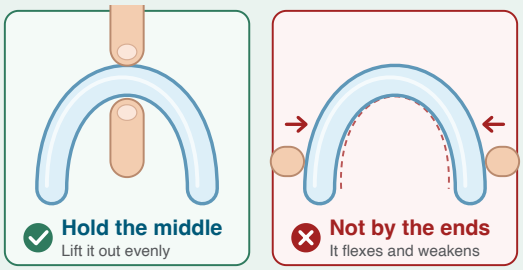
SANDQUIST DENTISTRY
LAS VEGAS SINCE 1968

702-734-0776
lasvegasdentistry.com

Caring for Your Aligners, Night Guard or Orthotic

Each one was made to fit one mouth. Most of what ruins one is how it is handled and heat, and both are easy to avoid.

Hold it from the middle, never by the two ends. Aligners, night guards and orthotics are all horseshoes, and squeezing or pulling on the two back ends flexes them open. Do that day after day and it weakens, distorts, or cracks. Take it in and out holding the **middle**, and lift it evenly rather than levering one side off first.



Cleaning it

- Rinse it under cool water as soon as it comes out, before anything dries on it.
- Brush it with a regular soft toothbrush kept just for it. **Plain water is enough.** A little hand soap or dish soap, or a non-abrasive toothpaste, is fine too.
- **Avoid abrasive toothpastes**, particularly whitening or "extra whitening" types. They scratch the surface, and scratches hold stain and bacteria.

Heat is the enemy

- **Never hot water.** Not to clean it, not to soften it, not to sterilize it.
- No dishwasher, no boiling, no microwave.
- Never leave it in a car. A dashboard in a Las Vegas summer will warp it in an afternoon.
- Heat changes the shape permanently, and a warped appliance cannot simply be adjusted back.

Storage

- In its case, every time it is out of your mouth. Not wrapped in a napkin, which is how they end up in the trash.
- Keep the case out of direct sun.
- **Away from dogs.** This is not a joke. Dogs find them by smell and destroy them in minutes.
- NIGHT GUARDS AND ORTHOTICS If you wear it every night, letting it air dry during the day is fine; a wet appliance shut in a case grows things. When it is not in use for a stretch, a trip or a break from wearing it, store it in water rather than bone dry. Acrylic needs moisture while it sits unused.

Bring it to every visit

- Bring it to every appointment, including cleanings. **We clean it in our ultrasonic cleaner** and check the fit.
- NIGHT GUARDS AND ORTHOTICS The wear on the appliance is information. It shows us where the force is going, and what it is telling us about your bite.

If you have an orthotic

- An orthotic is not the same as a night guard. A night guard keeps your teeth apart; an orthotic is both a diagnostic tool and a treatment. It is repositioning your jaw, and it typically needs adjusting **weekly at first, then every two weeks until you are comfortable, usually two or three months**.
- **Those adjustments are not aftercare. They are the treatment.** An orthotic that is never adjusted is not doing its job. Keep the appointments even when it feels fine. Feeling fine is what progress feels like.

A new night guard: what is normal at first

- Extra saliva for the first few nights.
- Mild tooth awareness in the morning that settles within an hour.
- Taking it out in your sleep for the first week or two. Put it back in if you wake and notice.
- We check your bite about a week after you get it.

Call us if: it cracks or a piece breaks off · it no longer seats fully. **With a night guard or orthotic, also call if** it feels tight in a new way · a tooth stays sore through the day · your bite feels different when the appliance is out and stays different · jaw pain is worse rather than better after wearing it. **Do not keep wearing a night guard or orthotic that has changed how your teeth meet.** Stop and call us.

Questions? Call 702-734-0776

2650 Lake Sahara Dr., #160, Las Vegas, NV 89117 · Mon & Tue 7-12, 1-5 · Wed 7-12, 1-3 · Thu 7-12, 1-4

More at lasvegasdentistry.com/home-care/ and /services/night-guards/. General information, not a substitute for an exam.

Watch the video