

Will I need retainers?

Most probably yes.

The tissues around the roots take time to adjust to the new tooth positions and there is a particular risk of relapse in the early months after the brace is removed. Even in the longer term some risk remains and the best advice is to continue retention indefinitely if at all possible.

Retainers may be removable or fixed, and there are advantages and disadvantages to both.

- Removable retainers are usually worn full time initially, but reduced to night times only later. They are effective but obviously depend on the patient remembering to wear them. They will need occasional repair or replacement, a relatively simple task.
- Fixed retainers are usually bonded to the back of the teeth. They are therefore in place all the time and are highly effective. A high standard of tooth cleaning in the vicinity of the retainer is essential to avoid gum problems. They do need regular inspection because if any of the bonds fails, the tooth in question may start to drift out of position. For this reason it is essential for the patient to contact the orthodontist at once if there is a breakage. Many general dentists are unhappy about repairing a fixed retainer and a visit to an orthodontist will be needed
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