

Ten Rules for a good nights sleep

1. Stick to a regular routine. Try to go to bed and get up at the same time each day – even weekends.
2. Avoid taking strenuous exercise at night. Leave at least five–six hours between work-outs and sleep. That said a short gentle walk can take the edge off any energy surplus.
3. Don't eat after 8pm.
4. Avoid alcohol. Small amounts may help you get to sleep but more than the equivalent of two small glasses of wine disturbs natural sleep rhythms and may have the opposite effect.
5. Avoid stimulants, including nicotine and caffeine for at least four hours before bedtime.
6. Only go to bed when you feel sleepy.
7. Some people may find reading in bed relaxing but don't do work or watch TV. in the bedroom – keep the bed for sleep and/or sex to build clear associations with it.
8. If you don't drop off within 30 minutes get up and go to another room and do something relaxing (or boring) until you feel tired.
9. Don't lie in bed turning things over in your head. If possible get up and deal with whatever it is that's bothering you.
10. If you must take a nap during the day limit it to just 20 minutes, no later than 5pm. Sleep problems are often the result of poor habits, but equally there can be underlying stresses or even dilemmas about feelings of fulfilment in life. Talk to someone. Consider seeing a counsellor, therapist or perhaps a coach to look at what may be troubling you. At Gedanken offers a range methods that can help you with the difficulties you face.