

Century Orthodontics
Our third Century of orthodontic Excellence
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Types of Retainers: Pros & Cons

We have found that it is the rare patient who does not need a retainer to hold the teeth straight after any type of orthodontic treatment. There are three major types of retainers that we use and each type has its pros and cons. Sometimes the doctor decides that one is much better in a certain situation, but often times they all work equally well if worn correctly. In deciding which type to choose please read the following information.

Typically we request that removable retainers be worn 22 hrs a day for the first month and then at night indefinitely.

Hawley (traditional) Retainers:

Traditional retainers (Hawley appliances) have been used for many years to preserve a beautiful smile. These retainers have a colored piece of hard plastic that is seated to the roof of the mouth and a wire that runs around the front of the teeth. Traditional retainers can last for many years. One nice thing about Hawley retainers is you get to pick a color, design, and/or sticker. Because we can adjust the wires, some minor orthodontic movement can be done with Hawley retainers. Your first Hawley retainer(s) is included in the contracted braces fee. The price to replace this type of retainer starts at \$225 a piece.

Essix and Vivera (clear "Invisalign" type) Retainer:

Clear retainers are a wonderful way of holding teeth in their correct position. They are very comfortable and patients don't seem to have many complaints about speaking with them. The clear retainers are made from different types of plastic (the plastics vary in strength and clarity). Clear retainers closely cover the teeth, which make them very comfortable and "invisible" to wear. They, however, are not as durable as traditional retainers. They can stretch out and not hold the alignment perfectly. For this reason they will need to be replaced more often than the traditional Hawley type retainers. \$110 a piece

Bonded Retainers:

Bonded retainers are a "guaranteed" way of holding teeth in their perfect position. Normally this type of retainer is selected by the doctor to be used in certain hard to hold situations (most often the lower anterior teeth). This retainer is a metal wire that is glued to the inside surface of the teeth (24-7!). There is always chance it may come loose, but it can be glued back on if no tooth movement has occurred (come in right away if it comes loose.) Bonded retainers are normally \$95 to replace but depend on the number of teeth bonded.

Removable Retainer Options:

- **Traditional (Hawley) retainers**
 - First retainer(s) included in contract fee
 - Made from hard colored plastic and stainless steel wires
 - Usually just upper arch (also lower if we do not use a bonded retainer)
 - Guaranteed for 12 months
 - Replacement fee currently \$225
 - Lifespan 5-20 years if worn as instructed
 - No back-up retainer if lost or broken
- **Clear retainers**
 - **Essix retainers**
 - First pair included in contract fee (if used instead of Hawley(s) and bonded retainer)
 - Limited lifespan...we only guarantee their effectiveness for 6 months
 - Should be replaced every 12 months
 - Current replacement fee \$110 per arch
 - These appliances **can be used for bleaching (ask us!)**
 - **Vivera retainers**
 - Similar to Essix but factory made by Invisalign
 - Comes in sets of 4 (\$475 for upper and lower sets, \$275 for one arch)
 - Could theoretically get 4 years of wear with each set
 - All Vivera retainers are constructed at one time so:
 - Any major dental work (veneers, crowns) can affect the fit of all the retainers and require new impressions, retainers and fees
 - Failure to wear as instructed may cause sufficient relapse to require new impressions, retainers and fees