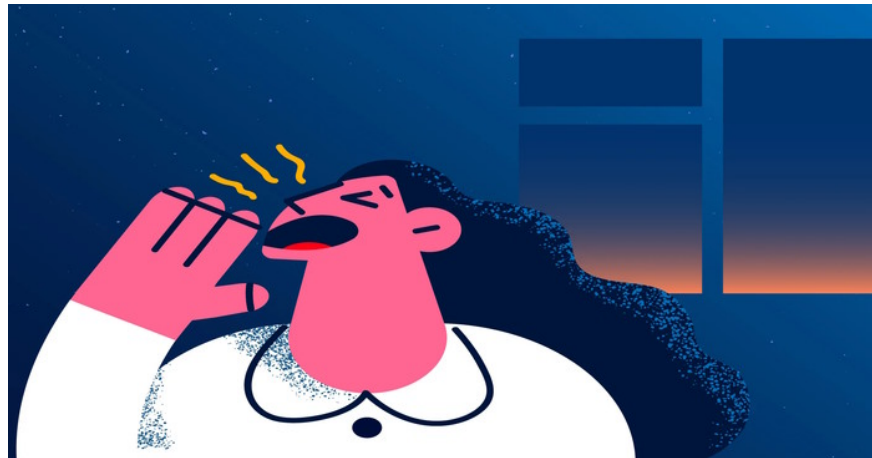


If you can't wake up while it's still dark, do the following:

Do you need to wake up early or do something before the sun rises but have trouble waking up? Then try these simple ways to wake up when it's dark!

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Exposure to light immediately after waking up

Your body secretes melatonin—a sleep-promoting hormone—when it's dark and suppresses it when it's light. That's why you feel sleepy around bedtime and ready to wake up in the morning. As the nights get longer and days get shorter in the fall and winter, with less sunlight, your body produces more melatonin, which can leave you feeling tired and sluggish in the morning.

The best thing you can do to counteract this effect is to expose yourself to light as soon as you open your eyes. Light is the enemy of melatonin; it depletes melatonin from your body, making you feel more alert.

How much light exposure should you get before your day begins? About 10 to 15 minutes is enough.



Keep a consistent wake-up time and resist the urge to hit the snooze button.

Avoid constantly hitting the snooze button on your alarm because you are essentially telling your body that there is still time to sleep, which can cause melatonin to continue pumping through your body, leaving you in a state of grogginess. So while it may feel good to sleep for a few more minutes, you will not get high-quality sleep by using it.

Better yet, skipping the snooze button can make waking up easier during the fall and winter. When you wake up at different times each day, your body essentially thinks you're jet-lagged. On the other hand, waking up at the same time every day helps stabilize your circadian rhythm, making you feel less groggy and less of a struggle to get out of bed.



Move your body, even just a little

Finally, get some exercise right after your alarm goes off. Physical activity increases cortisol, also known as the "*stress hormone*," which wakes you up faster. It also raises your body temperature, which boosts energy.

You can try some gentle stretches in bed: Pull your legs up to your chest or stretch your arms in the air. Roll your back or pull your shoulders back. Or, if you're already out of bed, do some push-ups or jumping jacks. Even walking to the bathroom can help make waking up more pleasant.

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