FREE GUIDE · RECOVERY

# THE SLUMBER SEEKER

Sleep is the cheapest performance tool you own. Why it matters, what gets in the way, and an hour-before-bed routine that fixes most of it.

6 PAGES

ALL LEVELS

WHY IT MATTERS

# SLEEP IS TRAINING

You do the session in the gym. You get the benefit in bed. Sleep is where your body repairs, rebuilds and resets, and nothing else you do can stand in for it.

Busy people treat sleep as the thing that gives when the diary is full. It is the wrong place to save time. A short night makes the next session harder, the food choices worse and the stress louder. Get this right and everything else in this guide, and in your training, works better.

## 01

### HEALTH AND MOOD

Good sleep supports your immune system, regulates the hormones that run your day and steadies your mood. Rested people handle stress better and bounce back faster.

## 02

### RECOVERY AND MUSCLE

Deep sleep is when growth hormone peaks and muscle is repaired. Cut it short and you keep the fatigue from training without all of the adaptation.

## 03

### BODY COMPOSITION

Short sleep pushes up hunger and cravings, and makes it harder to say no to them. If fat loss is the goal, sleep is part of the plan, not separate from it.

WHAT GETS IN THE WAY

# FOUR BARRIERS, FOUR FIXES

The usual suspects are well known. The good news is that each one has a simple fix you can start tonight.

| THE BARRIER | THE FIX |
| --- | --- |
| **SCREENS BEFORE BED**<br>Light from phones and laptops holds back melatonin, the hormone that makes you sleepy, and the content keeps your brain switched on. | **DIGITAL CURFEW**<br>No screens for the last 45 to 60 minutes. Swap them for something calm: a book, a stretch, a bath.<br>Need your phone on for work or family? Use sleep mode so only the important calls get through. |
| **ALCOHOL**<br>It helps you nod off, then breaks up your sleep in the second half of the night and cuts the deep, restorative stages. | **DRINK LESS, EARLIER**<br>If you drink, keep it moderate and finish well before bed, so your body has dealt with it before you sleep. |
| **CAFFEINE**<br>Caffeine has a half-life of around five hours. Half of a 3pm coffee is still working at 8pm, and a quarter of it at bedtime. | **CAFFEINE CURFEW**<br>Stop around eight hours before bed. Our free caffeine calculator shows how much is still in you at lights out. |
| **ROOM AND ROUTINE**<br>A bright, noisy, warm or cluttered room, and no set wind-down, both make sleep harder to find and easier to lose. | **CONTROL THE CONTROLLABLES**<br>Set up the room (next page) and run the same routine every night (the page after). |

YOUR BEDROOM

# SET THE ROOM UP FOR SLEEP

Your bedroom should do one job. Cool, dark, quiet and tidy, with nothing in it pulling your attention back into the day.

### COOL
Most people sleep best somewhere around 16 to 20°C. Your body needs to drop its core temperature to fall asleep.

### DARK
Dim the lights as you get ready, and make it fully dark to sleep. Blackout blinds or an eye mask both work.

### QUIET
Mask the noise you cannot control with white noise, calm sounds or a familiar audiobook.

### COMFORTABLE
A supportive mattress and pillow and breathable bedding. You spend a third of your life there.

### CLEAR
Keep it tidy, and keep the phone out of the room if you can. Out of reach is out of mind.

### CALM
If scent helps you relax, lavender or chamomile are the usual favourites.

### READY FOR THE MORNING
Lay out tomorrow's clothes and kit. One less thing to think about at night, one less job in the morning.

### A BOOK AND A NOTEBOOK
Something to read, and somewhere to empty your head before you switch off.

YOUR ROUTINE

# THE POWER-DOWN HOUR

Work back from the time you need to get up and allow 8 to 9 hours in bed. That is your bedtime (BT). The hour before it is a bridge from the day to sleep.

| WHEN | DO THIS | WHY |
|---|---|---|
| BT – 60 | Dim the lights | Tells your brain the day is ending. |
| BT – 45 | Screens off | Lets melatonin rise on time. |
| BT – 40 | Something calm | Read, stretch, gentle yoga, music. |
| BT – 30 | Warm bath or shower | You cool down afterwards, and falling core temperature helps sleep. |
| BT – 10 | Herbal tea | A caffeine-free ritual. Chamomile is a good one. |
| BT – 10 | Gratitude journal | Puts the day down on paper. |
| BT | Into bed, breathe | The breathing below, then lights out. |

**GRATITUDE JOURNAL**

1. Three things you are grateful for today.
2. One good moment from the day.
3. One thing you learned.

**4-6-8 BREATHING**

1. Breathe in through your nose for 4.
2. Hold for 6.
3. Breathe out through your mouth for 8.

Repeat 3 to 6 times.

# SLEEP IS THE BEST MEDITATION.

DALAI LAMA

### WANT IT BUILT AROUND YOU?

I'm Tom, Head Coach at TC Coaching. Recovery is built into every plan we write. In **Project Legacy™** a team builds your training, nutrition and recovery around your diary and your goal: training from me, nutrition from Adam Glover, rehab from Gaz McNamara.

APPLY FOR COACHING

FREE TOOLS