



A FREE GUIDE

Better Sleep, Starting Tonight

Ten simple, research-backed habits to fall asleep faster and wake up rested.



You can't force sleep.

But you can set it up.

Ten small habits, each placed at the right moment in your day.

HOW MUCH SLEEP YOU NEED

7+

**hours a night is what sleep experts recommend
for adults**

American Academy of Sleep Medicine and Sleep Research Society, 2015

THE REALITY

1 in 3

US adults regularly get less than that

CDC, 2016

THE GOOD NEWS

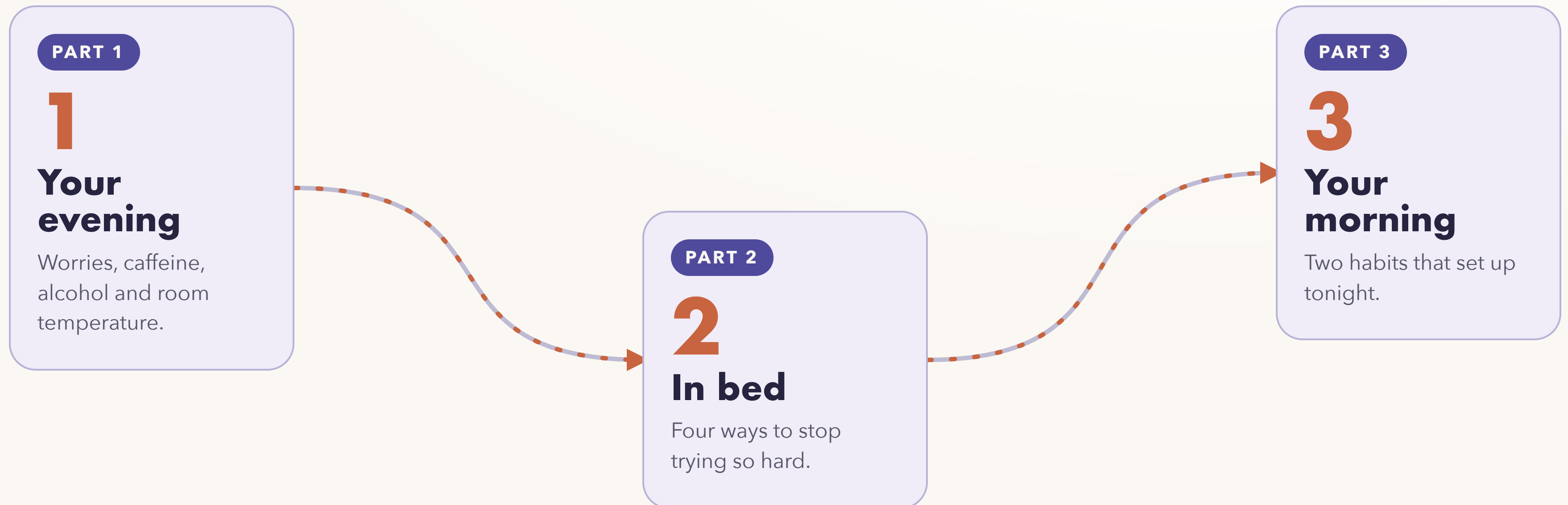
#1

The top recommended treatment for chronic insomnia isn't a pill. It's a set of habits called CBT-I.

American College of Physicians, 2016

HOW THIS GUIDE WORKS

Three parts, ten habits



1

Your evening

Set up tonight's sleep hours before bedtime.



HABIT 1 • EARLY EVENING

Park your worries

Spend five minutes writing tomorrow's to-do list, with a next step for anything on your mind.

TRY IT TONIGHT

- ✓ Set a five-minute timer an hour or two before bed.
- ✓ Be specific. The more specific the list, the better it worked.



WORRY	NEXT STEP
That email	→ Reply at 9 a.m.
Car service	→ Book it at lunch
Mum's birthday	→ Order a card

WHY IT WORKS

9 min

faster to fall asleep for people who wrote a to-do list before bed, compared with people who listed what they'd already done

Scullin et al., Baylor University, 2018

HABIT 2 • AFTERNOON

Cut caffeine early

Caffeine keeps working long after the buzz fades, quietly making your sleep shorter and lighter.

