

# Sleep Hygiene

healthy habits for a good night's sleep

## Prepare for a Good Night's Sleep the Moment You Wake

Get out of bed immediately after waking up. Avoid taking naps during the day if you can. This helps maintain the body's natural sleep-wake cycle.

Get exposure to bright, natural light during the day. Light inhibits the release of melatonin (the hormone which induces drowsiness) and trains the body's circadian rhythm. Exposing your body to natural light as soon as you wake up helps to let your brain know that it's day time (you could open your bedroom curtains, or have a cuppa outside or near the window as some ideas).

Vigorous exercise tires the body out and helps you sleep. Try to exercise in the first half of the day to avoid arousing the body before sleep.

Use your bed for sleeping only; not for reading, watching TV or playing video games. This maintains the mental association that when you are in bed, it is time to sleep.

Limit stimulants such as caffeine and nicotine 4-6 hours before bedtime.

## Preparing for Sleep Just Before Bed

Avoid the use of electronic devices for an hour or more before sleeping. The effectiveness of blue light-reducing 'night modes' is still debated, so it's best to just put the device away.

Have a **sleep routine** - Start winding down and going to sleep at a regular time each night to maintain a consistent sleep pattern.

Make sure the room is dark enough and a good temperature. Use **earplugs and eye mask** if you need to.

If you are having trouble falling asleep, get up. Attempt a dull activity in low light for 20 minutes and try again.

You could try a Sleep Story or Meditation app such as *Calm*. If you are struggling with persistent thoughts and to do lists, write them down. Then restart your Sleep Story or Meditation.

## Sleep problems because of significant worries or stress?

Start an online anxiety program early.

Click on the available programs below to find out more.

[MoodGYM](#)



[Mental Health Online](#)



[This Way Up](#)



[Mind Spot](#)

