

Different Types of Retainers

1. Essix (Clear plastic retainers)



2. Hawley retainers



3. Wire retainers (AKA permanent retainer)



Pros and Cons

1. Essix retainer

Advantages:

- It's virtually invisible, so you're more likely to wear it. That means relapse is less likely.
- It's less bulky and may be more comfortable than a Hawley retainer.
- It's less likely to affect your speech than a Hawley retainer.

Disadvantages:

- It can't be adjusted if you need realignment. It would need to be replaced.
- If it cracks or breaks, it can't be repaired.
- It may affect your speech more than permanent retainers.
- It can warp if exposed to heat.
- It tends to become discolored (and more visible) over time.
- Top and bottom teeth don't touch naturally with this type of retainer.
- It can trap liquids against your teeth, which can cause cavities.

2. Hawley retainers

Advantages:

- The retainer can be adjusted if you need a better fit when you first get it or if your teeth need slight realignment later.
- It's slightly more durable than a clear plastic retainer.
- It may be repairable if broken.
- It can last for years if used and cared for properly.
- The upper and lower teeth touch naturally with this type of retainer.

Disadvantages:

- It affects your speech more than other retainers.
- It's more noticeable than the other types of retainers.
- The wire may irritate your lip or cheeks initially.

3. Wire retainers (AKA permanent retainer)

Advantages:

- Complying with instructions for when and how long to wear it isn't a problem.
- It's not visible to others.
- It's not likely to affect your speech.
- It can't be misplaced or lost.
- It can't be damaged easily.

Disadvantages:

- It may be hard to maintain oral hygiene, especially flossing, because you can't remove it. This can cause tartar and plaque to build up, possibly leading to gum disease.
- It's attached, which you may not like.
- The metal wire might irritate your tongue.