

A good night's sleep



A good night's sleep.

Sleep is good for everyone.

Having a good sleep:

- **makes us feel better**
- **keeps us awake**
- **gives us more energy**
- **helps us enjoy life more**
- **keeps us well**

Everyone feels better after a good night's sleep.

Most people sleep for 7 or 8 hours, each night. Some people need to sleep more. Other people sleep less. Everyone is different. The important thing is you feel rested the next day.

Sleep problems

Some people have problems sleeping.

Sleep problems can be caused by:

- going to bed at the wrong time
- trying to sleep at the wrong time
- worrying
- feeling down
- a bedroom that is not comfortable
- things we have done during the day
- too much noise or light
- medical problems.



There is good news.

Lots of things will help you sleep better.

Are you a good sleeper?



People who are good sleepers:

— fall asleep quickly when they go to bed

— get back to sleep easily if they wake up

— feel rested when they wake up

— can do the things they want during the day.



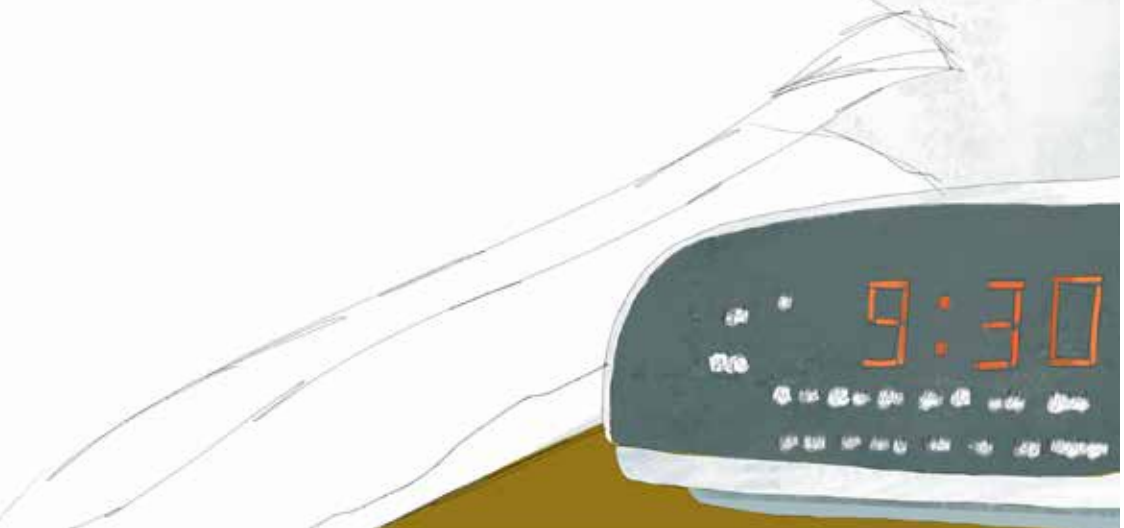
People who are poor sleepers:

— find it difficult to get to sleep

— lie awake for a long time in bed

— find it hard to get back to sleep if they wake up

— feel tired or in a low mood the next day.



Do you wish you could sleep better?
Here are some tips.

Sleeping better

Ten tips for a better night's sleep:

- ✓ Find out how much sleep you need and find out the best time for you to be sleeping.
- ✓ Go to bed when you feel sleepy (as long as it's the best time for you).
- ✓ Look at your bed. A new mattress might help you sleep better.
- ✓ Keep busy during the day.
- ✓ Check the temperature in your bedroom - make sure it is not too hot or cold.
- ✓ Make sure your room is dark until morning. If not, get new curtains, or a blind.
- ✓ Only use your bed for sleeping. Do not do things like watching television.
- ✗ Do not take naps during the day.
- ✗ Do not drink caffeine drinks (like tea, coffee, red bull or cola) after 7 o'clock at night.
- ✗ Do not drink alcohol before bedtime.





Your bedtime routine

Doing the same things every night before going to bed helps us sleep better.

Decide what time is your natural bedtime and stick to that time every night. Start getting ready to sleep 1 hour before bedtime. Do things that help you feel sleepy.

Work out the best time for you to wake up and get up at the same time each morning. Set your alarm clock. If you sleep too long it can be difficult to get to sleep the next night.

What makes you feel sleepy?

