

# 40 SLEEP HACKS

## THE GEEK'S GUIDE TO OPTIMIZING SLEEP



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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Section I: **Hacking Sleep Schedules**

1. Wake up at the same time every morning
2. Try free-running sleep
3. The 28-hour day
4. Polyphasic sleep
5. Keep a sleep log
6. Give your schedules 10 days to 'click'
7. Reduce your sleep need

## Section II: **Diet**

8. Eat whole foods, unprocessed foods, and raw foods
9. Eat light in the evening
10. Eat a small pre-bedtime snack
11. Drink caffeine in the morning, not at night
12. Eat breakfast
13. Control your cortisol
14. Avoid foods you may be sensitive to

## Section III: **Napping**

15. Master the art of napping
16. Caffeine nap
17. Pzizz your way to sleep
18. Create your own nap mp3

## Section IV: **Dreaming and Creativity**

19. Learn to lucid dream

20. Use lucid dreaming to cultivate peak performance, solve problems, and overcome fears.
21. Explore hypnagogia
22. Keep a dream journal

## Section V: **Sleep Environment**

23. Sleep in complete darkness
24. Sleep in the cold

## Section VI: **Sleep Gadgets**

25. Use noise cancelling headphones
26. Use a bright light alarm
27. Use a sun box
28. The SleepTracker watch
29. Use a sleep mask
30. Use an mp3 alarm clock

## Section VII: **Psychology**

31. Use your brain's internal alarm clock
32. Set up morning rewards
33. Write down tomorrow's to-do list
34. Change your attitude toward sleep
35. Train your brain to wake up to alarms
36. Set two alarms
37. Maintain a positive attitude toward life
38. Wake up to euphoric music

## Section VIII: **Lifestyle**

39. Meditate
40. Fall in love

# ABOUT THIS EBOOK

## *40 Sleep Hacks: The Geek's Guide to Optimizing Sleep*

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This is the **July 2008** edition. Please check [SleepWarrior.com](http://SleepWarrior.com) for newer editions.

Health/legal disclaimer: The information presented in this book is taken from sources believed to be accurate. All of these sleep hacks aim to improve sleep quality and thus health and quality of life. However, you must use them at your own discretion. In the end there's probably no better sleep advice than this: listen to your body; 9 times out of 10 it knows what's right.

Enough of that... let's get started.

Enjoy!

# SECTION 1

## SLEEP SCHEDULES



*The amount of sleep required by the average person is five minutes more. ~Wilson Mizener*

## SLEEP HACK 1

### WAKE UP AT THE SAME TIME EVERY MORNING

Keep wake-up times consistent and sleep quality will improve dramatically, giving you more energy and decreased sleep need.

Your body has an internal 24-hour clock which controls your **circadian rhythm**. Sleep quality is optimized during a very specific window of your circadian rhythm. If you learn to sleep exactly within that window you will enjoy the best sleep of your life. That is, you want to perfectly hit the “circadian low-point”, which is the time when your body is programmed to sleep.

If you sleep in on weekends your internal clock is always playing catch-up as it tries to match itself with your indecisive wake-up times. For each hour you sleep in late on weekends it will take an extra day during the week to reset your clock. Sleeping in on weekends makes it difficult to hit the circadian low point. Your body tries to increase sleep duration to compensate for poor sleep quality.

Keep wake-up times consistent. Even on weekends. Your sleep quality will skyrocket.

For those who don't need alarm clocks (e.g. you are self-employed), you might be better off with free-running sleep...



## SLEEP HACK 2

### TRY FREE-RUNNING SLEEP

Free-running sleep means:

1. Go to sleep when tired.
2. Wake up without an alarm.

Early studies on circadian rhythm showed that our internal clocks run on a 25-hour period when isolated from external stimuli like daylight and timekeeping. External cues like sunlight reset our circadian rhythm and match it with the 24 hour day. These cues are called **zeitgebers**. (Other zeitgebers are food, exercise, and social interaction).



Even with a 25h internal clock, humans have slept with the 24h day before alarm clocks were invented. Artificial light prolongs the internal clock. To wake up without an alarm clock, don't expose yourself to too much artificial light at night. That will shift your internal clock forward.

Many insomniacs have circadian rhythms that run on 26 or 27 hour periods. It is difficult to entrain a 27-hour internal clock with a 24-hour external clock. Solution: free-running sleep with 27-hour days. Go to bed when you're tired, wake up naturally. Obviously hard to manage if you're not self-employed or on vacation.

Studies show that free-running sleepers experience a 10-15% boost in creativity compared to those who use an alarm clock.

Health-wise, free-running sleep is the optimal sleep schedule. It can be synced with the 24h day, but with artificial lights (like computer monitors) it might run out of sync, which is OK too.

**Dr Piotr Wozniak is a popular advocate of free-running sleep.**

## SLEEP HACK 3

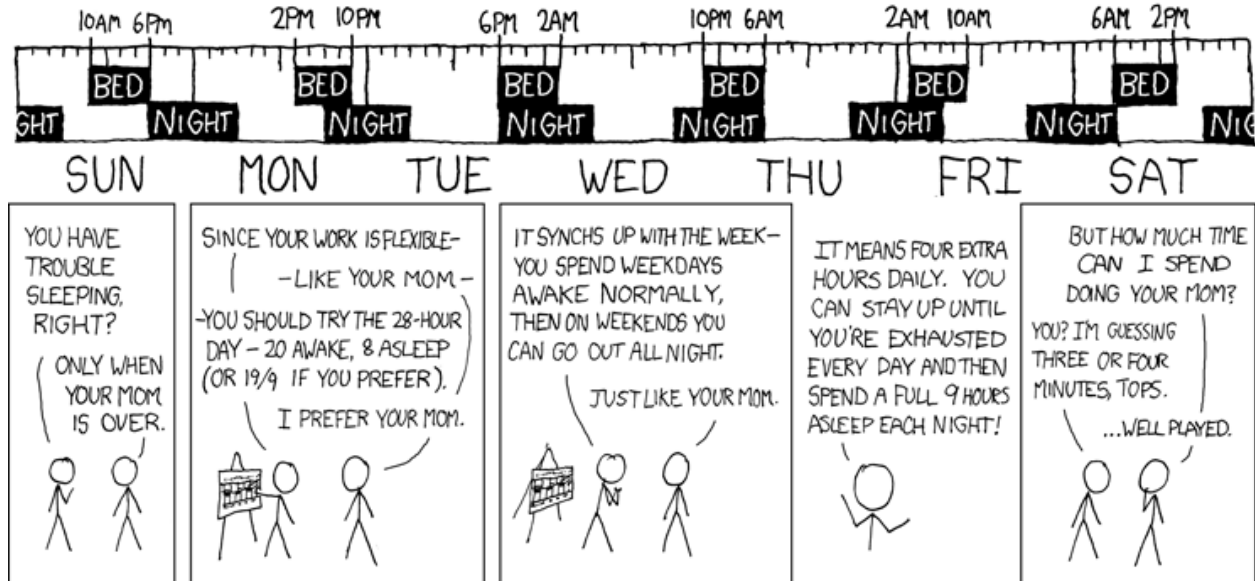
### THE 28 HOUR DAY

Jet lag is far, far less intense flying west than it is flying east. Flying west you follow the sun and extend your day.

For some reason, it appears that it is easier for humans to push our body clocks forward. It only takes 1 day of sleeping in to push our clocks forward by 3 hours, but it takes 3 days of waking up early to reset it to normal.

This is why some have adopted the 28-hour day. Why 28? It syncs with the 168-hour week. Six 28-hour days instead of seven 24-hour days. Good for those who want to be awake in the evening and night during weekends (for going out).

If you follow any non-24 hour sleep schedule, use zeitgebers properly. Light is the strongest zeitgeber, and since you can no longer rely on the sun, sleep masks (sleep hack 29) and light boxes (sleep hack 27) become beneficial.



Gotta love [xkcd](http://xkcd.com)...

