

BEDSIDE SLEEP HYGIENE CHECKLIST

A Step-by-Step Daily Blueprint for Restorative Rest & Optimal Circadian Health

1. MORNING RESET (ANCHOR YOUR BIOLOGICAL CLOCK)

- ☐ **Consistent Wake-Up Time** [Upon Waking]
Wake up at the exact same time every day, including weekends. This anchors your internal circadian rhythm and prevents accumulated sleep debt confusion.
- ☐ **Morning Sunlight Exposure** [First 60 Mins]
Get 30–60 minutes of natural sunlight or bright light exposure shortly after waking. Sunlight signals your brain to increase daytime energy and shortens night sleep onset.

2. DAYTIME & AFTERNOON BEHAVIORS

- ☐ **Caffeine Cutoff** [8–10h Before Bed]
Stop all caffeine consumption at least 8 hours before bed (or 10 hours per countdown rules). Caffeine blocks adenosine sleep receptors and reduces REM sleep.
- ☐ **Regular Physical Activity** [Daytime / Early Eve]
Engage in 30 minutes of daily exercise (150 min/week). Complete workouts at least 2–3 hours before bedtime to allow adrenaline and core body temp to settle.
- ☐ **Limit Daytime Naps** [Before 3:00 PM]
Keep naps under 15–20 minutes and avoid napping after 3:00 PM. Long or late naps drain your natural sleep drive and disrupt nighttime sleep onset.

3. EVENING WIND-DOWN PROTOCOL

- ☐ **Early Dinner & Snack Control** [2–3h Before Bed]
Finish heavy meals at least 2–3 hours before sleeping. If hungry later, stick to small, low-carbohydrate snacks to prevent indigestion and sleep fragmentation.
- ☐ **Fluid Intake Restriction** [1–2h Before Bed]
Taper off fluid intake 1–2 hours before bed and empty your bladder right before sleep to prevent nocturia (nighttime awakenings to urinate).
- ☐ **Alcohol & Nicotine Avoidance** [Evening]
Avoid alcohol near bedtime (it alters melatonin and disrupts deep/REM sleep). Avoid nicotine, a powerful stimulant that causes light sleep and withdrawal awakenings.
- ☐ **Digital Screen Cutoff** [30–60m Before Bed]
Turn off electronic devices (phones, tablets, TVs) 30–60 minutes before bed or activate blue-light filters. High-energy blue light suppresses melatonin release.
- ☐ **Relaxation & Cooling Ritual** [Bedtime Routine]
Take a warm bath or practice reading, deep breathing, or meditation. Body cooling after a hot bath mimics natural sleep onset thermal cues.

4. BEDROOM SANCTUARY SETUP

- ☐ **Cool Thermostat (65–68°F / 18–20°C)** [Nightly]
Maintain room temperature between 65–68°F. Core body temperature drops 1–2°F to initiate sleep; a cool bedroom promotes deep sleep efficiency.
- ☐ **Complete Darkness & Silence** [Nightly]
Eliminate external light and noise distractions. Turn clock faces away from view to eliminate clock-watching anxiety if you wake up.

5. IN-BED RECONDITIONING RULES

- ☐ **The 20-Minute Reset Rule** [When Awake]
If you cannot fall asleep (or fall back asleep) after 20 minutes, get out of bed and do a quiet, relaxing activity in dim light until sleepy. Do not stay in bed awake.
- ☐ **Consult a Specialist for Chronic Issues** [As Needed]
Seek medical evaluation if sleep onset regularly takes >30 mins, or if experiencing loud snoring, gasping, or chronic exhaustion despite good hygiene.