



Set Up Good Sleep Habits

- Plan ahead. Don't start writing a paper the night before it is due or cram for a test the night before you have it. Doing these things starts a cycle of staying up all night and never catching up on sleep.
- Get at least 30 minutes of sunlight exposure daily.
- Get regular exercise, but not within a few hours of going to bed.
- If you have a roommate, discuss and decide when your room will be used for studying, socializing, and sleep.
- If your dorm is too noisy to sleep, talk to your resident advisor and/or learn to tune out the noise in order to get to sleep. If it helps, listen to soft music with earphones when you fall asleep. Wear earplugs, if necessary.
- Make your dorm room or bedroom as comfortable as possible. Create a quiet, dark atmosphere. Keep the room temperature comfortable (neither too warm nor too cold). Don't wait longer than a week to change the sheets on your bed.



An hour or two before going to bed, dim the lights in your room.

- Have food items rich in the amino acid L-tryptophan, such as milk, turkey, or tuna fish, before you go to bed. Eating foods with carbohydrates, such as cereal, breads, and fruits may help as well. (Do not, however, take L-tryptophan supplements.)
- Develop a regular bedtime routine. Brush your teeth, lock or check doors and windows, get your backpack ready for the next day, etc. Try to go to bed and get up at the same time every day.
- Take a long, warm bath or shower before bedtime.
- Read a book or do some repetitive, calm activity. Avoid distractions that may hold your attention and keep you awake, such as watching a suspenseful movie.
- Avoid caffeine in all forms after lunchtime. Caffeine is in coffee, tea, chocolate, colas, other soft drinks, such as Mountain Dew, and some bottled water, such as Cup of Joe.
- Don't take No-Doz. Avoid alcoholic beverages at dinnertime and during the rest of the evening, too. Even though alcohol is a sedative, it can disrupt sleep.
- Don't take over-the-counter sleeping pills or friends' or relatives' sleeping pills. Only take sleep medicine with your health care provider's permission.
- Count sheep! Picturing a repeated image may bore you to sleep.