## SLEEP HACK 4

### POLYPHASIC SLEEP

Nearly all animals in the animal kingdom have multiple sleep episodes per day. Sleeping just once per 24h period is an anomaly, and may partially be an artifact of artificial lighting. Most adult humans are naturally wired for sleeping twice every 24 hour period – a 6-7h nocturnal rest with a 20-60m siesta in the afternoon. Sleep patterns defined by more than one sleeping episode every 24h period are called *polyphasic sleep*.

Polyphasic sleep has created a buzz on the Internet lately. Self-experimenters usually try one of two schedules:

1. Nap for 20 minutes every 4 hours (total of 2h per day), or
2. Have a 3h “core sleep” at night with three 20m naps in the day (total 4h per day).

Polyphasic sleep seems to be the only way to function on less than 5 hours of sleep (for genetically non-short sleepers). Unfortunately, out of all the people who try to adapt to such a schedule, the majority fail, suggesting that some people just aren’t wired for this.

Polyphasic sleep is an interesting sleep schedule that some people use with success, but the topic is too detailed to cover fully here.

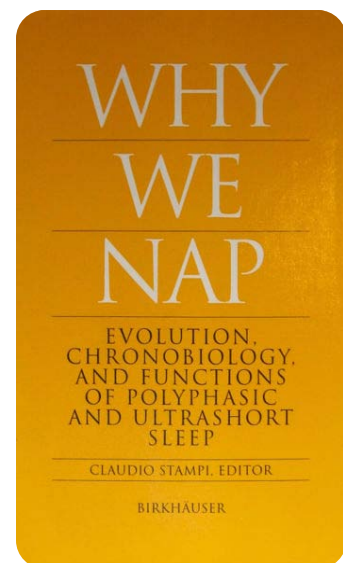
Explore further if you’re interested:

- [Steve Pavlina’s polyphasic sleep experiment](#)
- [Buckminster Fuller’s polyphasic sleep schedule](#)
- [Dr Wozniak’s take on polyphasic sleep](#)

The most knowledgeable sleep researcher on polyphasic sleep is probably Claudio Stampi. He has a book, *Why We Nap*, that collects dozens of studies on polyphasic and ultrashort sleep.

It’s out of print and hard to find. [You can download a pdf version at SleepWarrior.com here.](#)

[Download a PDF of \*Why We Nap\* at SleepWarrior.com](#)





## SLEEP HACK 5

### KEEP A SLEEP LOG

Strength trainers keep detailed work out logs. Why not keep a sleep log?

Sleep logs provide many benefits. It takes 15 seconds every morning to record your sleep/wake time. I have kept a daily sleep log (off and on) for over a year.

I can see specific patterns in the way I sleep and associate them with my lifestyle habits that I record in a journal. For example, how do dietary habits affect sleep duration? How much do I sleep while free-running as compared to when I use an alarm clock?

Self-experimenter and author Seth Roberts kept a sleep log when he was younger. He reviewed it several years later and noticed that there was an immediate shift in sleep duration at around the same time he adopted a raw, whole foods diet. The diet change decreased his sleep need by about 30 minutes (he never used an alarm clock, so this was a natural decrease).

In my own logs, I've seen correlations between exercise intensity and sleep duration, diet and sleep duration, and more.

A sleep log might seem a bit OCD, but it's a worthwhile time investment for us geeky "lifestyle hackers."

To log your data, use one of the following:

- [SleepChart software](#) (recommended)
- [Google Spreadsheet](#)
- Pen and paper (how primitive...)
- SleepTracker software (upload sleep data gathered from the [SleepTracker watch](#). Software included with [SleepTracker Pro](#).)



## SLEEP HACK 6

### GIVE YOUR SLEEP SCHEDULE 10 DAYS TO 'CLICK'

The sleep hacks so far have required adapting to new sleep schedules. When you first adopt a new sleep habit, like waking up at 6am every morning, you will struggle and feel tired. But keep it up for a while. It sometimes takes 7-10 days for a new schedule to “click”.

One older study followed six 8-hour sleepers for over a year. Once every 5 weeks the subjects reduced their sleep by 30m. Started at 8 hours, then 7.5, 7.0, 6.5, etc...



All subjects reported that every time they reduced sleep by 30m the first 7-10 days were difficult. But after 7-10 days their energy levels “clicked.”

Programming new sleep habits can be difficult. Go gradually if possible and give each incremental change a few days to click.

## SLEEP HACK 7

### REDUCE YOUR SLEEP NEED

The same study from above showed that it might be possible to train ourselves to need less sleep. The six 8-hour sleepers continued to reduce sleep by 30m increments until they were sleeping as low as 4.5-hours a night (ouch).

The subjects experienced severe fatigue below the 6.0-hour mark, but I guess their suffering was in the name of science...

After the study was over, the researchers caught up with the subjects the following year. It turned out that *all* subjects were naturally, by choice, sleeping 1-2 hours below their pre-study baseline – i.e. they were sleeping 6-7 hours instead of 8.

Is this evidence that by gradually reducing our sleep need and giving our bodies time to adapt we can make a permanent change in our sleep need?

Perhaps.

[Click here to read more about this study at SleepWarrior.com.](#) The details of the study are interesting and worth reading.

It appears that flaky, undisciplined schedules – like sleeping in on the weekend – will reset any sleep reduction adaptation. It also appears that for most people, there is a limit – sleeping below 6 hours does not seem sustainable without an alarm clock and accumulated sleep debt.

# SECTION 2

## DIET



*Sleep is a symptom of  
caffeine deprivation.*

## SLEEP HACK 8

### EAT WHOLE FOODS, UNPROCESSED FOODS, AND RAW FOODS

Here's one way to immediately – starting tonight – reduce the amount of sleep your body needs: change your diet.

Most people today have a poor understanding of what's healthy and what's not. Granola bars aren't healthy; they're highly processed. Most fruit juices are not healthy; they might contain high fructose corn syrup. Many studies even show milk to be very unhealthy, particularly the protein casein found in milk. Whole wheat bread is negligibly healthier than white bread; both are highly processed.



Foods have a direct effect on our sleep quality and duration. I have spent a lot of time trying to crack the diet vs. sleep-need code. I haven't cracked it yet, but here's some observations:

1. Seth Roberts reduced his sleep need by ~30m by reducing the amount of processing in his diet, including cooking and spices, and by avoiding anything packaged or artificial.
2. Some raw-foodists say they need less sleep on a raw food diet compared to a cooked food diet.
3. I noticed a ~60m reduction in sleep need after eliminating artificial and processed foods. This includes just about anything packaged, even bread and pasta.
4. Carbohydrates are linked to an increase in sleep need. Nutritionist Dr. Stanley Bass experimented with removing sugars (even fruit) from his diet. Sleep need went from 8h to 5h. [Read about it by clicking here](#) (skip down to the section "Fruit and Sleep").

In conclusion? Really, my best advice is... **Eat Food. Mostly Plants. Not too Much.** Sage advice from [In Defense of Food](#) that is a recipe for good health and may be a good recipe for optimal sleep. By "Eat Food" we mean eat yogurt, not Gogurt. Gogurt isn't food.

## SLEEP HACK 9

### EAT LIGHT IN THE EVENING

One of the greatest expenditures of energy in the body is from digestion of food. Large amounts of blood flow are directed toward the digestive system after a large meal. This means less blood flow, thus less energy, available for the brain. Low blood flow in the brain during sleep means poor sleep quality, since the brain conducts all sleep processes. So eat light in the evening.

## SLEEP HACK 10

### EAT A SMALL PRE-BEDTIME SNACK

An overhauled digestive system is bad. But a small amount of energy in your system might improve sleep. Eat a 150 calorie snack before bedtime. Nothing artificial. Preferably no sugar or carbohydrates, unless you need aid in falling asleep. A spoonful of slow-digesting, omega-3 rich flaxseed oil is a good choice. It will be easily and slowly digested and provide energy for your body throughout the night.

