

How to Sleep Like a Pro

To get more restful, restorative sleep, try these tips.

1 MIN TIP



- Exercise early. Exercise can help you fall asleep faster and sleep more soundly—as long as it's done at the right time. Try to finish exercising at least three hours before bed or exercise earlier in the day.
- Lighten up evening meals. Eat dinner several hours before bedtime and avoid foods at night that cause indigestion. If you get hungry at night, snack on foods that you know won't disturb your sleep.
- Avoid caffeine, alcohol, and nicotine. Caffeine is a stimulant that can keep you awake and decrease the quality of your sleep. Avoid caffeine for four to six hours before bedtime to avoid sleep disruption. Similarly, alcohol and smoking may cause wakefulness; refrain from using alcohol or tobacco products too close to bedtime.
- Make your bedroom a sleep-inducing environment. A quiet, dark, cool environment can help promote sound sleep, so:
 - Decrease outside noise by using earplugs or listening to ambient music.
 - Use heavy curtains, blackout shades, or an eye mask to block light—light tells the brain that it's time to wake up.
 - Keep the room well ventilated and the temperature comfortably cool, between 60 and 75°F (15.5-23.8°C).
 - Establish a soothing pre-sleep routine.
 - Ease the transition from wake time to sleep time with relaxing activities an hour or so before bed.
 - Take a bath or read a book.
 - Avoid stressful, stimulating activities, such as answering emails or doing work.
 - Avoid electronic light if possible—research has shown that the blue light emitted from the screens of smartphones and computers disrupts sleep patterns and decreases the body's production of melatonin—a hormone that regulates sleep cycles.
- Purge your worries. If you tend to take your problems to bed, try writing them down—and then putting them aside. Jot down any unresolved issues or unfinished items on your mental to-do list before you go to bed. Purging your working memory will make it easier to fall asleep and stay asleep.
- Keep a consistent sleep schedule. Going to bed and waking up at the same time each day sets the body's "internal clock". Try to stick as closely as possible to your routine on weekends to avoid a Monday-morning sleep deficit.