TRY IT TONIGHT

- ✓ Set a cut-off at least six hours before bed.
- ✓ Tea, cola, energy drinks and chocolate count too.



WHY IT WORKS

1 hr+

less sleep after a large dose of caffeine (400 mg, about four cups of coffee) taken six hours before bed

Drake et al., Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine, 2013

HABIT 3 • EVENING

Skip the nightcap

Alcohol can help you drop off faster, but it breaks up the second half of the night and cuts REM, the dreaming stage.

TRY IT TONIGHT

- ✓ Finish any alcohol well before bed.
- ✓ Swap the nightcap for a warm, caffeine-free drink.



First half of the night

Deeper, heavier sleep



Second half

Lighter, more broken, less REM

Simplified illustration of findings from Ebrahim et al., 2013

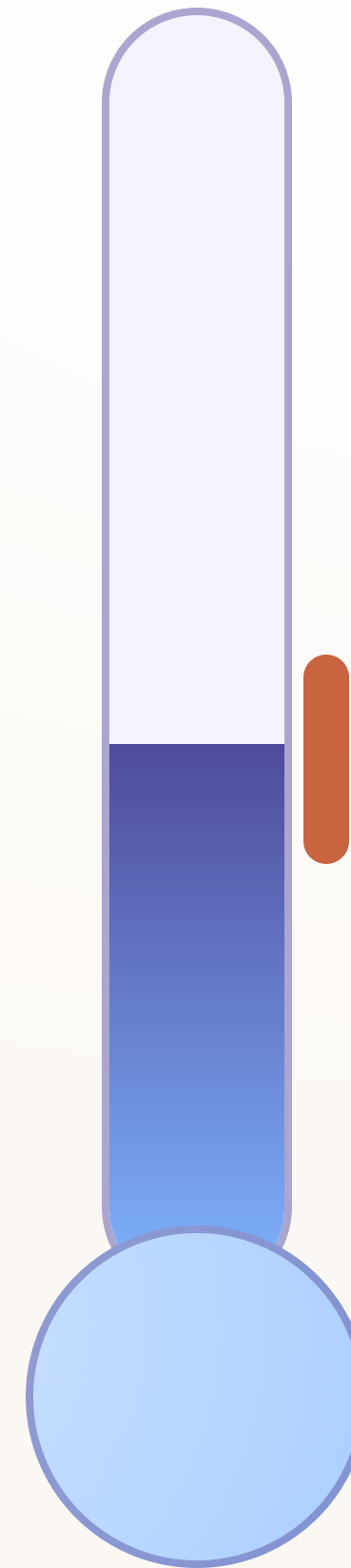
HABIT 4 • BEFORE BED

Cool the room

Your body temperature dips to start sleep. Most adults sleep best in a bedroom of around 16-19°C (60-67°F).

TRY IT TONIGHT

- ✓ Turn the thermostat down an hour before bed.
- ✓ No thermostat? Open a window or run a fan.



18°C

The sweet spot:

16-19°C
(60-67°F)

2

In bed

Four ways to stop trying so hard.



HABIT 5 • LIGHTS OUT

Shuffle your thoughts

Picture random, unrelated objects, one every few seconds. This "cognitive shuffle" from scientist Luc Beaudoin mimics the drift into sleep.

TRY IT TONIGHT

- ✓ Pick a simple word, like "bed".
- ✓ Picture objects starting with each letter in turn.



