

You have so much to gain from getting good sleep – from your mental sharpness and emotional wellness to heart health and overall energy. It can even help you maintain a healthy weight.

An estimated 40% of Americans say they struggle to fall asleep a few times a month, according to Psychology Today, and the Sleep Foundation reports that more than a third of Americans sleep less than an average of seven hours a night.

If you're tossing and turning when you'd rather be sleeping, try one of the following sleep hacks to help ease you into dreamland.

10-3-2-1-0 Rule for Sleep

This approach helps you manage the things that are most likely to keep you awake.

- 10 hours before bedtime – Stop drinking caffeine.
- 3 hours before bedtime – Stop eating and drinking, including alcohol.
- 2 hours before bedtime – Stop working, including reading emails.
- 1 hour before bedtime – Stop looking at all screens, including TVs, computers and phones.
- 0 – number of times you'll hit snooze in the morning.

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4-7-8 Breathing Method

This method focuses on a rhythm of breathing that can help you drift off to sleep.

1. With your mouth slightly open, make a whooshing sound when you exhale.
2. Close your mouth and inhale silently through your nose for a count of 4.
3. Hold that breath for 7 seconds.
4. Exhale that breath for 8 seconds.
5. Repeat 3 times for a total of 4 breaths.

Military Method for Sleep

This approach is designed by Army chiefs to help soldiers fall asleep as quickly as possible, even in intense environments. It originally came from *Relax and Win: Championship Performance* by Lloyd Bud Winter.

- Focus on slow and steady breathing throughout the process.
- Relax your face, starting with your forehead and moving down from your eyes, cheeks and tongue to your chin.
- Drop your shoulders and release tension all the way down to your fingers while keeping your arms loose at your sides. Do one arm at a time, going section by section.
- Relax your chest with a deep breath, and then your stomach.
- Relax each leg, one at a time, by imagining a warm sensation working its way down section by section. Allow yourself to sink into your chair or bed.
- Take your mind off any stressors by imagining a peaceful scenario, such as lying in a canoe on a calm lake or lying on a hammock in a dark room.
- Repeat the words “don’t think” in your head for 10 seconds to avoid getting distracted.

It can take some practice so stick with the routine for more than a week to see if you get results.