

# Sleep Hygiene

## Evidence-based habits that support better sleep

Sleep hygiene refers to habits that make sleep more likely and more restful. These strategies are most helpful when practised consistently over time.



### 1. Anchor your wake-up time

Get up at roughly the same time every day, including weekends. A regular wake time helps set your body clock.



### 2. Get morning light

Try to get outside or into bright natural light soon after waking. Morning light helps your brain know when to feel alert and when to feel sleepy later.



### 3. Move your body regularly

Regular exercise supports sleep. Gentle or moderate movement is helpful for many people; if vigorous exercise revs you up, finish it earlier in the evening.



### 4. Go to bed when sleepy

Try not to force sleep just because it is 'bedtime'. Going to bed when sleepy helps strengthen the link between bed and sleep.



### 5. Use bed mainly for sleep

Use your bed mainly for sleep and intimacy, not for scrolling, work, or long periods of worrying. This helps your brain associate bed with sleep.



### 6. If you cannot sleep, reset gently

If you have been awake for a while and are getting frustrated, get out of bed for a short time. Do a quiet, low-light activity and return when you feel sleepy again.



### 7. Be thoughtful with naps

If naps affect your night sleep, keep them short (about 20–30 minutes) and earlier in the day.



### 8. Reduce caffeine, nicotine, and alcohol

Caffeine can disrupt sleep even when used hours before bed. Nicotine is stimulating, and alcohol may make you sleepy at first but often disrupts sleep later in the night.



### 9. Create a wind-down routine

Set aside 30–60 minutes before bed for quieter, less stimulating activities. Dim lights and reduce stimulating screen use if it keeps your mind switched on.



### 10. Optimise your sleep space

Aim for a bedroom that is dark, quiet, comfortable, and slightly cool. Small supports such as earplugs, an eye mask, or white noise can help some people.



**TAKEAWAY:** Better sleep usually comes from small habits repeated consistently, not from doing everything perfectly.

Adapted from sleep hygiene and behavioural insomnia resources.

#### References

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