## SLEEP HACK 11

### DRINK CAFFEINE IN THE MORNING, NOT AT NIGHT

Caffeine in the system reduces the amount of deep sleep that occurs at night. You will wake up feeling less refreshed, and over time your body will want/require more time in bed to compensate for the poor sleep quality. You'll have less energy, which you would fight with more caffeine. Don't fall into this cycle.

Caffeine is safe and perhaps has decent health benefits. The key is in the timing. The safest time is in the morning, right when you wake up. The caffeine will be flushed from your system by the time you have a nap in the afternoon. By then you can have more caffeine immediately before or after the nap.

Caffeine 6 hours before bedtime will disrupt sleep.



## SLEEP HACK 12

### EAT BREAKFAST

Eat breakfast within 1 hour of waking up. This does 2 things.

1. It regulates your hormonal rhythms (e.g. cortisol rhythm).
2. It acts as a zeitgeber. Just like sunlight, it will reset your body clock. Ensures that your sleep schedule is properly synced with your body clock. It will give you more energy throughout the day and better sleep the following night.



Experiment with different foods. I prefer a smaller breakfast. Brown rice, eggs, spinach. Sometimes just a fruit smoothie (bananas, water, frozen blueberries, frozen spinach).

## SLEEP HACK 13

### CONTROL YOUR CORTISOL

Levels of cortisol, the “stress hormone,” spike in the morning and decrease throughout the day. Cortisol levels should be as low as possible when you go to bed. High cortisol levels during sleep drastically decrease slow-wave sleep (SWS) amount, meaning you won’t wake up refreshed.

Facilitate the natural decrease in cortisol levels by...

1. Eating breakfast in the morning
2. Eating low glycemic index meals instead of high GI meals.
3. Don’t go 5 hours without food.
4. Don’t skip meals, but don’t eat heavy meals either.

Follow these rules and cortisol will decrease, your sleep quality will improve, daily energy will improve, sleep need will reduce.

Dietary habits aren’t always easy to control (we only have so much self-discipline...). [Read more about the food-cortisol-sleep relation here](#) to decide if the above advice is right for you.

## SLEEP HACK 14

### AVOID FOODS THAT YOU MAY BE SENSITIVE TO

It is estimated that 70% of the population is lactose intolerant (dairy). 33% have yeast sensitivity. 15% have gluten sensitivity (wheat). And 35% have fructose or sugar sensitivity.



In other words, you probably have one of these sensitivities. And these dietary intolerances are tragically under-diagnosed. So statistically speaking, you probably have one but don't know it. This can be very bad. Gluten sensitive people, for example, may develop major health issues later in life like multiple sclerosis if they continue to eat wheat. Your body destroys itself when exposed to food it can't digest.

In terms of sleep, it's important to eliminate or minimize ingestion of sensitive food products, especially close to bed time. Wheat and dairy products in particular greatly disrupt sleep in sensitive people.

Your digestive system will be forced to work in overhaul, disrupting the sleep process and using blood flow during sleep when it's better spent on the brain.

I'm gluten sensitive and didn't know it for years. Removing wheat from my diet has changed everything. More energy. Better sleep.



# SECTION 3

## NAPPING



*You must sleep sometime between lunch and dinner, and no half-way measures. Take off your clothes and get into bed. That's what I always do. Don't think you will be doing less work because you sleep during the day. That's a foolish notion held by people who have no imagination. You will be able to accomplish more. You get two days in one —well, at least one and a half, I'm sure. When the war started, I had to sleep during the day because that was the only way I could cope with my responsibilities. ~Sir Winston Churchill*

## SLEEP HACK 15

### MASTER THE ART OF NAPPING

I'm a religious napper. I rarely go a day without one.

According to [Sara Mednick, PhD](#), napping will allow you to:

- ✓ Increase alertness
  - ✓ Make better decisions
  - ✓ Preserve youthful looks
  - ✓ Lose weight
  - ✓ Improve stamina
  - ✓ Boost creativity
  - ✓ Help memory
  - ✓ Alleviate migraines
  - ✓ Speed up motor performance
  - ✓ Improve perception
  - ✓ Improve your sex life
  - ✓ Reduce risk of heart attack and stroke
  - ✓ Elevate mood
  - ✓ Reduce stress
  - ✓ Reduce dependence on drugs/alcohol
  - ✓ Improve the quality of your nocturnal sleep
- ✓ And finally, it just feels good

NASA states that "an afternoon nap increases productivity by 35% and decision making ability by up to 50%".

Hopefully you're convinced... Besides, who doesn't enjoy a nap? 😊

Adult humans are naturally biphasic. We're neurologically wired for the afternoon nap. The "afternoon dip" occurs between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> hour after waking up – that's 1pm-3pm if you rise at 7am. But there's no hard and fast rule on when you should nap. Listen to your body.

Naps naturally (i.e. without an alarm) last for 20-60m, sometimes up to 90 but rarely longer. I can wake up after 20m without an alarm. If a nap lasts longer than 90m it can mean two things:

1. You are sleep deprived.
2. Your nap occurred much later than 3pm.



Late naps are more likely to include deep sleep (SWS), which is fine, but makes naps longer. Earlier naps include more REM.

Regardless of natural nap duration, I limit naps to 20m. Naps shorter than 20m are called **power naps** and include only stage 1, stage 2, and sometimes REM. Stage 3 and 4 sleep (a.k.a. Slow-Wave-Sleep/SWS/deep-sleep), will make you groggy since core parts of your brain shut down. Waking up in the middle of an SWS episode means those parts have to reboot. Result: you feel groggy.

Naps with SWS *are* natural and immensely restorative. So 60-90m naps are definitely OK. But I find they take a bit more skill to execute properly. Power naps are an easier and more time-effective solution.

Napping is a skill. At first you may find it difficult to fall asleep even if you're tired. Or maybe you can't cut your snooze button addiction and tend to oversleep naps. Give it time and practice. The effort is worth it.

## SLEEP HACK 16

### CAFFEINE NAP



Caffeine takes 30 minutes after ingestion to enter your bloodstream and have an effect on your concentration.

The caffeine nap: Chug some caffeine before a nap. You will wake up naturally 20-30m later once the caffeine kicks in. Wake up with a huge boost of energy and perhaps a mild euphoria.

Set an alarm as backup. Limit the nap to 25 minutes so that you don't enter deep sleep.

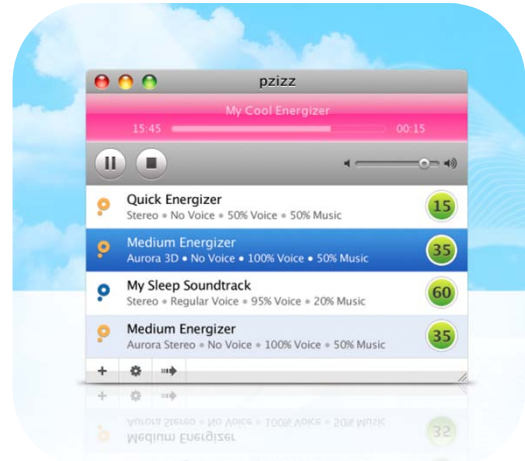
It sounds weird, but give it a try.

## SLEEP HACK 17

### PZIZZ YOUR WAY TO SLEEP

**Pzizz** is a program you can download (for Win or Mac). It generates “nap tracks”, which are essentially MP3s that you listen to while you take a nap. You can customize the length, background noises, etc.

Pzizz tracks include binaural beats, which sync your brain waves to specific frequencies for relaxation and calmness of mind. A background voice uses neuro-linguistic programming to alter your mental patterns and prime you for a boost of energy upon waking up. Pzizz is one of the few sleep audio programs that gets it right: it’s soothing, not distracting. Sometimes you don’t even realize you’re listening to anything. Pzizz soothes the subconscious without distracting the conscious. It becomes effortless to fall asleep and you wake up feeling supercharged.



I program pzizz tracks for 25 minutes – 5 minutes to meditate before falling asleep, then a 20 minute nap. At the end of the track, a soothing voice and crescendo of colorful sounds ease you out of sleep. No more buzzing alarms.

