

Fall Asleep Faster with a Clean Sleep Routine

Sleep hygiene is defined as the habits and practices you need for good quality sleep. By regularly following an optimized sleep hygiene regime - a clean sleep routine - your sleep can be improved, and it becomes easier to fall asleep.

4 Tips to Aid Restful Sleep

1 Limit caffeine and drink a soothing beverage

The effects of caffeine are different for each person. One sleep study recommends refraining from consuming caffeine at least six hours before bedtime. Caffeine can be found in many foods and beverages and can sabotage your attempts to get to sleep on time. Avoid these well before bedtime:

- Chocolate
- Sodas
- Coffee
- Energy drinks

Try drinking a soothing tea like chamomile, which has been shown to promote sleep and relaxation. Other bedtime teas that can aid sleep include passion flower and magnolia.

2 Turn off all electronics

Watching TV, playing video games, using a cellphone and social networking can make it harder for you to fall asleep. Electronic devices emit blue light, which has been found to suppress melatonin, a hormone that aids the body in falling asleep.

3 Lower the temperature

Your body cools down when you sleep. Setting your thermostat to a cool temperature between 60–67°F (15.6–19.4°C) could help you fall asleep quicker. Consider your individual preferences and find the temperature that works best for you. A warm bath or shower can help speed up the body's temperature changes. As your body cools down afterward, this can send a signal to your brain to go to sleep.

4 Use the 4-7-8 breathing method

The “4-7-8” method developed by Dr. Andrew Weil is a simple but powerful breathing method that promotes calmness and relaxation. It may also help you unwind before bed.

1. Place the tip of your tongue behind your upper front teeth
2. Exhale completely through your mouth and make a “whoosh” sound
3. Close your mouth, and inhale through your nose while mentally counting to four
4. Hold your breath, and mentally count to seven
5. Open your mouth and exhale completely, making a “whoosh” sound and mentally count to eight
6. Repeat this cycle at least three times



Simple tweaks to your sleep routine can **dramatically increase** the quality of your sleep. You'll find you're able to fall asleep much faster with good sleep hygiene.

