

# RETAINERS

## CONGRATULATIONS!

On this day you begin an important phase of your orthodontic treatment... RETENTION. Over the past months your teeth have moved a considerable distance and are not yet firmly in place. Your orthodontic retainers have been carefully designed to hold your teeth in their new position until they are stable. The retention period will generally last 1-2 years and should be maintained indefinitely. This period is an essential part of your treatment.

Retainers are designed to maintain your teeth in their corrected positions. Follow these instructions carefully:

- Soreness will disappear in a few days, even after an adjustment. If you have a localized sore spot after three or four days, call us for an appointment.
- Don't flip the retainer with your tongue. This could damage your teeth.
- The retainer's plastic taste will disappear quickly, and your speech will return to normal after a few days of wearing the retainer.
- Clean your retainer by brushing with toothpaste. Do not soak in denture cleaner or mouthwash as this will weaken the solder joints (where the wires are joined) or damage the retainer. Plax or Retainer Brite are good for soaking. If you don't clean regularly, a hard deposit will accumulate on the surface and irritate your gums.
- ALWAYS BRING YOUR RETAINER TO EACH APPOINTMENT!
- When it's not in your mouth, keep the retainer in the special box given to you (not in your pocket or wrapped in a paper towel or napkin—someone will surely throw it away thinking it's only trash). The plastic retainer box will protect your retainer from accidental damage or breakage under excessive pressure.
- Keep retainers away from pets.

## TYPES OF RETAINERS

Three kinds of retainers are used in our office. Each has indications and advantages over the others. Drs. Karr & Blackman will choose the one that is right for you.



- “Hawley” retainers are made of plastic that is molded to your mouth, and a wire to hold your teeth in position (this is the most common type of retainer). Choose from a variety of colors (including clear) and interesting designs.



- “Essix” retainers are made of a clear plastic (similar to the Invisalign® appliance). Some people love these, while others feel that they are too uncomfortable.



- “Bonded” retainers are glued to the back of your teeth and are not removable.

1820 Haynes St.  
Clarksville, TN 37043  
(p) 931•647•6370  
(f) 931•647•7975



www.drskarrandblackman.com

1281 Parkway Pl. 101st Blvd.  
Clarksville, TN 37042  
(p) 931•552•1339  
(f) 931•647•7975



**KARR•BLACKMAN**  
orthodontics  
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