In the past 12 months I have not had a single nap without Pzizz, and I nap 9 days out of 10. You can use a laptop with headphones or upload pzizz mp3s to your iPod. (I go the iPod route).

To download, go to their website [www.pzizz.com](http://www.pzizz.com).



## SLEEP HACK 18

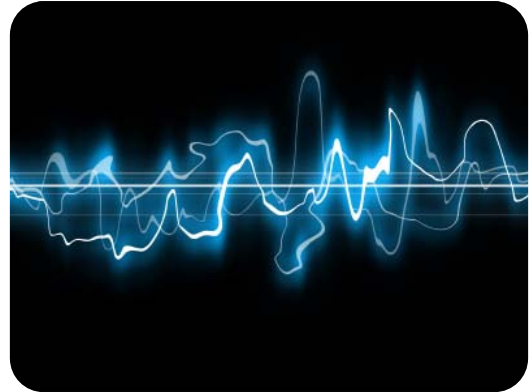
### CREATE YOUR OWN NAP MP3

You can create your own nap mp3. Download the free audio editing program [Audacity](#). Use Audacity to splice music together to create a custom nap track.

Here's what I do: I use a [pzizz](#) mp3 for the duration of the nap and follow it with euphoric music.

My two favorite custom nap mp3s:

1. 25 minute pzizz track followed by Sibelius's Karelia Suite. (total length: 32m)
2. 25 minute pzizz track followed by Solar Stone's trance classic Solarcoaster . (total length: 38m)



[Download both of these mp3s at  
www.SleepWarrior.com!](http://www.SleepWarrior.com)

The nap lasts 25 minutes and the music acts as an alarm. The music puts me in a euphoric mood, augmenting the mood benefits of the nap itself. When I wake up I start working, but continue to listen to the

MP3 until the music finishes.

You can download the above two nap tracks from [www.sleepwarrior.com](http://www.sleepwarrior.com). Use them as examples for creating your own pzizz + music combinations.

I used a pzizz track for the nap portion of my custom mp3. But you can use ambient noise, white noise, classical music, or just silence. I used some of my favorite euphoric music for the post-nap portion of the MP3, but you can use anything (beeps, roosters, or a recording of yourself saying "Self, wake the f--- up!"). [Audacity](#) will let you do it. Be creative and have fun.



# SECTION 4

## DREAMING AND CREATIVITY



*Our dreams are firsthand creations, rather than residues of waking life. We have the capacity for infinite creativity; at least while dreaming, we partake of the power of the Spirit, the infinite Godhead that creates the cosmos. ~Jackie Gleason*

## SLEEP HACK 19

### LEARN TO LUCID DREAM

*I realized I was dreaming. I raised my arms and began to rise... I rose through black sky that blended to indigo, to deep purple, to lavender, to white, then to very bright light. All the time I was being lifted there was the most beautiful music I have ever heard. It seemed like voices rather than instruments. There are no words to describe the JOY I felt. I was gently lowered back to earth. I had the feeling that I had come to a turning point in my life and I had chosen the right path. The dream, the joy I experienced, was kind of a reward, or so I felt. It was a long, slow slide back into wakefulness with the music echoing in my ears. The euphoria lasted several days; the memory, forever.*  
(A.F., Bay City, Michigan) Taken from pg 1 of [Exploring the World of Lucid Dreaming](#)



Lucid dreaming occurs when you become conscious during a dream. This allows you to control your dream character.

Lucid dreaming is a skill. Anyone can learn it, but it takes time and practice. The time and practice are well worth it. I had my first lucid dream 5 months after hearing about it. Some people are faster learners.

The most common way to induce a lucid dream is to program yourself to notice the “weird” stuff in dreams... you perform “reality checks” to see if you’re dreaming or not. For example, you might be dreaming and notice that you can’t read the numbers on a clock. “Why can’t I read those numbers? I can normally read... wait, this must be a dream”. Then *click*, you become conscious in your dream and can now control your dream character. Next step usually is to fly around for a bit then go make out with your favorite celebrity.

Learning to have a lucid dream isn’t hard, but you need the right techniques, which are too detailed to give in this book. I recommend [Exploring the world of Lucid Dreaming](#). Written by the very guy who first validated lucid dreaming in scientific research. It’s gained the reputation as *the* lucid dreaming how-to book. Worth the low price.

Otherwise, check out the excellent website [Lucidipedia](#).

## SLEEP HACK 20

### USE LUCID DREAMING TO CULTIVATE PEAK PERFORMANCE, SOLVE PROBLEMS, AND OVERCOME FEARS

Dream imagery is convincingly real and vivid. There's depth, color, dimension, and experience interwoven into dream imagery. An apple in a dream feels real and can be experienced with all senses, despite it only occurring in your head. On the other hand, when you imagine an apple in your head while you're awake, it appears dim and weak, like a small flicker. Yet we rely on waking imagery all the time to envision futures, set goals, and mentally rehearse and practice skills (public speaking, sports...). Dreams can be used instead for these things. Learn to become conscious during a dream and use it to become a better public speaker, overcome the fear of approaching women, or simply envision your ideal future self.



*Dreams are the most vivid type of mental imagery most people are likely to experience. The more the mental rehearsal of a skill feels like the real thing, the greater the effect it is likely to have on waking performance. Because of this, lucid dreaming, in which we can make conscious use of dream imagery, is likely to be even more useful than waking mental imagery as a tool for learning and practicing skills. –pg 185 of [Exploring the World of Lucid Dreaming](#)*

This technique has been explored heavily with great success by the community of avid lucid dreamers. It's a shame that a fundamentally useful skill like this hasn't entered the mainstream.



Let's look at a few examples:

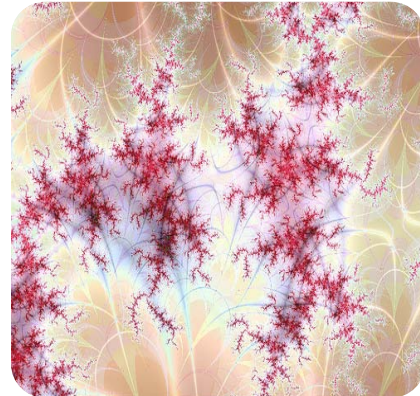
**Example 1:** Use Lucid Dreaming to fine tune motor skills as a surgeon

*I discovered in high school that I was a lucid dreamer when I learned that I could study complicated mathematical and geometry problems before going to bed and discovered that I was able to solve the problems when I awakened...*

*The greatest use to which I have been able to put this facility is in the practice of surgery. Each night before retiring I review my list of surgical cases and I actually practice these cases in my sleep. I have gained a reputation for being a rapid and skilled surgeon with almost no major complications... (R.V., Aiken, South Carolina)*

**Example 2:** Understand abstract mathematical concepts

*A little over a year ago, I was in a linear algebra class that introduced me to vector spaces. I was having a lot of trouble understanding the topic on more than a superficial level. After about a week of serious studying, I had a lucid dream about an abstract vector space. I perceived directly a four-dimensional space. The dream did not have a visual component, but such abstract dreams are not uncommon for me. The best I can describe that dream is to say that I perceived four coordinate axes that were mutually perpendicular. Since that night, both math and dreaming have been more fun for me, and I've had relatively little trouble understanding vector space calculus. (T.D., Clarksville, Tennessee)*



**Example 3:** Overcome anxiety, increase self-confidence

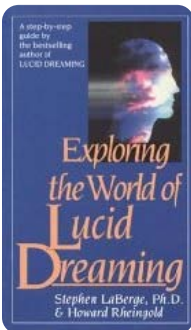
*In my lucid dreams I am always with a group of people in a room where everyone seems to be doing or saying exactly what they feel. I am usually sitting back not saying much of anything, and feeling very badly inside. Suddenly, I realize that I am dreaming and I decide to change my behavior in the dream and say exactly what is on my mind. It's a little scary doing this because it is new for me, but at the same time it feels good and makes me feel clearer. I wake up from these dreams feeling especially good about myself. It shows me how it feels to act aggressively rather than passively... (K.G., Charlotte, North Carolina)*

