



The importance of sleep hygiene has become more evident over time as medical journals have identified certain habits that negatively affect sleep and others that improve it. Following this sleep hygiene fact sheet will improve your sleep quality and help you make the best of the time you spend sleeping.

Sleep Hygiene Fact Sheet

Hit the sack at about the same time every night.

Your body tries to produce melatonin (the sleep inducing chemical) at the same time every night. Going to sleep at different times delays melatonin production. This causes you to spend more time in bed trying to fall asleep. Make arrangements be in bed +/- 20 min from the same time every night.

Keep naps below 20 minutes.

As you go through your day, adenosine builds up in your brain, causing you to feel more and more tired. Napping removes the adenosine attached to your brain (hence why you feel rested after a nap). The problem is that, since you're removing adenosine, you'll be less sleepy at bedtime. If you keep your naps below 20 minutes you'll feel energized without disturbing your night sleep.

Get the recommended amount of sleep for your age.

Missing out on sleep builds up. Get the recommended amount of sleep to prevent you from feeling sleep deprived as the week goes on. It's recommended for adults to get 7 to 9 hours of sleep per night. You can visit [Rested Life](#) for a table of the recommended amount of sleep at different ages.

Exercise regularly.

Exercising has great benefits for sleep. Note that exercising before bedtime has not been proven to affect your sleep quality. In fact, this myth was busted by a [study](#) from the National Sleep Foundation in 2013.

Avoid blue-light emitting devices at least 30 minutes before going to sleep.

Cellphones, TV's, tablets and other electronics emit light at wavelengths that interfere with the body's production of melatonin. Using these devices too close to sleep time makes it more difficult to fall asleep and can cause you to wake up more easily throughout the night. Good news is that you can download various apps [here](#) to filter out the blue light.

Soak in natural sunlight in the morning.

Open the windows and let the natural sunlight in. Opening the windows and receiving natural sunlight in the morning helps your body realize it's time to wake up and allows the body to establish more regular circadian rhythms.

Keep your bedroom pitch black.

Even tiny amounts of light can disturb your sleep at night. Cover or turn off all lights when going to sleep, especially those coming from charging cables or electronics because these can emit blue light which further affects your sleep.

Maintain your room temperature between 60°F and 67°F.

Some [sleep studies](#) have found that 60°F to 67°F is the ideal temperature range for sleep.

Only use your bed for sleep and sex.

The brain is great at making connections between places and activities. If you regularly use your bed for studying or browsing the web, your body will struggle to fall asleep. If, instead, you train your brain to associate your bed with sleep and sex only, you will start to sleep better at night.

Wear socks.

A [study](#) by Swiss researchers found that wearing socks helps people fall asleep faster. According to the paper, wearing socks while sleeping works because the warmth on the feet help signal the body that it's time for sleep.

Avoid caffeine and nicotine at least 4 hours before sleep.

Caffeine and nicotine are stimulants that can hinder your ability to experience restful and refreshing sleep. Avoid caffeine 4 hours before sleep to prevent any leftover caffeine in your system from affecting your sleep quality. Also, eliminate or cut down on nicotine to curb its damaging effects on REM sleep.

Avoid alcohol and narcotics.

Though most people find it easier to fall asleep after they've been drinking, alcohol and some narcotics shorten your REM sleep cycles. [REM sleep](#) is often considered the most important stage of sleep. Lower amounts of REM sleep lead to less restorative sleep and more daytime sleepiness.

Silence your phone.

Text and call notifications during bedtime are a big distraction. Not to mention, the feeling of expecting a message or call by itself is enough to keep most people up at night. Handle all your phone business before going to sleep, that way you can put the phone on silence and focus on catching your zzz's.

□ **Set your alarm clock every night.**

Always set an alarm clock for the next day. Setting an alarm clock will spare you the worry of being late for work or school. Make a habit of double checking that it works before going to sleep. This saves you the hassle of waking up throughout the night to make sure that your alarm clock is set.

□ **Avoid large meals before bed time.**

The body goes into a state of heightened metabolic activity to process large meals. Since your body is still working while it's processing a large meal, you may experience difficulty falling asleep and more fragile sleep.

□ **Have white noise in your bedroom.**

White noise can keep you from being awakened by other sounds at night. The sound of a fan blowing is a common source of white noise in many bedrooms. Alternatively, you can also try playing some sleep or nature music at a low volume.

□ **Drink some water.**

Drink enough water before bedtime to prevent you from waking up thirsty throughout the night. However, avoid drinking too much to where you must wake up to use the restroom.

Note: The information in this sleep hygiene fact sheet is not meant to serve as a substitute for professional medical advice. If you have any worries or concerns about your sleep quality, make sure to bring those up to your family doctor. This **Rested Life Sleep Hygiene Fact Sheet** is **copyrighted** and shall not be used or reproduced in any way without permission of Rested Life.