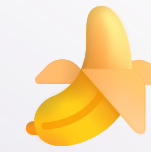
a balloon



a bee



an elephant



a banana



an egg



a duck

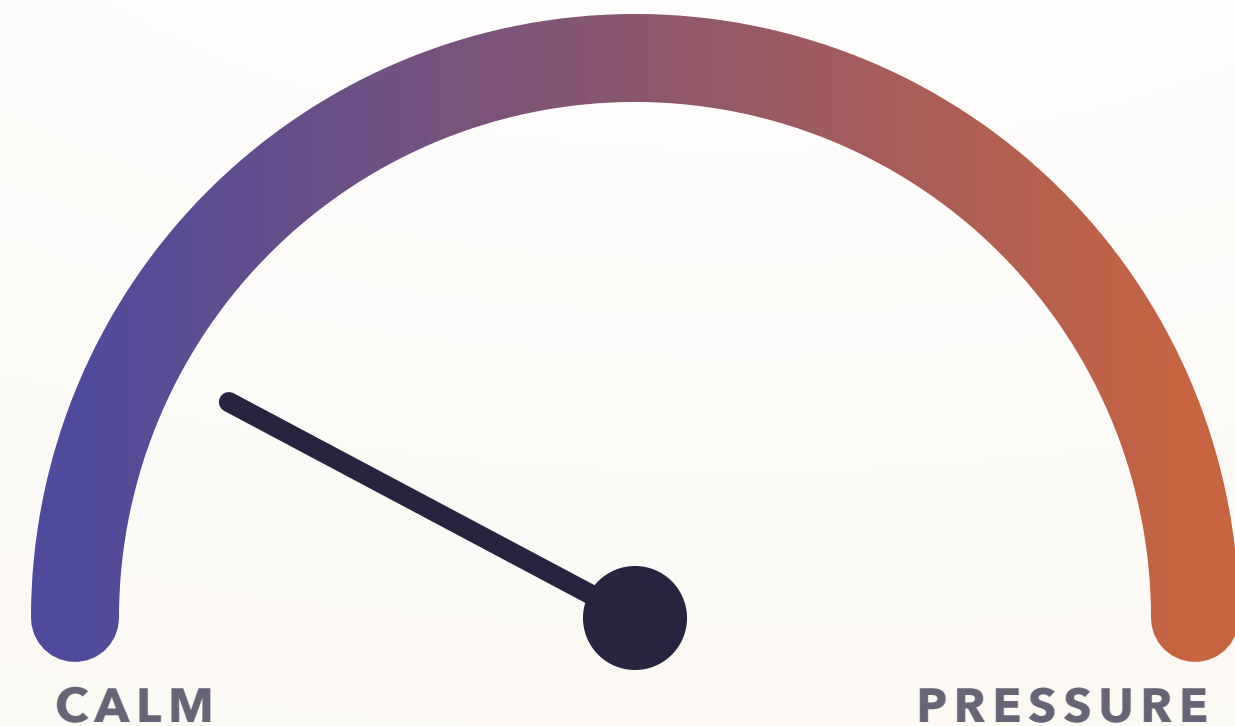
HABIT 6 • STILL AWAKE?

Try to stay awake

Trying hard to sleep creates pressure. Gently trying to stay awake takes it away. Researchers at the University of Glasgow studied this as "paradoxical intention".

TRY IT TONIGHT

- ✓ Lie in the dark with your eyes open.
- ✓ Don't strain. Just stop trying to sleep.



Less pressure, faster sleep.

HABIT 7 • STILL AWAKE?

Use the 20-minute rule

Not asleep after about 20 minutes? Get up and do something calm in dim light. It's a core part of CBT-I.

TRY IT TONIGHT

- ✓ Don't watch the clock. Just estimate.
- ✓ Go back to bed only when you feel sleepy.



Get up, do something calm, come back when sleepy.

HABIT 8 • ALL DAY

Keep your bed for sleep

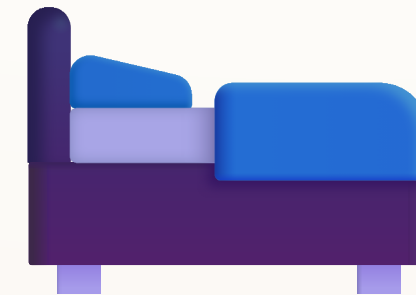
Work, scrolling and TV in bed teach your brain that bed means alert. Move them out, so bed means sleep.

TRY IT TONIGHT

- ✓ Move work and scrolling out of the bedroom.
- ✓ Go to bed only when you're sleepy.