**Example 4:** Perform in front of an audience without fear

*I am studying to become a professional musician (French horn), and I wished to remove my fear of performing in front of people. On several occasions I placed myself in a state of self-hypnosis/daydreaming by relaxing my entire body and mind before going to sleep. Then I focused on my desire to have a dream in which I was performing for a large audience by myself but was not nervous or suffering from anxiety. On the third night of this experiment, I had a lucid dream in which I was performing a solo recital without accompaniment at Orchestra Hall in Chicago (a place where I have performed once before, but in a full orchestra). I felt no anxiety regarding the audience, and every note that I played made me feel even more confident. I played perfectly a piece that I had heard only once before (and never attempted to play), and the ovation I received added to my confidence.*



*When I woke up, I made a quick note of the dream and the piece that I played. While practicing the next day, I sight-read the piece and played it nearly perfectly. Two weeks (and a few lucid dream performances) later, I performed Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony with the orchestra. For the first time, nerves did not hamper my playing, and the performance went extremely well. (J.S., Mt. Prospect, Illinois)*



All of these examples were taken from [Exploring the World of Lucid Dreaming](#), which has dozens more such examples and, of course, expert advice on how to use lucid dreaming to improve *your* waking world.

The possibilities are limitless. Dream of approaching the opposite sex with power and self-confidence. Perform piano recitals in a lucid dream before doing it in real life. Rehearse your martial arts moves. Overcome anything.

## SLEEP HACK 21

### EXPLORE HYPNAGOGIA

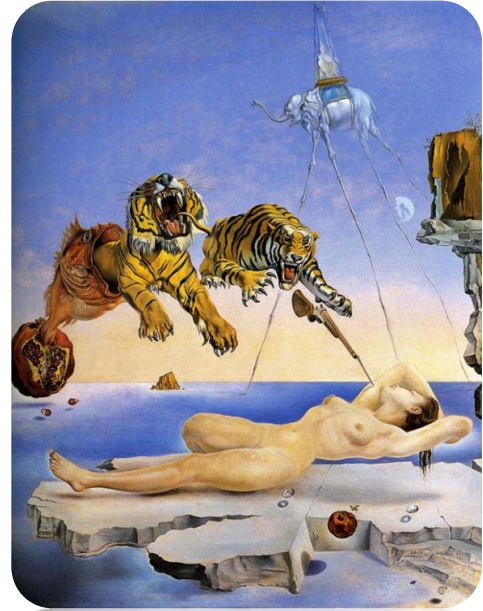
Hypnagogia is the mental state between waking and sleep when we are half conscious. Hallucinations occur in this half-asleep state. Problem is, our memory facilities shut down about 3 minutes before we even get to sleep. Hypnagogia hallucinations are rarely remembered.

If you manage to have some awareness during hypnagogia, you'll find it a gold-mine of creativity. Dali, Einstein, Brahms, Wagner, Charles Dickens, and Mark Twain were all influenced by hypnagogic dreams and hallucinations. Out of body experiences sometimes occur during this state.

There's a trick to exploring hypnagogia. Dali was famous for his spoon method. He rested his chin on a spoon held up by his hands. As Dali drifted off, his muscles would relax and the spoon would fall on the table and wake him up from a hypnagogic dream. He then proceeded to paint what he saw.

Dali's method works, but here's a better method:

1. Lie on your back in bed or sit in a comfortable armchair.
2. Rest your elbow on the surface of the bed or the arm of the chair so that your forearm is pointing straight up. Let your wrist go limp if that is more comfortable for you.
3. Focus your mind on a problem you wish to solve.
4. Allow yourself to drift toward sleep, while continuing to focus on the problem as long as you can.
5. Wait for your arm to relax and fall, waking you up. This will happen naturally when you begin to fall more deeply asleep.
6. Record any creative thoughts you had while dozing.
7. Repeat.



This painting was inspired by one of Dali's hypnagogic hallucinations

The method was borrowed from the excellent book: [Mind Performance Hacks: Tips and Tools for Overclocking Your Brain](#).

Hypnagogia occurs because as you enter sleep your sensory perceptions dissolve, leaving your brain open for creativity and hallucination.

Try this method 30-60 minutes before your bed time or around naptime.

## SLEEP HACK 22

### KEEP A DREAM JOURNAL

The purpose of a dream journal is to improve dream recall, which is a requisite to learning lucid dreaming. The tried and true method to dream journaling is as follows:



1. When you realize you're awake, don't move. Sit there and search for any memories of dreams. If you remember a detail from a dream, work forward and backward through the story sequence as much as you can
2. Jot down anything you remember.

Step 2 is what stops people. No one wants to spend 5 minutes dictating a story on paper. Instead, just write down keywords, draw pictures, or write out a few lines of dialogue you remember. 90% of my dream journal entries are just a list of 5 keywords. Takes 30 seconds.

The point of a dream journal isn't necessarily to archive every dream experience on paper for further analysis. The *main* purpose of a dream journal is to *trick* your mind into thinking that remembering dreams is important. I never re-read 90% of my journal entries.

Aside from being an effortless 30-second routine upon waking up, dream journaling is simply a way for you to explore your own creativity through vivid imagery. I usually go through 1-2 months of dream journaling per year. I'm not very dedicated, but it's always fun to do once in a while.

# SECTION 5

## SLEEP ENVIRONMENT



*There are two types of people in this world, good and bad. The good sleep better, but the bad seem to enjoy the waking hours much more.*

*~Woody Allen*

## SLEEP HACK 23

### SLEEP IN COMPLETE DARKNESS

The tiniest amount of light can disrupt circadian rhythm and your pineal gland's production of melatonin and serotonin. LEDs from alarm clocks and computers, although dim, actually do have a measurable effect on sleep quality. Darker sleep increases melatonin which increases sleep quality and promotes good health. Turn off or cover all LEDs.



If you wake up to go to the bathroom, turning the light on will immediately cease all production of melatonin. Don't drink water to the point where you have to wake up at night. It seems like a small detail, but the pineal gland really is that sensitive.

**Sleep masks** are effective, too. I don't use one every night, but I own one because it's good to have around. If I've been sleeping poorly for a few days, I start using a sleep mask for an easy and effective sleep quality boost.

## SLEEP HACK 24

### SLEEP IN THE COLD

Temperature is closely linked with circadian rhythm. Core body temperature drops around bed time. Sleep in a cool room so as to not counteract your circadian rhythm.

Cool temperature will give you higher quality sleep. More SWS throughout the night. If possible, keep the room as cool as possible without making it uncomfortably cold. Too cold and you'll wake up in the middle of the night.

Humans did not evolve with central heating. Our bodies were designed to sleep optimally at cooler temperatures. Most people keep their homes far too warm during night.

However, daytime naps can – some experts say *should* – be taken at warmer temperatures.

# SECTION 6

## SLEEP GADGETS



*There will be sleeping enough in the  
grave. ~Benjamin Franklin*

## SLEEP HACK 25

### USE NOISE CANCELLING HEADPHONES

Whenever I nap, I put on a **pzizz** track using my **iPod** and **noise-cancelling headphones**. Certain models of in-ear headphones are designed to isolate outside noise by 35dB. Best used for airplane rides, studying, or while meditating to **meditation CDs** (outside traffic nearly ruins the experience of meditation...)

In-ear headphones have become my favorite napping gadget. Wherever I go, I can create my own audio sanctuary and listen to a pzizz nap track. I've napped in odd places – libraries, Starbucks, work... It's easy to relax, clear your mind and fall asleep when you block outside noise.



In-ear headphones fit in your ear canal like ear plugs, hence the noise isolation. The right models are curiously comfortable.

In-ear headphones give this weird sensation that the music is being played inside your skull. For audiophiles, it's a surreal sound experience. For nappers, it's a powerful way to overclock the effectiveness of nap MP3s – how? There's just this extra dimension of detail to music when played through in-ear headphones. Listen to old favorites and suddenly you'll hear fingers over guitar strings and the shuffling of sheet music from an orchestra. For pzizz (or meditation tracks, even), there's this extra layer of clarity and depth... it's kind of hard to explain, but it somehow just makes pzizz more relaxing, at least for me.



