

Headgear

What is the purpose of Headgear?

Headgear is used to move the upper back teeth backwards or keep them in the present position whilst front teeth are being straightened. This allows back teeth to fit together properly leading to successful orthodontic treatment.

What does it look like and how does it work?

Headgear is made up of a metal face-bow, headstrap and safety strap as seen in the picture. Part of the metal bow attaches to the top back teeth via fixed or removable braces and part attaches to a headstrap outside the mouth.



Are there any special instructions I need to know?

Yes. Your Orthodontist will have shown you how to put on and remove the Headgear. Important points to remember:

- Remove the outer Headgear first before the inner bow. Never remove the Headgear in one piece by pulling it over the face.
- Do not wear Headgear during sports.
- Do not wear Headgear during eating or drinking.
- At night, make sure the safety strap is attached to stop the Headgear coming off at night and causing any injury.
- If you have any problems e.g. the Headgear comes off at night or the facebow detaches, STOP wearing it and contact the Orthodontist.
- Very rarely, eye injuries can happen when wearing Headgear. If this occurs it is a medical emergency and you must attend the local Accident and Emergency Department for an ophthalmic opinion.

- Always bring your Headgear to each visit to the Orthodontist and report any problems.

How often and for how long do I have to wear Headgear?

Headgear is worn for part of the total orthodontic treatment. It is normally worn for between 10 to 14 hours a day. It is usually worn in the evening and at night. Your Orthodontist will give you a time chart to record the hours of wear. If the Headgear is worn for the specified time the more successful your treatment will be.

Will it be painful or uncomfortable?

Once the Headgear is fitted, your teeth may ache for a few days. Mild painkillers that you normally take for headache will help.

What about tooth brushing?

You should remove the Headgear when you brush your teeth. It is important to brush very well at least 2 times a day with fluoride toothpaste.

Does my Headgear need to be adjusted?

It is important to bring your Headgear to every visit with the orthodontist. This allows us to check it is working well and make any necessary adjustments. DO NOT make any adjustments yourself.

What if I don't wear my Headgear?

If you don't wear your Headgear daily then it may be difficult to fully straighten your teeth or prevent them from sticking out!

The success of your treatment is directly dependent on how well you wear your brace. We may stop treatment before your bite has been corrected if we feel that you are not wearing the brace as instructed.

Are there any risks of treatment?

Please read the risks and benefits information sheet, risks include:

- Poor cleaning around braces and a high sugar diet during treatment can cause damage to the teeth in the form of white or brown marks.
- Gum disease including bleeding gums and recession.
- Teeth with big fillings in them or that have had trauma can die over a long period of time, with or without braces.

**If your brace breaks you should come to the departments Orthodontic
Emergency Clinic:**

**Please contact our team on
020 7767 3200 to get an emergency appointment. The clinics run Monday-
Thursday 0900-0930.**