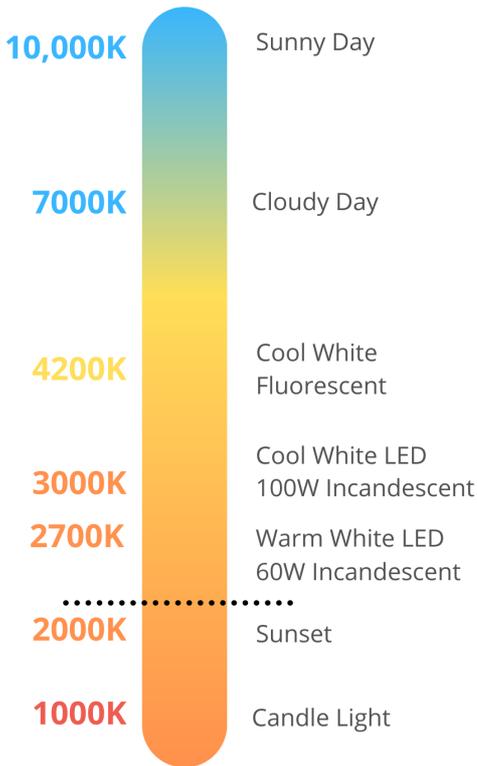


SLEEP & LIGHT

Strategies about using light to feel more sleepy

Light Colour Scale



Light and Melatonin

Preparing our body for sleep

Melatonin is a hormone that is released from the pineal gland that signals to the brain that it is time to prepare for sleep. The activation of this process is in response to the colour of light in your environment.

Changing colours

When the sun rises, the sky is orange-pink with a warm glow, and quickly moves to a blue light. As the sun sets, it returns to a warm orange glow. This change in light is noted by brain via the suprachiasmatic nucleus located above your optic nerve and tells the body to prepare for sleep as nightfall is approaching.

Blue light exposure increases time to sleep

As our dependence on technology increases, our sleep seems to be affected. Exposure to artificial light via LEDs, phones, laptops and tablets mean that our night time environment gives greater blue light exposure, inhibiting melatonin. This blue light exposure may be the culprit when people say that it takes them a long time to get to sleep when they do finally turn out the light.

1

MELATONIN

This hormone responds to light exposure and tells our brain when to prepare for sleep.

2

BLUE LIGHT

Exposure to blue light from screens or LED bulbs inhibits melatonin production

3

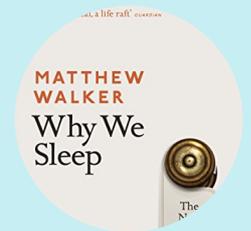
WARM LIGHT

Orange light exposure at night time supports melatonin production to regulate our sleep cycle



THE PSYCH COLLECTIVE

Check out our website for videos, curated content and more resources.



Want to learn more about sleep?

Matt Walker writes about the research of sleep.



Busy Mind at Bed time?

Do you get into bed and your mind starts racing? Check out our handout on Wired and Tired at The Psych Collective

How to Control Your Light Exposure

Strategies for getting better sleep.

Making changes to your light exposure takes deliberate effort and planned action. It will also mean accepting that your phone is not your friend at bed time. Light exposure needs to be considered at different times throughout the day. Early morning light exposure will stop your melatonin production, helping you to feel more awake, while dim lights in the evening will help you feel more sleepy.

Check Your House

1. Walk around your house at night and pay attention to your light globes. Notice the colour (cool white or warm white) and the brightness.
2. Consider which rooms you spend the most time in during the evenings. Can you change the light globes to a warm white and a lower brightness? A dimmer switch is ideal, otherwise invest in smart globes that can be dimmed via your phone app.
3. Alternatively, invest in some lamps that have warm white and low brightness to use at night.
4. Ensure you have window coverings that block out street lights or sunlight during daylight savings months.

In The Morning

1. Open your curtains to allow natural light in to cue your suprachiasmatic nucleus to daytime and stop your melatonin production.
2. Avoid wearing sunglasses in the early mornings to get at least 15 minutes of full sunlight.

In The Evening

1. Pick a time about two hours before bed to start dimming the lights, switching to lamps, closing the curtains and reducing arousal. Candle light/salt lamp is ideal if you can manage it.
2. If you are using laptops, phones or tablets, activate the option to remove the blue light or dim the screen brightness as much as you can.
3. If you can't control your environment, consider using amber eye glasses which will block out the blue light.

Preparing For Sleep

1. Turn off all screens 30 minutes before getting into bed.
2. Don't use phones, tablets, laptops or watch TV in bed, as this can cause other problems with sleep associations and it will take longer for you to fall asleep.
3. Do something boring to calm you mind before sleep.
4. If you still have trouble getting to sleep because your mind is busy, check out our handout on Wired and Tired.

NEED MORE?

Check out [ThePsychCollective.com](https://www.thepsychcollective.com) for more resources on preparing for sleep, including curated content and our handout on Wired and Tired.