I've been in the noise isolation headphone market for 5+ years, so I thought I'd give my recommendations depending on your price range.



**Shure SE530 Sound Isolating Earphones** - **\$500**. Expensive, but these headphones are heavenly. A dream for audiophiles. Easily the most popular headphone in this price range. Amazon has them for almost **\$100** off.

**Etymotic ER-6i** - **\$150**. Optimized for use with iPods. Stellar sound quality. Isolates outside noise very well (by 35dB... you won't be able to hear the TV). I've owned a pair for 4 years and wouldn't trade them in for anything. To the extent that a human being can fall in love with tiny headphones, I have certainly fallen in love with these things. Amazon has them for **\$75** now, which is a steal in my opinion. My personal recommendation.

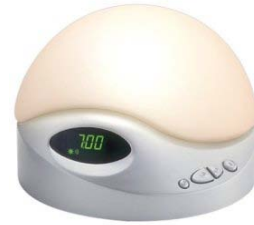


**Sony Fontopia in-ear headphones** - **\$40**. Can be found on Amazon for around **\$25**. Sound quality is average (but much better than the default iPod headphones). Reduces outside noise by 10dB, compared to 35dB from the Etymotic ER-6i's. Still the best in the low-end price range.

## SLEEP HACK 26

### USE A BRIGHT LIGHT ALARM

Everyone has their preferred method of waking up. If jumping out of the bed to an obnoxious buzz isn't your thing, then you might prefer a light alarm. Light alarms wake you up with, well, light. The light gradually increases in intensity for an easy transition into wakefulness.



## SLEEP HACK 27

### USE A SUN BOX

Sunlight resets the body clock and stabilizes circadian rhythm, which promotes proper timing and release of hormones. This is why lack of sunlight causes depression and low energy.

Sunlight is good, but we can't control its timing or intensity. There will always be cloudy days and winter months. This is where technology comes in.

Light boxes simulate sunlight by producing a wide spectrum of light. Normal artificial lights do affect circadian rhythm, but not nearly as much due to their limited wavelength spectrum.



Unfortunately, few people think to use light boxes outside of therapy for S.A.D. or circadian disorders. Yet they're the perfect sleep hacker tool for even healthy sleepers.

Turn on a light box for 30 minutes in the morning as you work at your desk. Circadian rhythm balances, energy increases, sleep quality increases, performance and mood increase.

Cheat nature by using a light box during winter months or cloudy days. Strut around with better mood and more energy while everyone around you mopes because they assumed light boxes were only for those with "disorders". Sleep hacking at its best.

The two most popular models currently are by [NatureBright](#) and [Apollo](#).

## SLEEP HACK 28

### THE SLEEPTRACKER WATCH

Despite my advocacy of waking up at the same time every morning, it has a flaw. A normal alarm cannot tell where you are in a sleep cycle.

Your brain cycles through the different stages of sleep, oscillating between Deep sleep, and light/REM sleep at a period of about 90 minutes.

Deep sleep is very important for cognitive performance. A lot of “neural housecleaning” occurs during deep sleep, which makes it so important for mood, performance, motor skills, productivity, and creativity.

Deep sleep has specifically been evolutionarily programmed to not be interrupted. Some researchers suspect that one of the main reasons light sleep evolved was to act as a transition stage to and from deep sleep and to provide opportunities for awakening. During deep sleep your cerebral cortex – the consciousness part of your brain – nearly shuts off. Neural activity in the cerebral cortex break down into little islands that can't talk to one another.

This is why we feel groggy when we're woken up from deep sleep. Our cerebral cortex (i.e. our consciousness) is turned off! It takes 20m of waking activity for it to reboot itself. There are thought to be health consequences too, since you're not giving your brain the opportunity to finish what it started.

A cool sleep hacker tool is the [SleepTracker watch](#). You wear it at night like any watch, but it can detect where you are in a sleep cycle. In light stages your body tosses and turns a bit, although we never know it. In REM our bodies are paralyzed and in deep sleep our muscles are relaxed and motionless. The SleepTracker watch can detect movement from light stages, so it always knows when you're in a light stage and when you're in a non-light stage. Its alarm only goes off during light stages. You wake up feeling refreshed and energetic. Much to my surprise, it actually works...



*But I've heard that if we just sleep in 90m intervals we will always wake up at the right time...*

Err.... That's a toughie. There's been a lot of buzz about sleeping in 90 minute intervals. Some people claim that this guarantees we wake up at the end of a sleep cycle (which are on *average* 90 minutes long). The real situation is much more complicated, unfortunately. Sleep stage architecture is highly variable. Drink a bit of alcohol before you sleep and you're unlikely to see any evidence of 90-minute cycles. And even as we age our sleep architecture becomes more broken. The pure 90-minute cycle thing is more of a textbook example, a simplified model that loses applicability in real-world situations.

Lastly, if you buy the [SleepTracker watch, get the pro version](#). It's a lot better and you can upload sleep data to your computer (via USB). Plus it has a vibrate option, whereas the older model does not.

## SLEEP HACK 29

### USE A SLEEP MASK

Most people wouldn't think to buy a sleep mask

We've talked about how light is the strongest zeitgeber. When optimizing our sleep habits, taking control of light exposure is essential. Sleeping in darkness improves sleep quality. But darkness isn't always achievable.

I normally don't wear a sleep mask, but I'm glad I own one. I usually use it when I feel like I need a sleep quality boost, or when my sleep too far overlaps daytime.

I used a tried-and-true \$10 sleep mask for a couple years. Worked great, but then I upgraded to the "[ultimate sleep mask](#)", which is a bit more comfortable and doesn't let light in through the bottom like other masks (lots of sleep masks don't fit your nose contour perfectly, meaning a bit of light seeps in... not a huge deal, but sometimes a bit annoying.)

[Dispos·a·mask](#) has a good, straightforward selection.

## SLEEP HACK 30

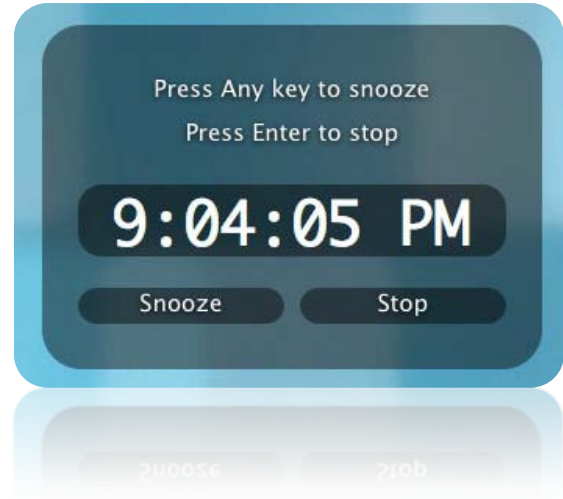
### USE AN MP3 ALARM CLOCK

Use your computer as an alarm clock. Download alarm clock software to play your favorite mp3s as an alternative to the obnoxious *beep beep beep* beep...

Picking your favorite wake-up song has some advantages. Choose something that really strikes a positive nerve in you. Waking up will be easier. Or go for a gradual wake-up process choose a long mp3 that you can soak into your conscious for a few minutes before hopping out of bed.

Got a Mac? [Use Alarm Clock 2.0 for OS X.](#)

Use Windows? Download [Citrus Alarm Clock.](#)



# SECTION 7

## PSYCHOLOGY



*Whatever you hold in your mind will tend to occur in your life. If you continue to believe as you have always believed, you will continue to act as you have always acted. If you continue to act as you have always acted, you will continue to get what you have always gotten. If you want different results in your life or your work, all you have to do is change your mind.*

## SLEEP HACK 31

### USE YOUR BRAIN'S INTERNAL ALARM CLOCK

Your brain has a built-in alarm clock.

