

**Retainers...** are designed to maintain the corrected position of the teeth and jaws achieved with orthodontic treatment. How to wear, and how much to wear your retainers depends upon the retainer option you choose...

## Retainer Options

1. **Completely Removable Retainers** - Able to be removed at any time - Typical recommendation is full time wear at home for 6+ months, then wear every night, forever.
  - a. **Option 1 - Upper and Lower Hawley Retainers** (traditional with wire in front of teeth and orthodontic acrylic behind) - [OFC - 150-10d]
    - i. *Advantage(s)* - These retainers are sturdy and hold correction well if worn as recommended. Easy to brush and floss teeth.
    - ii. *Disadvantage(s)* - Removable, and if not worn as recommended, unwanted tooth movement is expected, especially in the lower front area. Patient cooperation is essential.
  - b. **Option 2 - Upper and Lower Clear Retainers** - (look like Invisalign or tooth whitening trays and are clear) - [OFC - 152-2d+]
    - i. *Advantage(s)* - Holds correction best, except for fixed retainers. These retainers are esthetic, easier to wear, and less noticeable than the Hawley retainers in Option 1 above.
    - ii. *Disadvantage(s)* - Patient cooperation is essential. Less sturdy than Hawleys and will likely need replacement from time to time. Average length of life is 1-2+ years, depending on care.
2. **Removable/Fixed Retainer Combinations** - Hold the less stable lower front teeth with an attached, always on retainer, with a removable upper - Typical recommendation is full time upper retainer wear at home for 6+ months, then wear every night, forever.
  - a. **Options - Upper removable Hawley OR Upper Clear Retainer with Lower Fixed and Lower Clear Back-up Retainers** - [OFC - Uhaw 152-2d+/150.80-10d+ -- Uclr 152-2d+/80-10d+]
    - i. *Advantage(s)* - Upper retainer advantages same as in Removable Retainer section above. Lower holds ideally since it is always fixed to the teeth, like the braces were. Clear lower back-up retainer prevents movement if lower fixed retainer becomes loose. Treatment result is held better with less patient cooperation
    - ii. *Disadvantage(s)* - Upper retainer disadvantages same as in Removable Retainer section above. Lower fixed retainer requires more maintenance to keep hygienic, and flossing requires more effort. Lower retainer can be dislodged or bent from hard or very sticky foods, requiring replacement or repair.

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