



Dr. **michelle** cartier  
ORTHODONTIST  
*embrace your smile!*

## ORTHODONTIC RETENTION

### Maintain Your Smile!

Finally, your braces have been removed and your smile is perfect. However, your orthodontic journey is not complete. To keep your smile looking its best, you have to wear a retainer. Retainers are needed to control or limit potential changes in tooth position. They are used after braces treatment to hold teeth in their correct alignment while the surrounding gums, bone, and muscle adjust to the new positioning of your teeth.

### Types of Retainers: Removable or Fixed

- Traditional removable retainers typically include a metal wire that surrounds the front teeth and is attached to an acrylic arch that sits on the roof of the mouth. The metal wires can be adjusted to address minor movement if needed.



- Clear retainers are a more aesthetic alternative to wire retainers, yet they are not as durable. Clear retainers fit over all the surfaces of your teeth.



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- Fixed retainers consist of wires bonded/glued behind the bottom and/or top teeth, and it is often kept in place for life.



### Pros and Cons

- Removable retainers can be taken out for eating and hygiene routines.
- Removable retainers can get lost easily, so remember to keep yours in the case whenever you remove them to eat or brush.
- A fixed retainer is great if you don't want to keep track of it, or if you don't want to worry about how many hours per day it must be worn.
- Fixed retainers require extra attention when you clean your teeth. Special cleaning devices are needed to floss your teeth when wearing fixed retainers.