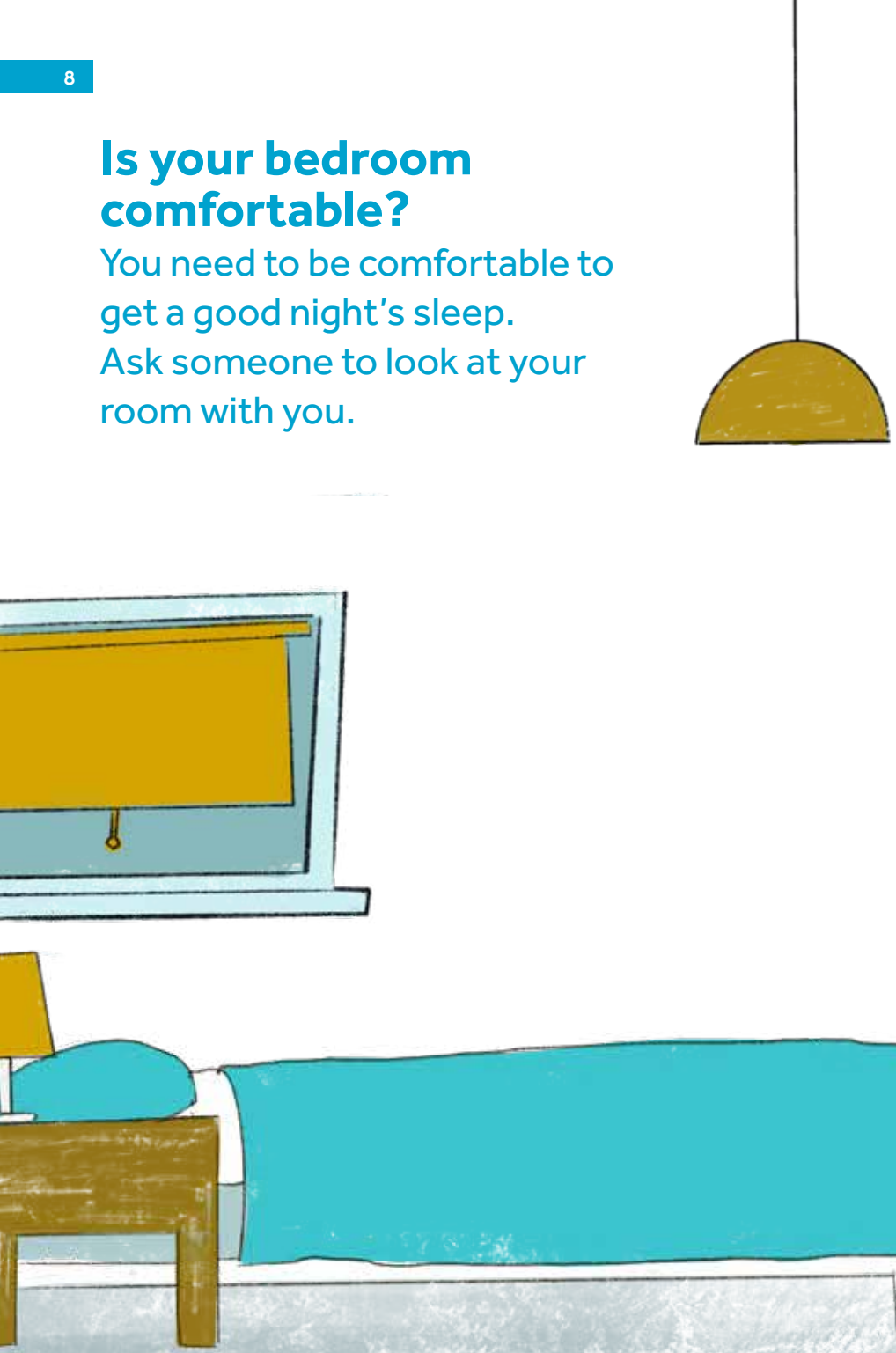
Mark the boxes if these things help you feel sleepy.

	Yes ✓	No ✗
Having a warm bath before you go to bed		
Listening to relaxing music		
Putting on pyjamas		
Getting washed and brushing your teeth		
Looking at a book or magazine		
Watching TV		
Listening to a relaxation tape, or CD		

Think of other things that make you feel sleepy.
Do the things that make you sleepy every night.
Make them part of your bedtime routine.

Is your bedroom comfortable?

You need to be comfortable to get a good night's sleep. Ask someone to look at your room with you.



Hot and cold

If your bedroom is too cold, it is difficult to sleep. The bedroom might be too hot. Your bedroom should be colder than other rooms. In summer use a lighter blanket or duvet.

Lighting

Too much light can wake you up. Look at your curtains. Make sure they keep the light out. If you can't get to sleep make your room as dark as possible. If light gets in, thicker curtains or blinds will help. If you wake up too early make sure your room is still dark. If you struggle to wake up in the morning put the lights on and open the curtains.

Noise

Does noise wake you up at night? Find out where the noise is coming from. Ask someone to help you sort it out. Some people like to sleep with ear plugs.

What would make your bedroom more comfortable?



Things you can do to sleep better

Try these ideas. See if they help you sleep better.

Don't take naps

Try not to take naps during the day. Staying awake during the day will help you to sleep at night.

Caffeine

Some drinks have caffeine in them. Coffee, tea and fizzy drinks have a lot of caffeine. Caffeine wakes you up. Too much caffeine makes it difficult to sleep.

Try these ideas:

- Do not have caffeine drinks after 7 o'clock at night
- Buy coffee and tea with no caffeine
- Only have 3 drinks with caffeine each day.

Test your bedtime

Try going to bed an hour earlier than usual or an hour later to see if it makes any difference. Some people are suited to going to bed earlier and some later. Find out what works best for you.

