

Sleep Positives and Sleep Negatives

by Nicola Morgan



Sleep positives: include any during 1-2 hours before you want to sleep. These are the things you can include in your winding-down routine.

- Remove daylight – close curtain/blind; switch off backlit screens (inc phones).
- Dim other light – use reading lamps.
- Shower or bath.
- Soft, slow music.
- Think what went well; positive thoughts.
- Move slowly, calmly.
- Lavender oil – a few drops in a bath or on a pillow.
- Rub a herbal sleep blend or balm on wrists, behind ears or on pillow or pyjamas.
- Burn a scented candle if you can do safely. (*Obviously, extinguish before getting into bed.)
- Stretches or gentle yoga.
- Light snack if hungry; not too sugary. For example, small sandwich, piece of cheese and fruit; cream cheese on oatcakes; nuts.
- Small milky drink or herbal tea.
- Organise things for the morning and put near door.
- Put clothes tidily.
- Get into sleeping clothes.
- Clean face and brush teeth.
- Write journal.
- Write any worries down and then put the paper away.
- Draw, doodle or colour in.
- Read for pleasure.

Sleep negatives: avoid during 1-2 hours before you want to sleep:

- Daylight.
- Bright electric light.
- Screens apart from ebook readers (turn notifications off and bright light down).
- Caffeine – coffee, tea and cola drinks (unless 'caffeine-free', herbal or fruit tea).
- Arguments and stress.
- Exercise that raises heart rate.
- Too much food; any spicy or rich food.
- Work.
- Loud, fast music.
- Messy bedroom.
- Alcohol – it raises heartrate and reduces the deep sleep essential for restoration.

In addition, a sleeping space should be dark, safe, quiet and slightly cool – like a cave.