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# From A to Zzzs:

## Best Sleep Hacks for the Whole Family

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Americans are getting fewer hours of sleep than ever before—and screens, in many cases, are the culprit. Kids are especially impacted because they need more sleep (and it affects grades and mood). How do you enjoy your digital life and still get in a great night's sleep?

**Toss and turn no more with these 26 sleep tips.**

## Age matters

Make sure you're all getting the sleep you need. Kids ages 3 to 5 need 10 to 13 hours; ages 6 to 13 need about 9 to 11 while teens need 8 to 10 hours. Adults should be getting at least 7, yet many don't...<sup>1</sup>



# 20%

**OF TEENAGERS**

Get less than 5 hours of sleep, while the average amount is 6.5 hours.

## Balance screen time

Set a digital curfew, like one hour before bedtime (the earlier the better), so everyone powers down for a restful sleep.<sup>2</sup> 70% of children check their mobile device within 30 minutes of falling asleep at night.

## Circle's Bedtime

turns off the Internet for you at a set time every night and turns it back on come morning, saving you "nagging" time when everyone's at their most tired.

## Darkness is key

The bright blue light on our screens can slow down our body's ability to produce melatonin, the hormone that makes us sleepy. Lights out means devices too!



# 37%

of 12 to 20 year olds reported texting after "lights out."

## Exercise

Being active during the day can help you sleep better at night. Find an exercise you can all get on board with, like a post-dinner walk.<sup>3</sup> Adults who exercised three times a week for 30 minutes reported on average 45 minutes longer sleep and less sleepiness.

## Face-to-face conversation

It can be easy to check out on our phones at night but catching up with your partner or kids IRL can be a boon for your relationship and a great way to score some feel-good sleep. Snooze your device and ask them about the best thing that happened today.

## Go device-free in the bedroom

Create a charging station outside the bedroom where everyone puts his and her phone to sleep for the night.

# Habits are important

“Our son, who has now finished up high school, had the habit of no devices in his bedroom and he thanks us to this day for it,” says Dr. Delaney Ruston, director of Screenagers. Set rules and create consistency wherever you can.



## Invest in an alarm clock

An old-school alarm clock instead of your phone by your bedside will help avoid late night and middle-of-the-night scrolling.

## Journal

Writing down your thoughts has proven to reduce bedtime worry and stress.<sup>4</sup> Swap your phone for a bedside notebook. College students who journaled for 15 minutes before bedtime reported increased sleep time and improved sleep quality.

**Journaling 15 minutes prior to bedtime reportedly improves sleep quality.**



## Keep clutter at bay

A recent study found that bedroom clutter could be linked to sleep disorders. Remove tech from the bedroom but also put clothes away<sup>5</sup> and organize anything that could increase sleep stress.

# Light up your day

Exposure to natural sunlight or bright light during the day helps regulate your circadian rhythm—your body’s internal clock. This can help improve your sleep quality and quantity at night.



## Make your bed

Get kids, elementary and higher, on board with making their bed in the morning, which has shown to help with sleep.

## No notifications

Who hasn't woken up to the annoying sound of a text or notification alert? Silence these alerts by adjusting your family's phone settings or setting Bedtime mode on your Circle App.

## Open a window

Cooler temperature create a better environment for a good night's sleep. Clear the air and let the breeze in before bedtime. Fresh air is also linked to relaxation, which can lead to sleepiness.

# Pillows, please

Studies show that a comfortable pillow and mattress can make a huge difference in the quality of sleep while they can also help relieve aches and pains.<sup>7</sup>

# Quiet

Snoring, traffic, text notifications can all disrupt our sleep. Silence sleep-disrupting sounds with noise-canceling earplugs, white noise machines and device-free bedrooms.

# Relax

Your body needs time to shift into sleep mode, so spend the last hour before bed doing a calming activity such as reading or taking a bath.



# Stick to a sleep schedule

Kids who follow a set bedtime (and wake time) are more likely to get a better night's sleep. Keeping weekend bedtimes close to weekday times will help kick off a solid week of sleep.



# Turn off the TV

Studies show that sleeping with the TV on can disrupt sleep and may even be a risk factor for weight gain.<sup>8</sup> The artificial light tricks your internal clock while the temptation to watch one more show can keep you from getting the sleep you need.



# 49%

of children age 8 or under often or sometimes watch TV or videos or play video games in the hour before bedtime.

# Use your bed for sleep only

Bringing laptops and work to bed distracts you from a clear, relaxed mind. Create a stronger connection between your bed and sleep by making it a sanctuary for sleep and cuddle time.

# Vacate the room if you can't sleep

Experts suggest that you leave the room if you can't sleep. Get up and do something relaxing, like reading a book or meditating, until you feel tired.<sup>9</sup>

# Walk the talk

Making sure you follow your own tech-free bedtime rules can be the incentive kids need to do the same (and will avoid having them call you out on it later!).



## X out late night meals

Heavy meals and sweets before the clock strikes bedtime can lead to indigestion and sugar highs, making sleep uncomfortable or difficult. Limit bedtime snacks to light bites about 45 minutes before bedtime.

## Yoga

Research shows that yoga can help you sleep longer and better.<sup>10</sup> Hit the mat before you hit the hay.

## Zzzs

Uninterrupted sleep is crucial for boosting grades, mood and productivity. Follow the tips that work for your family and come up with a bedtime plan that you can all stick to. Circle can help. Learn how at [meetcircle.com](https://meetcircle.com).



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Parental Controls

[www.meetcircle.com/resources](http://www.meetcircle.com/resources)



# Appendix

1  
**National Sleep Foundation Recommends New Sleep Times**  
<https://www.sleepfoundation.org/press-release/national-sleep-foundation-recommends-new-sleep-times>

**I in 3 adults don't get enough sleep**  
<https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2016/p0215-enough-sleep.html>

2  
**Bedtime Use of Technology and Associated Sleep Problems in Children**  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5669315/>

3  
**Bedtime Use of Technology and Associated Sleep Problems in Children**  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4341978/>

**How Exercise Can Help Us Sleep Better**  
<https://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/08/21/how-exercise-can-help-us-sleep-better/>

**Exercising for Better Sleep**  
<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/exercising-for-better-sleep>

4  
**Journaling Before Bed Can Help Ward Off Sleeplessness**  
<https://www.healthgrades.com/right-care/sleep-disorders/journaling-before-bed-can-help-ward-off-sleeplessness>

5  
**To Sleep Better, Stay Cool and Cut Clutter**  
<https://health.usnews.com/health-news/health-wellness/articles/2015-12-30/to-sleep-better-stay-cool-and-cut-clutter>

**Is Clutter Keeping You Up?**  
[https://www.huffpost.com/entry/clutter-and-sleep\\_b\\_8600392](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/clutter-and-sleep_b_8600392)

6  
**Want to Sleep Better? Make Your Bed**  
<https://www.webmd.com/sleep-disorders/news/20110126/want-sleep-better-make-your-bed-1>

7  
**Effectiveness of a selected bedding system on quality of sleep, low back pain, shoulder pain, and spine stiffness.**  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/11896375>

8  
**Sleeping with artificial light at night associated with weight gain in women**  
<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/06/190610130121.htm>

9  
**Healthy Sleep Tips**  
<https://www.sleepfoundation.org/articles/healthy-sleep-tips>

10  
**Yoga Can Help With Insomnia**  
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/sleep-newzzz/201210/yoga-can-help-insomnia>