Sleep Well

Wake Up at the Same Time Every Day
Setting a regular wake time is the most effective way to improve sleep. By waking up at the same time every day, you'll also train yourself to go to bed at the same time every night. Your body will start to release sleep hormones at the same time every night, making you feel tired. This is called "setting your circadian rhythm."

Exercise Early
People sleep significantly better and feel more alert during the day if they get at least 150 minutes of exercise a week—or a little more than 20 minutes daily. Intense exercise releases adrenaline, which can interfere with sleep, so high-intensity exercise is best done in the mornings or early afternoons. But mild- to moderate-intensity exercise can be done at any time.

Cut the Caffeine
Whether your vice is coffee, energy drinks, soda, or chocolate, stop the caffeine six hours prior to bed. Researchers found that caffeine consumed zero, three, and six hours prior to bedtime reduced total sleep time, diminished sleep quality, and significantly increased the amount of time spent awake at night. Consuming caffeine six hours before bed reduced the total sleep amount by more than an hour.

Stop Eating at Night
In general, it's best to stop eating three hours before bed to allow food time for digestion. If you lie down to sleep on a full stomach, there's more chance of reflux and stomachaches.

Turn Off the Lights
The blue light from your computer or phone can screw with your sleep. It suppresses production of a brain chemical called melatonin, which helps us fall sleep, say researchers at the Lighting Research Center at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in New York. Looking at tablet displays for over two hours will suppress the body's melatonin production significantly, according to their study in Applied Ergonomics. If you need to be on your computer, wear glasses that filter bright light or use an app, like Flux, which changes the color scheme and lighting of the screen.

Turn Down the Thermostat
Sleeping in a cool room may help you fall asleep and stay asleep, suggests a study presented at SLEEP 2011, the 25th Anniversary Meeting of the Associated Professional Sleep Societies. Setting your thermostat to a cool temperature, such as 65°F, may provide those results.

Put on Socks
When you're just about to fall asleep, your body directs blood toward your extremities, like to your feet. Keeping them toasty warm helps promote blood vessel dilation, better circulation, and faster sleep onset.

Don't Switch Up Your Bedtime
Part of creating the perfect sleep routine is setting a bedtime. A consistent sleep schedule helps teach your body when it should prepare for sleep, which means less tossing and turning.

NATIONAL HEALTHY SLEEP AWARENESS PROJECT

GET 7 OR MORE HOURS

AVOID BEFORE BED

SLEEP WELL BE WELL

MONDAY-SUNDAY
KEEP A CONSISTENT SLEEP SCHEDULE

SEEK HELP FOR POOR SLEEP

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT: WWW.SLEEPEDUCATION.ORG/HEALTHYSLEEP

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