

# How to Get a Good Night's Sleep

(and why those Zzzz's are the secret to living your best life)

**Tired? Welcome to the club.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has found nearly one-third of American adults get fewer than seven hours of sleep per night. Despite all the talk of work-life balance, for many of us the easiest thing to skip when our schedules are bursting at the seams with family and work responsibilities is sleep.

Because our culture encourages a fast-paced lifestyle, it seems natural that getting more done requires giving up some time in the sack. And if the trade-off is bleary-eyed morning grumpiness, we'll take it.

Here's why that attitude is counterproductive. Multiple studies show that you're actually *less productive* when you aren't getting enough sleep. In fact, sleeping more may actually help you get more done during the day.



## Your Productivity Wake-Up Call

According to experts, adults need 7 to 9 hours of sleep per night. Skipping even an hour of needed rest can carry significant costs, including:

- Poor judgment
- Difficulty learning and retaining information
- Delayed reaction time
- Irritability
- Impatience
- Negativity
- Fatigue
- Decreased concentration
- Diminished self-control
- Poor reflexes

When you consider these factors, it's easy to see how skimping on shut-eye is the last thing you want to do. Your best, most productive work almost always comes when you're well-rested.

## Keys to a Good Night's Rest

**Maintain a regular sleep schedule.** Instead of sleeping in on weekends to compensate for lost sleep, try going to bed an hour or two earlier at night and keeping this schedule all week long.

**Use your bed only for sleeping.** This will help train your body to fall asleep quickly when you tuck in for the night.

**Keep your room dark.**

**Use "white noise,"** such as a fan, to dampen outside noises.

**Don't exercise too close to bedtime.** The resulting endorphin release will energize you and keep you awake.

**Avoid caffeine in the evening.** Half the caffeine you consume will still be in your body six hours later.

**Don't use alcohol to excess.** Having a few drinks may help you go to sleep, but it will also disrupt your sleep cycle, leaving you tired in the morning.

**Lower the thermostat.** Studies show that a cooler temperature helps create more restful sleep. Go as low as you can while still remaining comfortable.

**Invest in a good mattress.** Mattresses stop offering the right amount of support after about 10 years.

**Shut out negativity.** If TV news causes you stress and worry, skip that late newscast and do something that relaxes you instead.

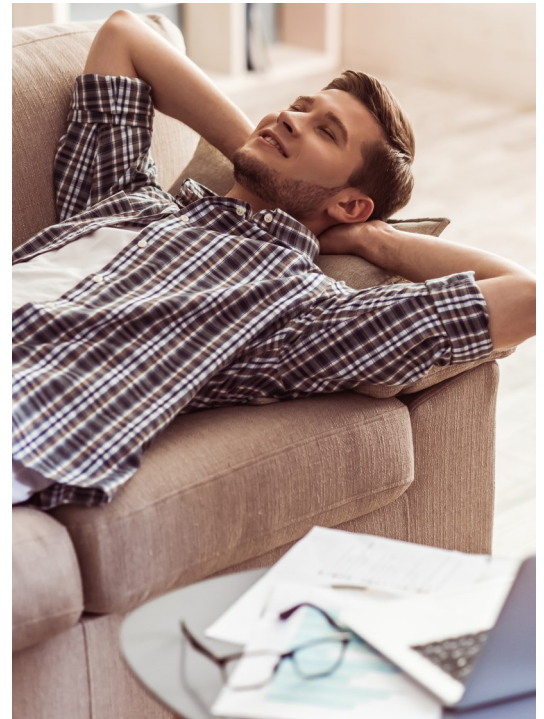


## Beating the Busy Bug

The most common excuse people give for not getting enough sleep is that they're simply too busy. Here's the bottom line: You simply can't live a rich, happy, and productive life when you're stumbling around like a zombie due to a lack of sleep. If the daily grind is overwhelming your schedule, it's time to start eliminating all but your highest priorities and obligations and carving out some extra time for a good night's rest. Start small and try going to bed 10 minutes earlier each night until you're getting a full eight hours of sleep.

## The Power of Napping

When all else fails, grab a pillow and snooze a bit during the day. Studies suggest a nap as short as just 10 minutes can boost mental alertness and productivity for hours. Don't buy into the idea that napping is lazy. Cultures all over the world build nap time right into their workdays. Famous nappers include Albert Einstein, Winston Churchill, and Johannes Brahms.



## 7 apps to aid sleep disorders

**Pain and Depression Relief:** Uses songs and sounds to help you relax and fall asleep. One of the app's most interesting features is its use of binaural entertainment, which means each ear receives a different tone. You can also opt for isochronic music, which consists of repeated beats of a single tone. Cost: \$1.99

**CBT-i Coach:** For people who are engaged in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia with a health provider, or who have experienced symptoms of insomnia and would like to improve their sleep habits. The app will guide users through the process of learning about sleep, developing positive sleep routines, and improving their sleep environments. It provides a structured program that teaches strategies proven to improve sleep and help alleviate symptoms of insomnia. Cost: Free

**Dream:ON:** Monitor your sleep cycle via your level of movement through the night, play a "soundscape" of your choice to try to influence your dreams and be woken during the optimum part of your sleep cycle. Choose whether to share your data to take part in their experiment. Cost: Free

**Relax Melodies:** Select sounds and melodies that you like and combine them to create a mix. Adjust the volume of each sound individually for better results. Lay back, listen, and enjoy falling asleep. Use timers and alarms if needed. Can also be used in many other situations. Perfect during some of your favorites activities such as relaxing at the spa, exercising in your yoga or relaxation classes, massaging sessions, or even when taking a nap. For parents, the ideal to help your baby fall asleep. Cost: Free

**Relax and Sleep Well:** A hypnosis recording by self-help audio author Glenn Harrold. This recording will help you alleviate stress and anxiety and prime you to sleep well at night. The full version of this app has daytime and night-time versions. The free version includes the daytime version only, but is a full 27-minute hypnosis session. Cost: Free

**Sleep Cycle:** Having depression can cause noticeable changes in your sleep habits. You may find you're sleeping more, or you may have trouble falling asleep or staying asleep. That means waking up in the morning can be a real challenge, especially if you have to get out of bed in the middle of a deep sleep. This app analyzes your sleep and wakes you during the lightest part of your sleep cycle. This intelligent alarm clock can detect your movement during sleep and wakes you up at the optimal time during a 30-minute alarm window. Cost: Free

**Sleep Bug: Sound Generator:** Sleep Bug is an ambient sound mixer that produces a variety of scenes and music with random sound effects. The built-in sound generator creates a listening experience to help calm a busy mind and for adults, children, and babies who are having trouble sleeping. Can also use the app in the office to mask out distracting noises, improve concentration, and increase privacy. Cost: Free

*If stress or other emotional issues are affecting your sleep habits, The Village Employee Assistance Program can help. Call us at 800-627-8220.*