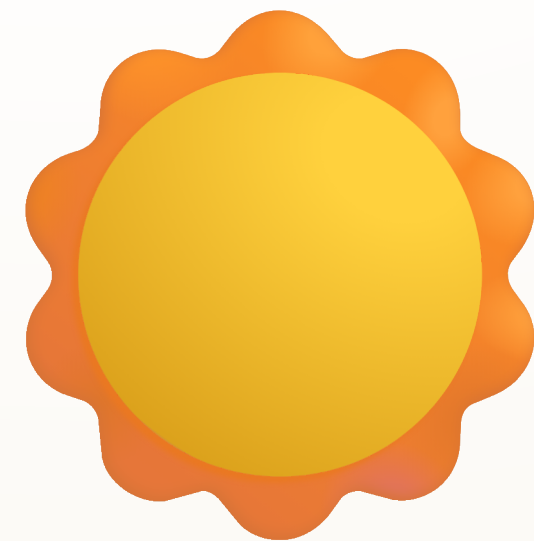
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Your morning

Tonight's sleep starts when you wake up.



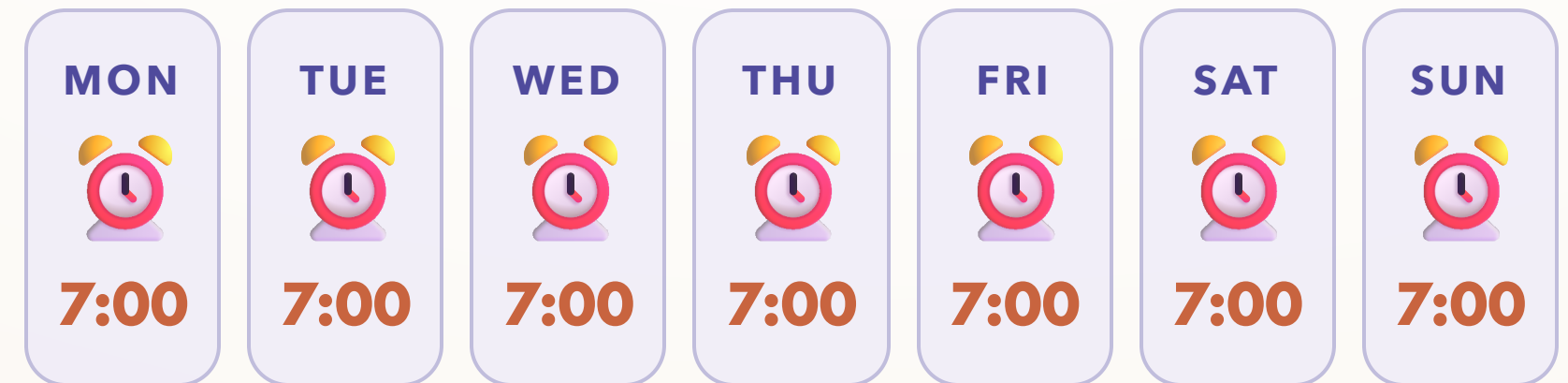
HABIT 9 • EVERY MORNING

Wake up at the same time

A fixed wake-up time, seven days a week, anchors your body clock so sleepiness arrives on time at night.

TRY IT TONIGHT

- ✓ Pick a time you can keep, weekends included.
- ✓ Get up at that time even after a poor night.



Same time, every day. Weekends too.