People knew this for years. When you're stressed out about waking up in time for that important flight/meeting/exam early tomorrow morning... What do you do? You set 5 alarms just in case. Somehow you wake up 3 minutes before all of them... how did your brain do that? It has a built-in alarm.

Only recently has science discovered [the biological basis of this alarm](#).

The wake-up process occurs via increased blood flow to the brain, which is facilitated by the stress hormones ACTH and cortisol. By anticipating (or stressing over) a wake-up time we set our internal alarm clock. When the anticipated wake-up time arrives, the brain signals the pituitary and adrenal glands to spike ACTH and cortisol. And you wake up.

So how do you use this to your advantage? If you want to learn to wake up easily, refreshed, with a jolt of energy and – most importantly – without an alarm clock, then it helps to psychologically pep yourself before you go to bed. Learn to visualize and anticipate, or use morning rewards (see next hack).

Better yet, you can wake up at the same time every morning (sleep hack #1). Your brain will program itself to anticipate the scheduled wake-up time. The internal alarm clock will replace your external alarm clock.



## SLEEP HACK 32

### SET UP MORNING REWARDS

Help facilitate the cortisol wake-up mechanism. Create a morning reward. Something to get you excited.

1. Set out ingredients for your favorite breakfast the night before. Get excited to get up and eat.
2. Set up your favorite coffee or tea. Call me crazy, but thinking about drinking my favorite tea ([matcha green tea](#) – So. Damn. Good.) is more than enough to get me out of bed.
3. Morning sex. Convince your partner to try it. You'll wake up easier than you have in years.



Some of my morning rewards have been silly and trivial – but they were enough to get me excited and wake up with a boost of cortisol. Pick rewards that work for you.

## SLEEP HACK 33

### WRITE DOWN TOMORROW'S TO-DO LIST

A classic sleep hack that you've probably heard before. Worth trying if you haven't yet.

Sometime in the evening, about 3-5 hours before bedtime, write down everything you have to accomplish tomorrow. Or write your thoughts in a journal, whatever you prefer. The point is to get those "open loops" out of your head and onto paper (or a .txt file). You'll feel 100% better immediately. Sleep will improve.



I recommend doing this a few hours before bedtime so you can spend the remainder of the day relaxing with “me time” activities (a habit that studies have shown improves sleep quality). But you can do it right before bed if you want. Try it. It’s cheaper than a sleeping pill (and unlike a sleeping pill, it won’t wreck havoc on your sleep stage architecture).

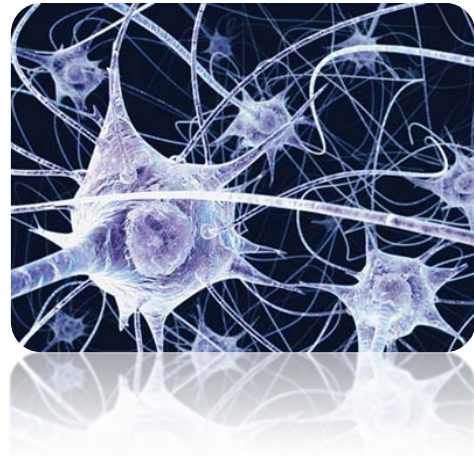
Highly recommended for insomniacs, but even for non-insomniacs this technique will help control cortisol levels and improve sleep quality.

## SLEEP HACK 34

### CHANGE YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARD SLEEP

Here are two studies that show how mere *belief* can change sleep quality:

1. First study. When insomniacs in this study were told that they slept better/more than they did, they felt and performed better during the day when compared to insomniacs who were not told anything about their sleep quality yet who got the same amount of sleep.
2. Second study. Subjects were divided into 3 groups. Time cues and clocks were taken away. All groups went to sleep, and researchers woke everyone up after exactly 8 hours. Group 1 was told they slept 6 and were being sleep deprived for the study. Group 2 was told they slept 10 hours. Group 3 was told the truth. Group 1 complained of sleepiness, irritability and poor concentration. Group 2 complained of lethargy. Group 3 reported feeling fine.



Is sleep need just in our heads? Not quite. Sleep is a biological drive at its core. But psychology can influence the subjective quality of our sleep.

## SLEEP HACK 35

### TRAIN YOUR BRAIN TO WAKE UP TO ALARMS

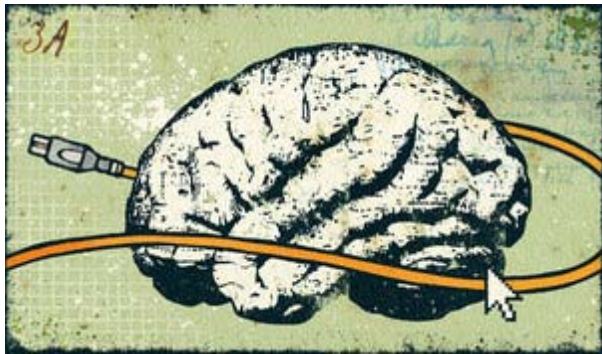
This sleep hack is from blogger [Steve Pavlina](#).

Our bodies were not designed to wake up during SWS. If you wake up in SWS it takes about 20 minutes of being awake for certain parts of your brain to reboot. Waking up from SWS leads to cognitive fog and intense grogginess – and the snooze button.

Whether you wake up from SWS or just have a hard time getting up, you can't trust yourself to be rational at this time. Self-discipline does not work in a cognitive fog. If you have the habit of pressing the snooze button in the morning, it's not because you lack self-discipline. It's because even if you did have self-discipline, the self-discipline wouldn't work in your unconscious fog.

Upon waking up you rely heavily on habits and automation. Spend a few minutes during the *day* to program proper wake-up habits into your psychology's auto-pilot system. The procedure:

1. Start by following your bedtime routine – brush teeth, put on pajamas, etc.
2. Lay down in bed, set alarm for 5 minutes later.
3. Relax, pretend to fall asleep.
4. When the alarm goes off, immediately sit up, turn it off, take in a deep breath, then jump out of bed.
5. Walk out of the bedroom.
6. Repeat this a few times for the next few days.



If you do this correctly, your brain will be trained to follow a routine upon hearing the alarm. You'll wake up on auto pilot, no matter how tired you are. Works eerily well. Kinda scares me to realize our brains thrive on automation, and not so much on things like... you know... free will and self-discipline...

## SLEEP HACK 36

### SET TWO ALARMS

So simple, yet so effective. Set one alarm with a pleasant, quiet buzzer within arm's reach. Set a second alarm with a very obnoxious buzzer in a hard to reach place – in the corner, on top of a shelf – for 5 minutes after the first alarm. You wake up to the first alarm and hop out of bed to quickly turn off the second. The second alarm will punish you for pressing snooze on the first.

Now that you're up, the rest is easy. Go shower.

Works well if you sleep with your spouse. First alarm won't wake him/her up, and you have to get up immediately to turn off alarm #2.

## SLEEP HACK 37

### MAINTAIN A POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD LIFE

One study compared short sleepers to long sleepers. The study found "The short-sleepers tended to be efficient, energetic, and ambitious... The long-sleepers, as a group, showed more doubts about their career choices and life situations." A positive attitude toward life, a certain drive and ambition, appears to improve sleep quality and reduce people's sleep need. Another study showed that long sleepers had less energy and more examples of psychopathology.

We can't tell whether it's the positive attitude toward life that causes more efficient sleep, or if naturally efficient sleep causes the positive attitude. But who cares? Because developing a positive attitude has its own inherent benefits. As a bonus, there's a good chance it will give you more energy, more refreshing sleep, and a reduced need for sleep.



## SLEEP HACK 38

### WAKE UP TO EUPHORIC MUSIC



Slow-Wave Sleep (Stages 3 and 4) is the “wake up and feel great” sleep. If you wake up feeling mild euphoria, you probably got a large amount of SWS.

This mild euphoria upon awakening is likely caused by the feel-good hormone serotonin. The “just woke up” feeling is good, but we can make it better with the right music.

English psychologist Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic studied the way music influences serotonin levels in listeners’ blood. He even derived a formula: Pitch + % of positive lyrics + Tonality + Beats per Minute + Images/Memories associated with the music = serotonin level.