Alcohol

Too much alcohol can make it difficult to get a good night's sleep. If you have sleep problems drink less alcohol. Try not to drink any alcohol. See if you sleep better.

Going to the toilet

Do you wake up and go to the toilet every night? Try to drink less before bedtime. Do not drink anything for 1 hour before going to bed. Make sure you go to the toilet just before you go to bed.

Bedtime activities

Only use your bed for sleeping. Do not do things like watching television, or using a computer or a phone in your bed. Go to bed when you feel sleepy. Put the lights out and go to sleep.

Now make a plan of things you want to try.

Your sleep plan

Choose 3 things to try and help you sleep better.
Tick the things you have chosen

	✓
Go to bed at the same time each night	
Wake up at the same time – set your alarm	
At night do things that make you feel sleepy	
No naps during the day	
Make your bed more comfortable.	
Change your bedroom – light, heating, noise	
Cut down on caffeine drinks	
Go to the toilet before bed	
Cut down, or stop, drinking alcohol	

Find the 3 things you have chosen in the booklet.
Plan how to try them out.

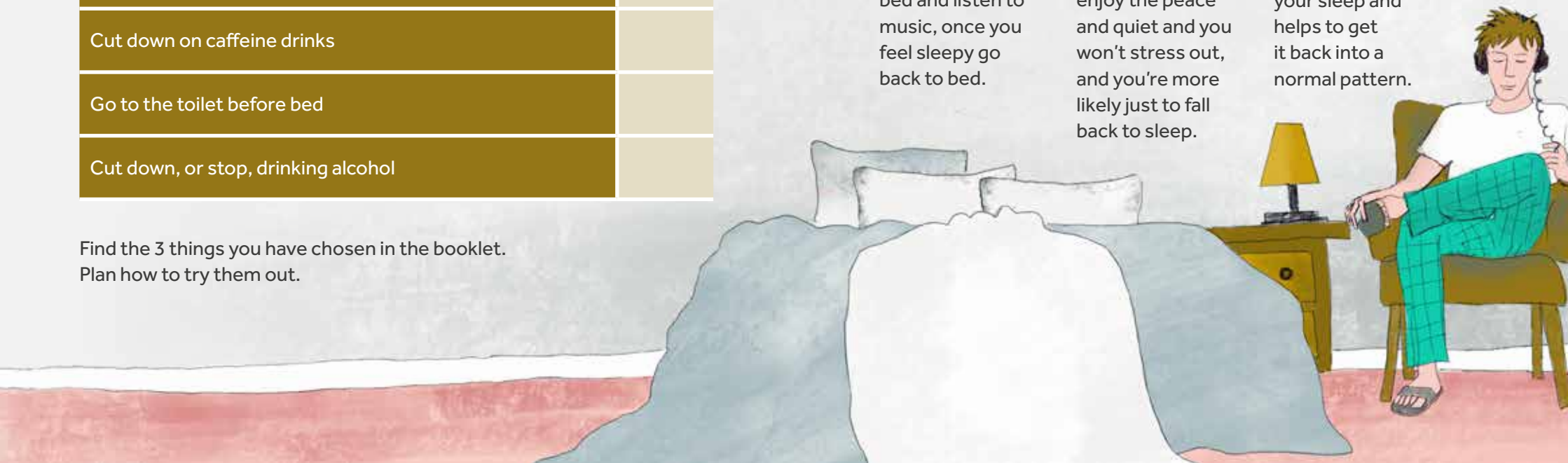
What if it is difficult to fall sleep?

It sometimes takes a long time to fall asleep. We lie in bed trying hard to get to sleep. Nothing seems to help. The harder we try the more difficult it is to get to sleep. We start to worry.

Most people fall asleep in less than 15 minutes. Don't lie awake getting frustrated, just get up for a while and go back to bed when you feel sleepy. Don't force sleep, let it come naturally, try keeping your eyes open in the dark, you'll soon find they want to close.

Try these ideas:

- Go into another room and watch TV or sit in a chair beside your bed and listen to music, once you feel sleepy go back to bed.
- Say to yourself; *its ok to be awake*. Take some nice deep breaths, enjoy the peace and quiet and you won't stress out, and you're more likely just to fall back to sleep.
- Stay up later and get up a bit earlier for a few nights, this strengthens your sleep and helps to get it back into a normal pattern.



Sleeping well will help you to feel better during the day.

Use this page to build a plan that works for you, try building your own wind-down routine that you can try:



So far you have:

- Thought about your sleep
- Made a sleep routine
- Looked at your bedroom
- Made choices about your lifestyle.

You might start sleeping better now.

Sometimes you need to give it time.
Stick to your routine. Keep trying.

Important stuff to remember

Sometimes the ideas in the booklet do not help. You might need help from other people.

Talk about your sleep to the person who helps you use the booklets.

Think about who you can talk to about your sleep problems. What about your doctor, a nurse or social worker?





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This booklet was produced by
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