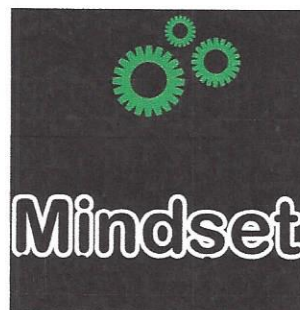


THE 12 HEALTHY SLEEP HABITS CHEATSHEET

*This cheatsheet outlines the 12 sleep habits
from [“Why We Sleep” by Matthew Walker](#)*

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THE 12 SLEEP HABITS FOR HEALTHY SLEEP

NOTE: These are also the habits recommended by the National Sleep Foundation

1. Sleep on a schedule. Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day. The body likes cycles. Set an alarm for both bedtime and waketime.

NOTE: Matthew says this is the most important habit of all 12 habits list.

2. Exercise. Avoid exercising two to three hours before bedtime.

3. Avoid caffeine and nicotine. The stimulating effects of caffeine can last up to 8 hours. Avoid coffee, colas, certain teas, and chocolate as best you can. If you're going to consume these, make sure you do so early in the day. Nicotine should also be avoided, both due to the nature of the substance (*i.e. a stimulant*), and the withdrawals that come along.

4. Avoid alcoholic drinks before bed. While alcohol can produce feeling of relaxation, it is a sedative, and should not be used as a sleep aid. Studies on sleep and alcohol, show sleep fragmentation, and an overall decrease in REM sleep.

5. Avoid large meals and beverages late at night. Meals can cause indigestion—a common disruptor of sleep. Digestion itself will work against your attempts to lower your core body temperature too. As for beverages, you want to limit them; you'll increase your chances of waking up in the middle of the night to pee, if you don't.

6. If possible, avoid medicines that delay or disrupt your sleep.

Some medications for certain: heart, blood pressure, asthma, allergies, colds, and coughs, can disrupt sleep patterns. Consult with your doctor or pharmacist if you find that you are having sleep problems, and you suspect its related to your medications..

7. Don't take naps after 3 p.m. Naps late in the day can make it hard to sleep at night.

8. Relax before bed. Schedule unwinding time before bed. Choose a relaxing activity that is unrelated to anything that might be stressful.

9. Take a hot bath before bed. The bath can serve as a relaxing activity, but it can also aid to drop your body temperature. This will increase your feelings of sleepiness.

10. Make your bedroom dark, cool, and gadget-free. Get rid of anything in your bedroom that might distract you from sleep, such as: noises, electronics, bright lights, an uncomfortable bed, and warm temperatures.

11. Have the right sunlight exposure. Daylight is key to an in sync circadian rhythm. Try to get natural sunlight for at least 30 minutes daily. Matthew recommends that you either wake up with the sun, or use very bright lights in the morning.

12. Don't lie in bed awake. Many people have trouble falling asleep, due to the power of their associations. Avoid using your bed for anything but sleep and sex. Anxiety of not being able to fall asleep can also lead to disruptions. If you find yourself still awake after staying in bed for a period of time, get up and engage in a relaxing activity until you feel tired.