

Wakey Wakey! Lifehacks to Become a Morning Person

Listen up, night owls: I was one of you, once.

Exhausted all day, yet unable to drift off before 1 or 2 AM. The sound of the morning alarm was like nails on a chalkboard to me. I often overdid it on the snooze button or managed to sleep through alarms entirely, causing myself to show up late to class, work, family events; you name it, I've been late to it.

The guilt of showing up late to something combined with the fact that you can barely keep your eyes open is a particularly bitter cocktail. You feel your control over yourself and your life slipping through your fingers. I was NOT a morning person.

For me, there came a point when I really *missed* mornings. I missed the quiet, the stillness of the air, the smell of a fresh day. It wasn't mornings I hated, it was waking up, especially after a late night.

Once I realized that mornings themselves weren't the problem (a realization that took far too long to arrive at), I started to look at my daily routines differently. At the time, I was working shifts at a restaurant that had me up early some mornings and working late other nights. Inconsistency made it difficult, but even on my late nights, I was eventually able to get myself out of bed with minimal struggling.

How to Become a Morning Person

Okay, so we know why you're here, you're wanting to know how to be a morning person. Start to fine-tune the little details in your evenings and mornings that you put off or miss entirely. Ask yourself what your biggest hurdles are in the morning, then ask what you can do for yourself the night before to eliminate those obstacles, or at least make them easier to swallow.

Once you commit to doing a few specific, small things for yourself on a daily and weekly basis, you will form new routines, ones that will actually work with your daily schedule instead of against it. Let's look into what makes a morning person.

Hack #1: Find Your *Ikigai*

Ikigai is a Japanese thought system or wellness theory. It's the combination of the Japanese words: *iki*, or "life," and *kai*, or "effect, result, benefit." Taken together, *ikigai* means "a reason to live." You can think of it as "a reason to wake up in the morning" in this case. While the philosophy lends itself to grander plans and maybe even answers to the meaning of life, *ikigai* can refer to anything that gets your senses excited, or maybe makes you feel completely content. Your *ikigai* is unique to you, and on any given day, *ikigai* could mean anything.

Make time for a little *ikigai* on the mornings of weeks that have been particularly tough. For me, waking up 20 minutes earlier on weekends to have coffee on my balcony with my dog is the most relaxing way I can think to start a morning. Once you have your nighttime routine down, you'll find you might have some time open up that wasn't there before. Maybe getting dressed and making lunch took 20 minutes before you started prepping the night before, but now that time is free! Make a smoothie, a coffee, or a tea; enjoy a few pages of a book or simply sit outside and give your mind time to wake itself up in the sunlight.

Hack #2: Consistency

We don't realize how much of our lives involve muscle memory and programming. But the body craves routine. It needs to do certain things every so often: eat, drink, stretch, breathe, walk, talk. The reason we can do these things is because we've established them as routine.

Can you see where this is going?

Commit to getting up at the same time, give or take a MAXIMUM of half an hour, every single day of the week. The same goes for bedtime. Find the times that work best with your schedule; my preference is getting up and moving around 8:30 am (8:00-9:00 grace period) and typically I'm in bed no later than 11:00 pm. Challenge yourself and work your way up to earlier times, day by day if you need to. Eventually, your body will adapt. You just have to stick with it!

What worked especially well for me was rewarding myself for waking up early; the idea was just to get up and out of bed earlier, not necessarily to start being productive instantly! Especially while you're training your body, positive reinforcement is a great way to keep yourself motivated. Get up and indulge in a little self-care straight away. If you've never sipped tea wearing a cooling face mask before the world is properly awake, you're missing out.

[Vocabulary List \(A\)](#)
[Click here](#)

Hack #3: Blue Light Filter Apps

This is one *tiny* thing that I think made a *huge* difference in my ability to fall asleep at night. The blue light emitted from the various screens in our lives messes with our circadian rhythms, which refers to the body's "internal clock" that enables us to fall asleep at night and wake up in the morning "naturally". So many people now use their cell phones in bed, and the blue light from the screens tricks the eyes (and therefore the mind) into believing it's midday even when it's midnight. That trickery affects the brain's ability to fall asleep.

So many cell phones now already come equipped with a "night mode" or blue light filter of some kind, but for those who haven't quite caught up, there are so many apps you can download for free that provide customizable blue light filters for your phone, like these ones. Applying these filters reduces the amount of blue light in your eyes, so you can switch on the filter in the evening (I do this around 8 pm). That way, my brain has a few hours to start winding itself down.

There are numerous extensions for browsers as well, like f.lux for Google Chrome. For those of you who spend a lot of time in front of a computer at work, you can download the f.lux software for your desktop.

Related Article: Constant Headaches? Blue Light Might Be To Blame

Hack #4: Evening Prep

Get stuff done the night before. Pack your lunch, your bag, check the weather, and plan your outfit. Try to switch to evening showers if you're finding yourself pressed for time in the morning. You're doing Tomorrow You a *huge* favor.

One check I try to do in the evening before bed is making sure my keys are on their hook by the door, where they should be. I know that I often lose track of my keys, so it's little things like this that save me a ton of stress and time in the morning. Know your own idiosyncrasies and stay one step ahead of them wherever you can.

Hack #5: The 2-Alarm System

Here's the thing: if possible, you shouldn't be hitting snooze at all. Not even once. But for someone like myself - whose ability to fall asleep is unreliable at best - it isn't often that simple.

What ended up working for me is a 2-alarm system. One alarm when I *need* to get out of bed, and one alarm half an hour before that.

The wash of relief I get when my first alarm goes off and I know that I have a whole *half hour* before I *must* get out of bed is absolutely integral to my ability to make it out of bed at all. I can spend that half-hour how I like, dozing, scrolling through my phone, cuddling my dog. I could get up and have a mug of coffee if I wanted to. This method makes me feel like I have a lot more control and is a good amount more sleep if I *do* need to doze right back off. It's not overly long, but not as unsatisfying as say, a 15-minute snooze. That said, you can use whatever time interval works best for you - maybe

15 minutes is all you really need. Maybe you'd like as long as an hour. Experiment with this however you need, but know you only get 2 alarms; choose them wisely.

If you play on Hard Mode, set your first alarm on your phone, which, let's be honest, is probably plugged in right beside your bed. Then, set your second alarm on an alarm clock that you keep across the room so you *have* to get up and shut it off.

Prioritize Your Sleep.

It's really tempting and incredibly easy to succumb to the many distractions that offer themselves up to us in such abundance via the Internet. You might have to be tough on yourself; perhaps completely disallowing your phone from your bedroom is the only way you'll be able to start going without it. When it comes to sleep, try to treat your brain like you would a small child: be sensitive to its signals of fatigue and allow yourself to rest and recharge.

You do, quite literally, need to sleep. It is worth prioritizing your sleep because you are worth prioritizing.

[Vocabulary List \(B\)](#)

[Click here](#)

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