

PATIENT GUIDE

Your first week with braces

What the first few days feel like, what helps, and why it gets easier fast. · 30 Aug 2026

Your teeth start moving from today, and they will grumble about it for a few days. That is the braces working. Soft food, patience and proper brushing carry you through the first week, and by week two most people barely notice them.

3 to 5 days, then it settles

Tender teeth at the start are normal; it means they are moving. Soft foods and cold water help.

3x brushing a day

After every meal. Small circles around every bracket and along the gums, and interdental brushes for what the toothbrush misses.

1 rule for food

If it is hard, sticky or chewy, it is a bracket breaker. Cut apples and carrots up, skip toffees and ice, and never chew pens.

0 panic required

Poking wire or loose bracket? Press wax on it and message us. Rubbing spots toughen up within a week or two.

Days one to three

Biting feels strange and your teeth feel tender, especially the front ones. Eat soft things: pasta, eggs, soup, smoothies, yoghurt, mashed anything. Cold water and cold food soothe. Chewing on the back teeth is easier than biting with the front.

Your lips and cheeks are meeting brackets for the first time and may feel rough or rubbed. Dry the spot with a tissue and press a small ball of the wax we gave you over the bracket. Warm salt-water rinses help any sore patch settle.

Days four to seven

The ache fades steadily. Speech, which may have sounded odd on day one, is back to normal. Normal food comes back, with the one rule above in mind. Cleaning takes a little longer than it used to, and it matters more; there is a whole guide on brushing with braces.

Completely normal

- Teeth feeling slightly loose. That is them moving.
- A little extra saliva and a lisp on the first day or two.
- A milder version of the first-week ache after each adjustment.
- Small white marks on the lips or cheeks where they rubbed. They heal.

Message us if

- A bracket comes loose or a wire pokes. Wax first, then message.
- An ulcer will not settle after a few days of warm salt-water rinses.
- Discomfort is severe, or is not easing by the end of the first week.
- Anything worries you at all. Quick questions are welcome.

Call us on (09)520 1880 or email hello@milkkorthodontics.co.nz.

Week one is the worst of it. From here, it is routine.