



Are you getting enough sleep?

NHS advice states that 'a minimum of 8 to 9 hours' good sleep on school nights is recommended for teens.'

Here's how to make sure you are getting enough sleep to stay healthy and do well at school, even when not actually going in to school!

(Adapted from: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness/sleep-tips-for-teenagers/>)

Limit screens in the bedroom

If possible, don't have a mobile, tablet, TV or computer in the bedroom at night, as the light from the screen interferes with sleep.

Having screens in the bedroom also means you are more likely to stay up late interacting with friends on social media.

Have at least 30 minutes of screen-free time before going to sleep.

Exercise for better sleep

It's official: regular exercise helps you sleep more soundly, as well as improving your general health.

You should be aiming for at least 60 minutes' exercise every day, including aerobic activities such as fast walking and running.

Exercising out in daylight will help to encourage healthy sleep patterns, too.

Mrs Holmes says - I once heard someone talking about this on a podcast, they said in particular, having access to daylight in the morning hours is also really beneficial to good sleep patterns, even if you are just sitting by a window to do school work.

Read more about [how much exercise teenagers need](#).

Cut out the caffeine

You really should drink less caffeine – found in drinks such as cola, tea and coffee – particularly in the 4 hours before bed.

Too much caffeine can stop you falling asleep and reduce the amount of deep sleep you have.

Don't binge before bedtime

Eating too much, or too little, close to bedtime can lead to an overfull or empty stomach. This can be a cause of discomfort during the night and may prevent sleep.

Have a good routine

Have a regular bedtime routine. Doing the same things in the same order an hour or so before bed can help you drift off to sleep.

Use these [bedtime routine tips](#).

Create a sleep-friendly bedroom

Make sure you have a good sleeping environment – ideally a room that is dark, cool, quiet and comfortable. It might be worth investing in thicker curtains or a blackout blind to help block out early summer mornings and light evenings.

Talk through any problems

Your sleep may be disturbed if you are worrying. Talk about this with the people you live with, especially with the way things are at the moment. This will help you put the problems into perspective and sleep better.

You could also encourage jot down your worries or make a to-do list before you go to bed. This should mean you're less likely to lie awake worrying during the night.

Mrs Holmes says - right now, there is a tendency to watch/read the news avidly, as we all want our lives to return to normal and are worried about what is going on. But consider whether this is helping your state of mind, particularly if you are reading alarming articles before going to sleep. People are reporting an increase in disturbing dreams as we all try to process this crisis. Consider reducing the amount of time you spend watching/reading the news/social media sites and think carefully about the time of day you access them to distract yourself and allow yourself to calm before sleeping.

Avoid long weekend lie-ins

Bad news, I know, but you really shouldn't sleep in for hours at weekends. Late nights and long lie-ins can disrupt your body clock and leave you with weekend "jet lag" on Monday morning.

Try these [simple lifestyle changes that improve sleep](#).