

GRAPPLESTRONG

THE RECOVERY SERIES

GUIDE TO **SLEEP**

Your definitive guide to getting more sleep, and better sleep — the single biggest lever for recovery and results.

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WHY IT MATTERS

SLEEP IS A SUPERPOWER

Knowing the key principles of getting more, better-quality sleep is paramount.

There will be times when it becomes more challenging — shift work, parenting, busy work periods — but you can always do the basics.

WORTH KNOWING

In research on sleep and body composition, the intervention was simply education on how to improve sleep — no supplements, no change in diet. Better sleep alone moves the needle.

"WHAT IF I CAN'T GET TO SLEEP EARLY ENOUGH?"

If you cannot get to sleep earlier, focus on your **routine** to improve how fast you fall asleep — then read the section on staying asleep. Minimising broken sleep will help. (Children, admittedly, take some of this out of our control.)

THE BASICS

THE SLEEP CHECKLIST

Get these four foundations right before worrying about anything else.

ENVIRONMENT	TEMPERATURE	LIGHT
Associate your bedroom as a place for sleep and sex only. No work, no business.	Optimal sleep temperatures are 17–20°C. Keep it cool.	Your room should be pitch black. Get blackout curtains or use an eye mask.

ROUTINE
Just like you do with kids, you need a consistent bed routine.

THE PRINCIPLE

Consistency is what trains your body to fall asleep faster and sleep deeper. Same room, same temperature, same routine.

THE WIND-DOWN

YOUR SLEEP ROUTINE

Don't start your bedtime routine at the time you want to be asleep by.

You should start winding down 45 minutes before the time you want to be asleep. Brushing teeth, reading, getting into bed — it all takes time.

THE 45-MINUTE WIND-DOWN



PHONE DOWN • DIM LIGHTS • READ OR MEDITATE



9:45 PM

Start winding down

10:30 PM

Lights out — asleep

DO THE MATHS

For a 10:30pm sleep, you need to start winding down at 9:45pm.

SLEEP QUALITY

FALLING & STAYING ASLEEP

FALLING ASLEEP QUICKER

How fast you fall asleep is called sleep latency. Improve it:

- Minimise electronics 45 minutes pre-bed. If using your phone, switch on night shift.
- Don't engage in stressful activities before bed — no horror movies or work emails. Stop 45 minutes pre-bed.
- Go to bed and wake at the same time each day, as close as possible.
- Read, listen to an audiobook or meditate in the 45 minutes before sleep. De-stress.

STAYING ASLEEP

- Don't overhydrate in the evening. Sip water, don't gulp — hydrate early in the day instead.
- Eat a balanced meal. Too high in carbs or fat can cause digestion issues and disrupt blood sugar, waking you in the night.
- Keep your room cool. Overheating is a common cause of broken sleep.

COMMON DISRUPTORS

CAFFEINE & EVENING TRAINING

CAFFEINE

Caffeine can negatively impact sleep if consumed too close to bed. Use caffeine in the **first 8 hours** of your day.

Even if you think you can drink it and still fall asleep, it affects your REM sleep — meaning you wake feeling tired. This is common in those who say "I'm tired no matter how much sleep I get".

EVENING TRAINING

It's challenging to get to sleep after evening training, due to numerous factors — one being adrenaline and cortisol.

THE GOAL

Bring cortisol down and get into a "rest and digest" state, as opposed to the "fight or flight" state — through your wind-down routine, dim light and de-stressing.

NUTRITION

FOODS FOR SLEEP

FOOD	WHY IT HELPS
Bananas	Rich in magnesium and potassium, which help relax muscles and promote sleep.
Cherries	A natural source of melatonin, the hormone that regulates sleep-wake cycles. Frozen cherries are easier to get.
Almonds	A good source of magnesium, and provide protein that's helpful for recovery.
Leafy greens	Spinach and kale are high in calcium, which helps produce melatonin.
Fatty fish	Salmon, tuna and trout are rich in omega-3s, which may help reduce insomnia symptoms.
Whole grains	Quinoa, brown rice and whole wheat provide complex carbs that can promote better sleep.
Herbal teas	Chamomile and valerian root have calming properties that improve sleep quality.
Turkey	Contains tryptophan, an amino acid that aids serotonin production and relaxation.

MEAL IDEAS

Yoghurt with banana, cherries & granola	Pan-fried turkey with Nando's sauce, wedges & peas
Tuna jacket potato & cheese	Salmon & egg fried brown rice
Protein banana pancakes with greek yoghurt, blueberries & almond butter	Chicken with green beans, flaked almonds & quinoa