

Sleep Strategies Worksheet

Nearly nine out of ten UT students report sleepiness during daytime activities as a problem.¹ Technology, stress and sleep environment are the three greatest barriers impacting UT students' sleep.² Getting an average of eight hours of quality sleep per night is an important part of overall health and academic success. The benefits of sleep are numerous, especially for students, as sleep is essential for increased memory consolidation, learning, decision making, critical thinking and, of course, staying well.



Directions:

Review the **BARRIERS** below and note the ones that impact your sleep. Then, review the list of **STRATEGIES** and identify one or more that you will implement to help address the corresponding barrier.

BARRIERS	STRATEGIES
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Minimize the use of electronic devices in the hour before bedtime <input type="checkbox"/> Turn off devices when going to sleep or put them out of reach <input type="checkbox"/> Enable "do not disturb" mode on your phone to limit distracting notifications and pop-ups <input type="checkbox"/> Set up a blue light filter on your phone
Stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Plan an hour of quiet time before bedtime when you focus on activities that promote rest (e.g., relaxing stretches, breathing exercises, bathing, reading) <input type="checkbox"/> Listen to a meditation app, soft music or soothing nature sounds <input type="checkbox"/> Write a to-do list for the next day or spend time journaling <input type="checkbox"/> Jot down notes about issues keeping you awake <input type="checkbox"/> If you cannot fall asleep within about 20 minutes, get up and do a low-key activity (like reading) in dim light until you start to feel drowsy <input type="checkbox"/> Spend time outside, move your body and fuel yourself with good food, hydration and social interaction during the day
Sleep Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Make your bed a cue for sleep by moving wakeful activities (e.g., screen time, working, worrying, planning) out of the bed <input type="checkbox"/> Use an eye mask, blinds or blackout curtains to reduce intrusion of light <input type="checkbox"/> Spray lavender or another calming scent <input type="checkbox"/> Try earplugs or a white noise machine to block out background sounds <input type="checkbox"/> Use sheets, blankets and quilts that breathe to keep you at a comfortable sleeping temperature

BARRIERS	STRATEGIES
Time Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Establish a consistent bedtime and waketime routine <input type="checkbox"/> Create a daily/weekly schedule that includes all your responsibilities (e.g., class, work, orgs), time to socialize and time to take care of yourself (e.g., eating, moving, sleeping, relaxation) <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid all-nighters
Roommates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Practice good communication skills and respect with roommates <input type="checkbox"/> Address issues as they come up and identify solutions <input type="checkbox"/> Value each other's space and opinions <input type="checkbox"/> Use a desk lamp rather than overhead lighting <input type="checkbox"/> Talk on the phone outside a shared room <input type="checkbox"/> Use headphones when listening to a device <input type="checkbox"/> Set agreements on "quiet hours" and daily bedtimes/waketimes
Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A part of all healthy relationships are healthy boundaries – do not stay up if you do not want to <input type="checkbox"/> Enhance communication skills with loved ones <input type="checkbox"/> Identify and express needs <input type="checkbox"/> Address issues as they come up and identify solutions
Caffeine, Alcohol and Other Substances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid caffeine six hours before bedtime <input type="checkbox"/> Limit alcohol consumption as it increases the number of times you wake up during the night and restricts REM sleep <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid cigarettes/vaping, which can cause insomnia and delay sleep <input type="checkbox"/> Use prescribed medicinal sleep aids or over-the-counter methods only as directed

¹ 2017 NCHA - UT Austin Survey

² 2019 AlcoholEdu - UT Austin Survey