

PATIENT GUIDE

Removable plates and other appliances

The small appliances that do a specific job: what each is for, how to wear it, and how to keep it. · 30 Aug 2026

Not every job needs braces. A removable plate can tip a single tooth, hold a space open for a permanent tooth still on its way, or help break a thumb habit. They are simple, they work only while they are in, and the habit of wearing them is the whole treatment.

The ones you may meet

APPLIANCE · WHAT IT DOES

A removable plate with a spring or a screw

Moves one or two teeth a short distance, or widens the arch a little. Worn as directed, often full time apart from meals.

A space maintainer

Holds the gap left by a first tooth (a primary tooth) lost early, so the permanent tooth has room to come through. Often fixed to a back tooth and simply left alone.

A habit appliance

A small fixed or removable device that makes thumb-sucking or tongue-thrusting less satisfying, so the habit fades and the teeth can settle.

A bite plate

A plate with a flat platform behind the front teeth that stops the back teeth meeting for a while, letting a deep bite open.

A functional appliance

A larger removable device worn in the evenings and overnight that holds the lower jaw forward while a child grows, to reduce a large overjet.

Wearing a removable appliance

Follow the hours we give you exactly; they are chosen for the job. Put it in with your fingers, never by biting it into place, and take it out by lifting the clasps at the back on both sides at once. Speech and saliva are odd for the first two or three days, then settle. Keep it in for talking and reading aloud, which is how speech adapts fastest.

Keeping it

- Brush it with a soft brush and cool water after meals. No hot water: the plastic warps.
- In its case whenever it is out, and never wrapped in a tissue.
- Keep it away from dogs and younger siblings.
- Bring it to every visit, even if it is not in.

Message us if

- It cracks, a wire bends, or it no longer clips in firmly.
- It has been out for more than a couple of days and now feels tight. Do not force it; message us.
- It is lost. The sooner we know, the less ground is lost.

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