



DO THIS FIRST

“Turn down the lights a full hour before bedtime,” says Michael Breus, Ph.D., a sleep specialist. Lowering overhead bulbs and drawing the shades helps your body produce more melatonin, which can induce sleepiness.



For even better dimmed light, install a Good Night bulb (\$70, definitydigital.com), which eighty-sixes the blue-light wavelength that’s considered most detrimental to sleep.

NIGHTTIME NOSHING



BANANA

The magnesium and potassium can relax your muscles.



TART CHERRY JUICE

This drink is full of melatonin, which may help you doze off.



TOAST WITH PEANUT BUTTER

Easy-to-digest simple carbs topped with tryptophan-rich protein won’t keep you up.



ROOIBOS TEA

Soothing and caffeine-free (black and green aren’t always).

FALLING ASLEEP

Don’t just dream about a good night’s rest—get it.



SUPPLY LIST
Accessori-zzz’s

EYE MASK

Choose one that’s lightly filled or weighted (as opposed to a single flap of cotton), or made with a pillowy fabric like fleece, so it blocks light from coming in around the sides of the mask too. Sleep Mask (\$45, sleepstudio.com) is chic, not cheesy.

PAJAMAS

The perfect slumbering outfit should be loose; made of a lightweight fabric such as cotton or silk; and comfortable around your middle (no gut-pinching waistband!). We like the Butterfly Blue camisole, \$31, and shorts, \$24, figleaves.com.

PRE-BEDTIME BEHAVIOR

Relaxing or angst-producing? We rank the usual suspects.

TERRIBLE

E-mail—especially for work. “It stirs up emotions,” says Breus. “To fall asleep, you don’t want to be dwelling on your day.”

PRETTY BAD

Texting or game playing. Though it can take your mind off stressors, constant pings and beeps are bound to stimulate you (ahem, Candy Crush).

AT YOUR OWN RISK

Watching television or a movie. This is the least disruptive tech activity (especially if the screen is far away) because it’s passive and distracting.

MOSTLY CALMING

Sex. Everyone’s different, but “the endorphins tend to be good for sleep in most people,” says Janet Kennedy, Ph.D., a clinical psychologist.

DOWNRIGHT SOOTHING

Reading fiction. “It settles the mind and distracts you from other things buzzing in your head,” says Kennedy.



MYTH, DEBUNKED

Sheep counting? Baaa-d idea. In a study, insomniacs asked to imagine a nice scene (like a future vacation) fell asleep faster than those told to count something (like sheep). Detailed, positive images may take up enough cognitive space to distract you from other thoughts, while mindlessly ticking off numbers won’t.

KEEP YOUR COOL
65°F to 70°F
The ideal temperature for snoozing

QUICK TIP
If you’re reading on your tablet, slap on a SleepShield screen cover to dim the snooze-destroying glow (prices vary by tablet, sleepshield.com).

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: ALAMY (5); THOMAS MACDONALD AND MITCH MANDEL/RODALE IMAGES (3); PROP STYLING: ANNIE CHERVIN EDWARDS

