

The Ultimate Sleep Hygiene Checklist

15 science-backed habits for deeper, more restorative sleep

Poor sleep isn't just exhaustion — it affects your mood, metabolism, immune system, and even your lifespan. The good news? Small, consistent habits make a bigger difference than any sleep aid.

This checklist covers everything: your bedroom environment, evening routine, morning habits, and what to avoid. Work through it one habit at a time — you don't have to do all 15 at once.

Ready to take action? Try SleepWell — it's free.

bmcksapps.com/sleep

Get started free !'

Ø=Bïp Your Sleep Environment

1. Keep your bedroom at 65–68°F (18–20°C)

! Core body temperature must drop ~2°F to initiate sleep. A cool room accelerates this.

2. Block all light — use blackout curtains or a sleep mask

! Even small amounts of light suppress melatonin production. Total darkness = faster sleep onset.

3. Eliminate noise or use white/brown noise

! Sudden noises fragment sleep architecture. Consistent background sound masks disruptions.

4. Reserve your bed for sleep (and intimacy) only

! Stimulus control therapy — your brain learns to associate the bed with sleep, not alertness.

5. Use high-quality, breathable bedding

! Overheating during sleep reduces deep sleep percentage significantly.

🌙 Your Evening Routine

6. Stop screens 60+ minutes before bed

! Blue light from screens suppresses melatonin for up to 3 hours after exposure.

7. Take a warm shower or bath 1–2 hours before bed

! The post-bath temperature drop mimics the natural pre-sleep temperature decline.

8. Dim household lights after 8pm

! Bright indoor light keeps cortisol (stress hormone) elevated and delays sleep onset.

9. Do a "brain dump" — write tomorrow's to-do list

! Writing tasks out reduces pre-sleep cognitive arousal and racing thoughts significantly.

10. Avoid caffeine after 2pm

! Caffeine's half-life is 5–7 hours. An afternoon coffee at 3pm is still 50% active at 8pm.

& p Your Morning & Daily Habits

11. Get bright light within 30 minutes of waking

! Morning light resets your circadian clock and anchors your sleep timing for that night.

12. Wake up at the same time every day (including weekends)

! The most powerful zeitgeber (time cue). Consistent wake times regulate your entire sleep cycle.

13. Exercise regularly — but not within 3 hours of bed

! Exercise increases sleep pressure and improves deep sleep. But post-workout cortisol delays sleep.

14. Avoid alcohol as a sleep aid

! Alcohol makes you drowsy but fragments sleep architecture, especially REM sleep.

15. Track your sleep for at least 2 weeks

! Without data, you can't see patterns. Tracking reveals what's actually affecting your sleep quality.

QUICK START: TOP 3 HABITS TO TRY THIS WEEK

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