

PATIENT GUIDE

Wearing and changing your aligners

Why 22 hours is the number, how to change sets without losing ground, and what happens when wear slips. · 30
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Aligners only move teeth while they are in. Twenty-two or more hours a day keeps a steady push on the teeth; anything less lets them drift back between wears, and the next set no longer fits the plan. The change schedule is the treatment, and it is the one thing that is entirely in your hands.

Why 22 hours

A tooth moves when a light force sits on it continuously. Take the force off for a few hours and the tooth begins to settle back; put it on again and the first hours are spent recovering lost ground rather than moving forward. Two hours out covers meals and brushing. Much more than that and each week achieves less than it should, which is how a twelve-month plan becomes an eighteen-month one.

Changing to a new set

1. Check the week is done

Count from the day you started this set. Seven days, unless we gave you a different interval. A tray that feels loose early is not a reason to move on.

2. Swap at bedtime

Put the new set in last thing at night. The tightest hours pass while you sleep and the tray is fully seated by morning.

3. Keep the old set

Rinse it, dry it, and put it in a labelled case. It is your backup if the new one is lost or cracked.

4. Note the date

Write it on the bag or in your phone. It stops the drift where a week quietly becomes nine days.

If wear slips

A missed day happens. Go back to full wear and stay on the current set an extra day or two before changing. If a set has been out for several days and the next one will not seat, do not force it: go back to the previous set until it fits, then message us so we can adjust the schedule. Skipping ahead to catch up never works; the tray simply will not fit.

Good to know

- Bring your current set and the next two to every visit.
- Travelling? Pack the current set, the next two, the previous set and a case. Change on schedule wherever you are.
- Hot drinks warp trays and coffee or tea stains them. Water only while they are in.

Consistency beats intensity.