

The Sleep Cheat Sheet

General Principles

- Aim for 7-9 hours of sleep per night for optimal health and longevity
- Consistency is key! Maintaining a regular sleep and wake schedule (even on weekends) is more important than total hours
- Sleep quality is just as important as sleep quantity
- Sleep should be prioritized as a cornerstone of health, alongside nutrition and exercise

Sleep Environment

- Keep your bedroom dark (use blackout curtains or an eye mask)
- Maintain a cool temperature (around 65°F/18.3°C is ideal for most people)
- Minimize noise disruptions (use earplugs or a white noise machine if needed)
- Cover LED lights from electronics in your bedroom

Daily Habits

- Get 10-15 minutes of morning sunlight exposure each day, when the sun is red or orange (not bright) or a white light device that emits 10,000 lux
- Exercise ideally in the morning or early afternoon, not before going to bed
- Limit caffeine intake to before noon
- Avoid eating within 3-4 hours of bedtime
- Allow 3-4 hours between your last alcoholic drink and bedtime (ideally avoid alcohol altogether)

Evening Routine

- Avoid screens for at least one hour before bed (or use blue light blocking glasses if necessary)
- Create a deliberate wind-down routine before sleep
- Lower indoor lighting and temperature 1-2 hours before bed
- Consider a warm shower or sauna 30-60 minutes before bed to lower core body temperature

- Try journaling or making a to-do list to clear your mind of lingering thoughts

Chronotype Considerations

- Honor your natural chronotype (early bird, night owl, or in-between) when possible
- Early birds generally perform best with morning workouts and earlier bedtimes
- Night owls may find afternoon exercise more effective and later sleep times more natural

Supplements to Consider

- Magnesium gluconate or glycinate 300-400mg before bedtime
Melatonin (3-5mg, 15-30 minutes before bed) can help reset your biological clock
- Only use melatonin short-term (less than a month consistently)
- Avoid benzodiazepines and other prescription sleep aids if possible

When to Seek Help

- If good sleep habits don't improve your sleep after 1-2 months, consider a sleep study conducted by a sleep specialist^[NN1]

[NN1]I don't have a lot of sentence-level comments on this chapter, which is well done, but I have more big-picture suggestions I'll add to the editorial letter.