers or if you neglect to wear them as prescribed. While your teeth may feel sore, your gums should not be irritated by the retainers.

### How do I take care of my retainers?

First, insert and remove your retainers as demonstrated by Dr. Godwin. Improper placement may break your retainers. Second, clean your retainers right before you insert them in your mouth by running cold (not hot) water on the retainers. Avoid brushing the retainers to avoid breaking them. At least every two weeks, soak your retainers in a denture cleaner (like Efferdent) to thoroughly clean them. Dissolve Efferdent in hot water then allow solution to reach room temperature before soaking retainers.

### How do I avoid losing my retainers?

WEAR THEM as directed! When you remove the retainers from your mouth to eat or brush your teeth, place them in the retainer case provided.



Do not wrap them in a napkin or leave them on your lunch tray. Use your retainer case! Use your retainer case at home as well. Your family dog loves to chew on retainers and will destroy them if it has the opportunity.

### What happens if I lose or break my retainers?



Call Dr. Godwin immediately! Your teeth will move and move quickly! It is important that missing retainers be replaced as soon as possible to avoid this relapse. The cost of replacing the clear retainers is \$ 75 per arch. The cost of replacing the more durable acrylic retainers is \$ 175 per arch. Remember: if retainers are not used, your teeth will become crooked and only braces will bring back your healthy smile.

### Should I wear my retainers when I am eating or brushing my teeth?

Do not wear the retainers while you are eating or while you are brushing your teeth. Put the retainers in your retainer case.



### Where should my retainers be when their not in my mouth?

In your  
retainer case!