Take a moment and reflect on your music collection. In particular, find the songs that are uplifting and associated with positive personal memories. These will be your euphoric wake-up songs.

Playing euphoric music upon awakening boosts that “just woke up” or “on top of the world” feeling you get after a nap or a particularly refreshing night of sleep.

I use Citrus Alarm Clock (sleep hack 30) to play euphoric music as an alarm for my nights of sleep. And I create my own nap mp3 (sleep hack 18) that plays euphoric music for power naps. These both work well.



Combined with **high-quality headphones**, waking up to music will allow you to experience music in a new way. During sleep your senses shut off. When you're transitioning out of sleep, senses are half-off. This is why hallucinations can occur during the half-asleep transition, called hypnagogia. Wake up to euphoric music and you'll hear it differently... sorta like how music sounds in dreams. Senses are off, just your brain and music. It's like the music is no longer coming out of headphones, but from inside your head. Your mind is clear

like water, and the music riffs through your skull with angelic lucidity. You see sounds and hear colors. Each beat, each drum, each instrument, and each note rings with its own distinct personality. Your perception of sound is heightened in the same way the THC from marijuana improves the subjective experience of music.

If you think I'm exaggerating, try it for yourself.

If you haven't figured it out already: **iPod + in-ear headphones + pzizz + custom nap mp3 with euphoric music as the alarm = the perfect 20-minute power nap. Pure energy and euphoria... without the drugs.**

My euphoric music suggestions (links are to youtube videos... have a listen!):

1. **Walhalla by Gouryella**. (Pure, uplifting melody. If Heaven has a theme song, this is it... guaranteed to send chills down your spine.)
2. **Karelia Suite by Jean Sibelius**. (Very colorful classical piece. The loud horns will wake you up and put the biggest damn smile on your face.)
3. **Solarcoaster by Solar Stone**. (Listen at least half-way through. Beautiful and ethereal... might bring a tear to your eye.)

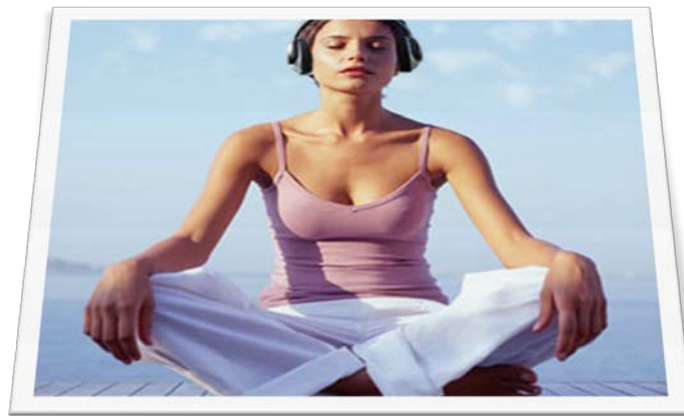
Now imagine listening to those as you wake up... Life is good, eh? 😊



Download nap mp3s with these euphoric songs at [www.sleepwarrior.com](http://www.sleepwarrior.com)

# SECTION 8

## LIFESTYLE



*Sleep is the best meditation*  
~Dalai Lama

## SLEEP HACK 39

### MEDITATE

According to Donald E. Miskiman of the University of Alberta,

*Transcendental Meditation seems to stabilize the sleep-dream cycle by reducing the effect of any disruption to this cycle and thereby restoring the system more quickly to its normal level of functioning.*

In other words, meditation improves sleep quality. It reduces interruptions to deep sleep (SWS).

One way meditation does this is by reducing cortisol levels during the day. The stress hormone cortisol will destroy sleep quality – it has a rather dramatic negative effect that has been studied extensively. Specifically, cortisol will reduce SWS amount. Less SWS means less energy, more irritability, and – ironically – more stress.

Our bodies were designed to have cortisol levels very low while we sleep. Cortisol spikes in the morning to wake us up, but otherwise should remain at low levels, especially in the beginning of the night's sleep since that's where most SWS is concentrated.

Our stress response was originally intended to spike occasionally during fight-or-flight situations like during a hunt. It was not designed to stay consistently high with 70-hour work weeks, impending deadlines, and no vacations. Modern lifestyles cause day-to-day, around-the-clock stress. Our bodies did not evolve this way. This is one reason why many people today experience poor sleep – high cortisol levels.

Several studies have shown how meditation can improve sleep quality. E.g. one study showed that insomniacs who take 60m to fall asleep reduce that time to 15m after 30 days of meditation.

Some studies even show that meditation somehow makes dreams more creative. I don't meditate often, but when I do go on these meditation streaks my dreams become really weird... which is good, that means more lucid dreams 😊



Meditation isn't for everyone. Don't feel guilty if meditation doesn't appeal to you. But if you like to meditate, you now have an extra reason to do so – better sleep.

You've probably guessed by now, but I'm a bit addicted to this [iPod + in-ear noise isolation headphones + pzizz/relaxation/meditation audio](#) thing... Not a very Buddhist way to meditate, but it works for me. Best audio program for meditation hands down is [Holosync](#). Not cheesy or new-agey, which for me has been a turn-off with other meditation audio tracks. You can get a [free demo of Holosync at their website](#).

## SLEEP HACK 40

### FALL IN LOVE

Fall in love, our last sleep hack.

One study on high school students showed that honeymoon romantics...

1. Had more energy
2. Slept about 1 hour less than a control group
3. Reported greater subjective sleep quality



The romantics were characterized as subclinical hypomaniacs. Hypomania is an attitude of mind characterized by elated emotions, fast-paced thoughts, increased risk-taking, and occasional euphoria. A side effect of hypomania appears to be a reduced need for sleep and improved subjective sleep quality. While “hypomania” is a term usually reserved for neurological “disorders”, apparently it is possible to attain subclinical (i.e. “normal”) hypomania by falling in love.

Unfortunately, this effect was not shown for couples that were past the honeymoon stage in their relationship.



## CLOSING

This eBook was created by [SleepWarrior.com](http://SleepWarrior.com).

As you can tell, I'm a bit of a nerd when it comes to sleep. But let me explain why...

I believe in something called "lifestyle investing." A lot of us put so much energy in financial investments, which is silly when you think about it because money won't bring us as much happiness and well-being as good lifestyle habits.

Our brain runs on habits. Half of it just runs on auto-pilot. If you spend some time programming a new habit for your brain, you can let that habit run on auto-pilot for the rest of your life and effortlessly enjoy the benefits.

Sleep falls into that category. Life falls apart when we don't sleep right. Insomniacs complain of never being fully asleep and never fully being alive – it's that middle ground of tiredness and cognitive fog. Improve your sleep habits and you will oscillate between the extremes of consciousness – extremely deep and refreshing sleep at night and extreme alertness and focus during the day. This is the ideal.

Spend a few weeks programming good sleep habits. Then spend the rest of your life with a consciousness upgrade – more alertness, more energy, more happiness, and all for the low price of a little upfront effort. It's remarkably simple, yet we struggle to find the self-discipline, motivation, and knowledge to take that easy first step toward installing better habits. I struggle with this too. So no patronizing.

But this is where I want my website, [SleepWarrior.com](http://SleepWarrior.com), to come in. I want to help people improve their lives through enriched knowledge on sleep. Become a part of this effort... I encourage you to take the following steps.

- Subscribe to SleepWarrior's RSS feed. New articles are posted frequently. Click this link: <http://feeds.feedburner.com/Sleepwarrior>. Then click the (+Google) button to add SleepWarrior to Google Reader (you *are* using Google Reader, right? ☺)
- Post this eBook on your website.
- Email it to a friend.
- If you haven't already, [download the free custom nap mp3s](#).

Visit [SleepWarrior.com](http://SleepWarrior.com) for more sleep hacks

And finally, my e-mail address is [jeff@sleepwarrior.com](mailto:jeff@sleepwarrior.com). You are welcome to e-mail me any time.

Best wishes,

Jeff

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