

Patient Instructions

Invisalign Clear Aligner Therapy

Welcome to your Invisalign journey! Your clear aligners are custom-made to gradually and gently move your teeth into their ideal positions. Following these guidelines will help you achieve the best results possible in the shortest time.

Wearing Your Aligners

- Wear your aligners for **20–22 hours per day** — this is the most important rule. The more consistently you wear them, the better your results.
- Only remove your aligners to **eat, drink (anything other than plain water), brush, and floss.**
- Advance to your next set of aligners as instructed — typically every **1–2 weeks.**
- When switching to a new set, do so at night before bed — your aligners will feel tightest when new and you'll sleep through the initial pressure.
- Always keep your previous set of aligners in case you lose or damage a current tray.
- Never skip a set of aligners, even if they feel loose. Each tray builds on the previous one.

Eating & Drinking

- Always remove your aligners before eating or drinking anything other than **plain cold or room-temperature water.**
- Hot beverages (coffee, tea, hot water) can warp and distort your aligner trays — never drink them with aligners in.
- Colored or sugary drinks (juice, soda, wine) with aligners in will stain the trays and promote tooth decay.
- After eating, brush your teeth before reinserting your aligners whenever possible. If brushing isn't possible, rinse your mouth thoroughly with water.

Cleaning Your Aligners

- Rinse your aligners with **cool water** every time you remove them.
- Clean your aligners twice daily by gently brushing them with a soft-bristled toothbrush and a small amount of clear, unscented soap or Invisalign cleaning crystals.
- Do not use toothpaste on your aligners — it is abrasive and will scratch and cloud the plastic.
- Do not use hot water, bleach, or mouthwash to clean your aligners as these can warp or discolor them.
- Soak your aligners daily in Invisalign cleaning crystals, Retainer Brite, or a denture cleaning tablet (dissolved in cool water) for a deeper clean.
- Never leave aligners exposed to air for extended periods — store them in their case when not in use.

Oral Hygiene

- Brush your teeth for 2 minutes, twice daily, and floss once daily — this is especially important during Invisalign treatment.
- Because aligners trap anything against your teeth, inserting them over uncleaned teeth increases your cavity risk significantly.
- Fluoride toothpaste is recommended. Your dentist may prescribe a fluoride rinse for added protection.

- A water flosser can be a helpful addition to your routine during aligner treatment.

Handling Discomfort

- Mild soreness or pressure when advancing to a new aligner set is normal and typically resolves within 2–3 days.
- Over-the-counter pain relievers such as **ibuprofen or acetaminophen** can help manage any initial tenderness.
- If an aligner has a sharp edge that is irritating your gums or cheeks, call our office — we can smooth it quickly.
- Some patients experience a temporary lisp when starting a new tray. This usually resolves within a few days as your tongue adapts.

Attachments & Buttons

- Some treatment plans require small tooth-colored attachments bonded to your teeth to help the aligners grip and apply targeted movement.
- Avoid biting into hard foods directly on attachments (apples, crusty bread) — cut food into smaller pieces instead.
- If an attachment falls off, do not be alarmed — contact our office so we can reattach it at your next visit.
- Elastics (rubber bands) may be prescribed at some point during treatment and must be worn as directed for your bite correction to work.

Lost or Damaged Aligners

- If you lose or damage an aligner, contact our office as soon as possible.
- In the meantime, go back to wearing your previous set of aligners (do not move forward to the next set).
- There may be a replacement fee for lost trays, so it is important to keep them in their case whenever not in use.

Your Progress & Appointments

- Attend all scheduled check-up appointments — typically every **6–8 weeks**. These are essential for monitoring your progress and providing new aligner trays.
- Treatment time varies by case, but most patients complete their active aligner phase in 6–18 months.
- Retainers are required after completing Invisalign to maintain your results. We will discuss your retention plan as you approach the end of treatment.

Questions? We're Here to Help.

Gardens Dentistry • (561) 508-6923

If your aligners don't fit correctly, if you lose a set, or have any concerns, please call us right away.