

# How to care for your retainers

Your retainer is especially designed to enable you to keep your teeth and gums healthy. We will show you how to thread floss between your teeth and the retainer, and how to use small interproximal brushes to help with your oral hygiene.



## Lower bonded retainers

Keeping your teeth clean and healthy will extend the life of your bonded retainer by preventing the build up of scale and reducing the risk of gum disease.

## Upper ribbon retainers

To allow a little movement between the teeth the wire used for ribbon retainers is of a braided flexible construction and is not as strong as a solid wire. It may not withstand biting into hard things; do not use your teeth as tools. The braiding can occasionally fray; should this happen you will need to come in and see us to have the appliance repaired.

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Poor oral hygiene may result in us having to remove your retainer. This may cause your teeth to move back to their untreated position, and this would be very disappointing.



## Upper vacuumed formed retainers

Wear your retainer at all times for the first 48 hours, except when eating, brushing your teeth, playing sports and swimming. After the first 48 hours wear your retainer at night when sleeping.

Do not chew your retainer or it will be destroyed.

Clean your retainer with a small (fingernail) brush and warm soapy water, such as a gentle detergent. Do not use toothpaste as this is abrasive. Remember that hot or boiling water can melt the retainer.

Keep your retainer away from your pets; for some reason, they find them very tasty.

Your retainer is very dimensionally stable. If you forget to wear your retainer for a couple of nights your teeth may shift a little. If you can see daylight between the biting edges of your front teeth and the retainer material your retainer is no longer fitting correctly. Wear your retainer full time for a couple of days, this will gently realign your teeth. Be patient, don't try to force or bite the retainer into place as this will only destroy the retainer.

If you grind your teeth holes may appear, however this does not prevent the retainer from working. Continue to wear your retainer.