

HOW TO BE MORE SUCCESSFUL AT SLEEPING



Despite being a nightly activity, consistently sleeping well can be a real challenge. Stress, late-night leisure activities, and general bad habits can all add up to restless nights and lethargic days.

Whether your sleep struggles developed recently or have been there your whole life, it's not too late to turn things around! Here are some ways to get started.

YOU SNOOZE, YOU LOSE

After an alarm jolts you out of sleep, hitting the snooze button can feel like the most natural thing in the world.

This may feel good during those fleeting moments, but the strategy is inherently counterproductive. Ideally, your body is at the tail end of its REM cycle (the rejuvenation period of the sleep process) when you first awaken. Getting up at this point will give you more energy for the day.

But drifting back to dreamland shortly after waking plunges the body *back* into a REM cycle, and when the alarm goes off again, the mind has to make a sharp switch to consciousness. This leaves you far groggier and foggier than if you had just stayed awake after the first alarm.

Resisting the temptation to hit snooze is much easier said than done. That's why the time-tested trick of moving your alarm someplace out of reach is so effective. If you're properly rested, it should only take a few short minutes of moving around for your sleepiness to wear off, so physically getting up to turn off the alarm can kill two birds with one stone.



BLUE-LIGHT BLUES

Melatonin is an indispensable ingredient for proper sleep, but devices like your phone, laptop, and television all emit blue light—which actively suppresses the hormone. The longer into the night you stare at glowing screens, the worse your quality of sleep will be.

The next time you're using an electronic device close to bedtime, turn the screen's brightness down to its lowest setting. This minor change pays big dividends by reducing the blue light your eyes take in.

If you want to take it a step further, decrease the color saturation on your screen. This can be accomplished through menu settings, free apps, or by using the night shift mode on iOS devices. Decreasing saturation changes the display's output to more closely mirror the amount of light provided by mother nature after the sun goes down.



SCHEDULE YOUR SUCCESS

As off-putting as it might seem, keeping a consistent schedule is perhaps the best thing you can do for the overall quality of your sleep. That means going to bed at the same time each night and waking up at the same time each morning—including on days off.

While that may seem restrictive at first, the following benefits more than make up for it:

- **Sharper focus**
- **Reduced insomnia**
- **Elevated positivity**
- **Improved immune system functionality**
- **Better memory**

And those perks are just the tip of the iceberg. Sleeping in a couple days each week isn't quite as tempting when you realize what it requires you to give up.



MAKE YOUR DREAMS COME TRUE

Breaking the cycle of bad sleep habits won't happen overnight, so don't give up at the first sign of trouble.

Why not set a goal to try these strategies for a week? Just commit to seven days—no more, no less. At the end, evaluate how you feel to see if permanently incorporating these techniques will make a tangible difference in your day-to-day life.

A more invigorating rest is within your reach.

