

# Sounder Sleep

Even college students can sleep like a dog with the right tricks.



## Keep it regular!

- **Set a regular bedtime.** Go to bed at the same time every night. Try not to break this routine on weekends. If you want to change your bedtime, make the change in small 15-minute daily increments.
- **Wake up at the same time every day.** If you're getting enough sleep, you should wake up naturally without an alarm. Try to maintain your regular wake-time even on weekends.
- **Be smart about napping.** If you must nap do it in the early afternoon and limit it to thirty minutes.
- **Fight after-dinner drowsiness.** If you find yourself getting sleepy way before your bedtime, do something mildly stimulating such as washing the dishes, calling a friend, or getting clothes ready for the next day to avoid falling asleep.

## Light & Dark!

- **Spend more time outside during daylight.** Try to take your work breaks outside in sunlight, exercise outside, or walk your dog during the day instead of at night.
- **Let as much light into your home/workspace as possible.** Keep curtains and blinds open during the day.
- **Turn off your television and computer.** Television can actually stimulate the mind, rather than relax it. If your favorite TV show is on late at night, record it for viewing earlier in the day.
- **Don't read from a backlit device at night** (such as an iPad or phone). If you use a portable electronic device to read, use an eReader that is not backlit.
- **When it's time to sleep, make sure the room is dark.** The darker it is, the better you'll sleep.

## Chill out more!

- **Keep noise down.** If you can't avoid or eliminate noise from barking dogs, loud neighbors, city traffic, or other people in your household try masking it with a fan. Earplugs may also help.
- **Keep your room cool.** Most people sleep best in a slightly cool room.
- **Make sure your bed is comfortable.** You should have enough room to stretch and turn comfortably. Experiment with foam or egg crate toppers, and pillows that provide more or less support.
- **Create a relaxing bedtime ritual** like reading a book or magazine by soft light, listening to soft music, doing some easy stretches, or make simple preparations for the next day.

## Bad eating!

- **Stay away from big meals at night.** Try to avoid heavy, rich foods within two hours of bed. Also be cautious when it comes to spicy or acidic foods in the evening.
- **Avoid alcohol and caffeine before bed.** While alcohol may make you fall asleep faster it reduces your sleep quality while caffeine can cause sleep problems up to ten to twelve hours after drinking it!
- **Avoid drinking too many liquids in the evening.** Drinking lots of water, juice, tea, or other caffeinated drinks may result in frequent bathroom trips throughout the night.
- **If you need a snack, have a light snack** with low carbs (energy-giving foods) and L-tryptophan, like egg whites!