

Do This One Simple Thing to Fall Asleep Faster

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If you lie awake at night because your mind won't stop racing, taking five minutes before bed to write out a to-do list for the next day might help you get more shuteye. In a [study in the *Journal of Experimental Psychology*](#), people who wrote down future tasks they wanted to accomplish fell asleep faster than those who wrote about things they'd done that day.

Research has shown that writing down worries, in general, [can reduce stress levels](#) and help people perform tasks more efficiently. But psychologists at Baylor University wanted to see if writing down future-focused thoughts, specifically, could help people sleep. To test their theory, they recruited 57 healthy adults, ages 18 to 30, to have their sleep patterns monitored overnight in a lab.

Half of the people were asked to take five minutes to write down, in bullet points or in paragraph form, "everything you have to remember to do tomorrow and over the next few days," the study authors write. The other half were asked to write down tasks they'd completed earlier that day and in the previous few days.