



Clear (Essix) Retainers

General Instructions:

- After removal of your braces or aligner attachments, it is recommended to wear your new retainers full time (22 hours per day) for 4 weeks.
- After the first four weeks, you can decrease your retainer wear time to 8-10 hours per night. This is considered nighttime wear. You will continue this nightly for life.
- Never bite your retainers into place or remove them with your tongue. This can deform your retainer and teeth may shift.
- If you notice that your retainers feel very tight when you put them in, increase the number of hours of wear for a few weeks and gradually taper back down to nighttime wear.
- If you notice increasing "daylight" or space between your retainer and your teeth, increase the number of hours of wear for a few weeks and monitor for improvement. You may use chewies in the areas where daylight is noted.
 - If the fit of your retainer does not improve after 7 days of consistent full time wear and chewie use, call the office to schedule an appointment. A new retainer may be needed.
- If you have dental work done (fillings, crowns, implants, cosmetic treatment, etc), please take your retainer to your appointment with you. Your retainer may not fit after certain dental treatments. If your retainer stops fitting or your general dentist advises that a new retainer will be needed after completion of your dental treatment, please call our office and we will help get you scheduled for a replacement retainer.
- Essix retainers most commonly last about 3-5 years, depending heavily on retainer care and grinding or clenching habits. If you notice wear spots, holes, cracks, calculus (hardened deposits) that cannot be removed with proper cleaning, please call our office to schedule a retainer check or replacement visit.

Excellent Retainer Fit



Poor Retainer Wear



Good Retainer Fit



Useful Tools During Retention:

- Hygiene: Maintaining good oral health and retainer cleanliness is important during retention. This will help prevent decay (cavities), keep your gums healthy and improve the lifespan of your retainers.
 - EverSmile Aligner and Retainer Cleaner foam can be used nightly before bed or when you don't have time to brush or soak your retainer. There is also a whitening version for gentle tooth whitening.
 - Dr. Hill also loves the Zima Dental Pod and tablets for maintaining retainer hygiene.
 - Dish soap and a soft-bristled toothbrush may also be used to clean your retainers. Avoid using toothpaste as the abrasives found in most toothpaste can scratch your retainers.