



# How to Meditate Before Bed

**If a racing mind is keeping you up at night, meditation might be just the sleep aid that you need.**

The mind-calming practice can be done at bedtime—or anytime during the day—to help **fight fatigue** and [insomnia](#). By practicing relaxing, whenever you do it, you learn how to let go of the stresses of the day. Think of it like exercising a muscle that gets stronger over time. This allows you to tap into that same [ready relaxation](#) state when it's time to say goodnight.

In fact, meditation, the practice of intentionally quieting or focusing the mind, creates physiological changes that are similar to those that happen in your body during the early phases of sleep. Your **pulse slows**, blood pressure drops, and [stress](#) hormones decrease. Being able to get to that state on demand means that you'll have an easier time **drifting off** when you want to.

There are a few different styles of meditation, and experimentation can help you to find the right fit for you.

– National Sleep Foundation



## Mindfulness Meditation

The most popular form of meditation, mindfulness meditation involves simply paying attention to your body—and nothing else. You might become more aware of the sound of your breath or the feeling of the floor underneath you, for example. If your thoughts wander to your to-do list or something outside the present moment, just observe that and try to steer yourself back to being mindful without judging yourself.

In this type of meditation, focus your awareness on one specific thing. You could zero in on the flame from a candle or repeat a mantra out loud, such as “I am at peace.” For some beginners, having a point of focus is helpful in quieting the mind and relaxing fully.

## Concentration Meditation



## Guided Meditation



In guided meditation, you listen to another person who leads you through your meditation practice. An instructor might tell you to focus on relaxing your toes, then your legs, and so on—all the way up your body. Or he or she might lead you through guided imagery, asking you to imagine, for example, a beautiful, white sand beach with water lapping onto the shore. Guided imagery can also be used for performance. For example, an athlete might imagine herself mastering a technical skill, or an executive might imagine himself confidently delivering a presentation. You can do guided meditation with an individual coach, as a part of a class, or by using a recording. For recordings, search your local library, bookstore, or app store on your phone. YouTube.com provides some free options, too.

**Meditation can take some practice to master, so be patient. Try starting with just a few minutes before bed, and work your way up to 15 or 20 minutes a day.**