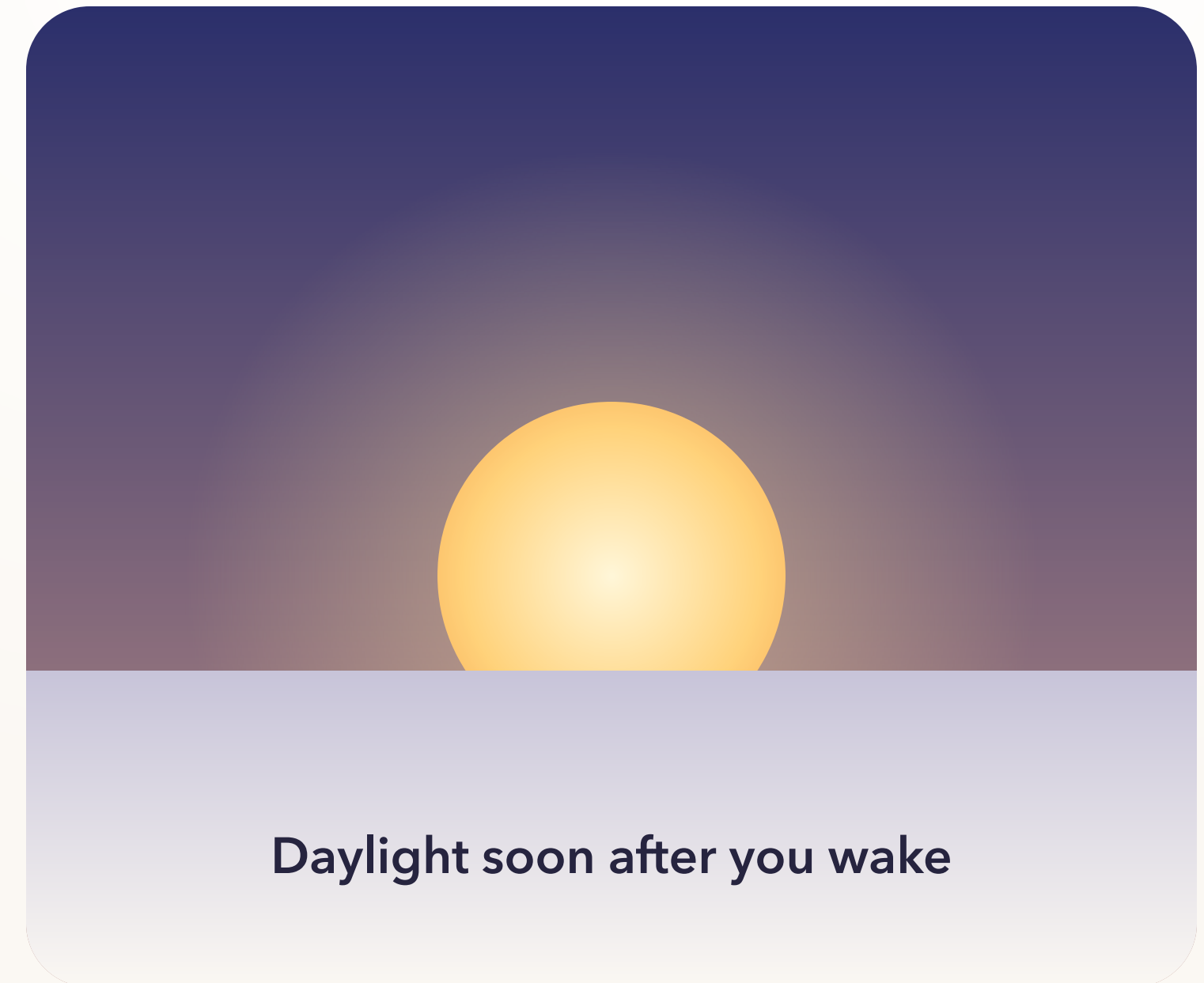
HABIT 10 • AFTER WAKING

Get morning light

Morning light shifts your body clock earlier, so you feel sleepy at a sensible time tonight.

TRY IT TONIGHT

- ✓ Step outside soon after you wake up.
- ✓ Dim the lights in the hour before bed.



YOUR WIND-DOWN PLAN

Pick two to start tonight



Write tomorrow's to-do list



No nightcap



Shuffle your thoughts



The 20-minute rule



Same wake-up time



Caffeine cut-off 6+ hours before bed



A cool bedroom



Try to stay awake



Bed is for sleep



Morning light

BONUS

Your 7-day sleep log

Print this page and fill it in each morning. After a week, compare your best nights.

DAY	BEDTIME	TIME TO FALL ASLEEP	WAKE-UP TIME	HOURS SLEPT	HOW RESTED (1-5)	WHAT I TRIED
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						
Saturday						
Sunday						

IMPORTANT

When to talk to a professional



Trouble sleeping three or more nights a week, for three months or longer



Loud snoring, or gasping or pauses in breathing during sleep



Very sleepy in the day, even after a full night in bed



Poor sleep is affecting your mood, work or relationships

Ask your doctor about CBT-I, the first recommended treatment for chronic insomnia.

This guide is general information, not medical advice.

YOUR NEXT STEP

Start tonight with **one** **small change.**

Pick the habit that feels easiest and try it tonight. Small changes, repeated every day, add up to better nights.

Choose your first habit now

SOURCES

The research behind this guide

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