

# Sleep Smarter Summary

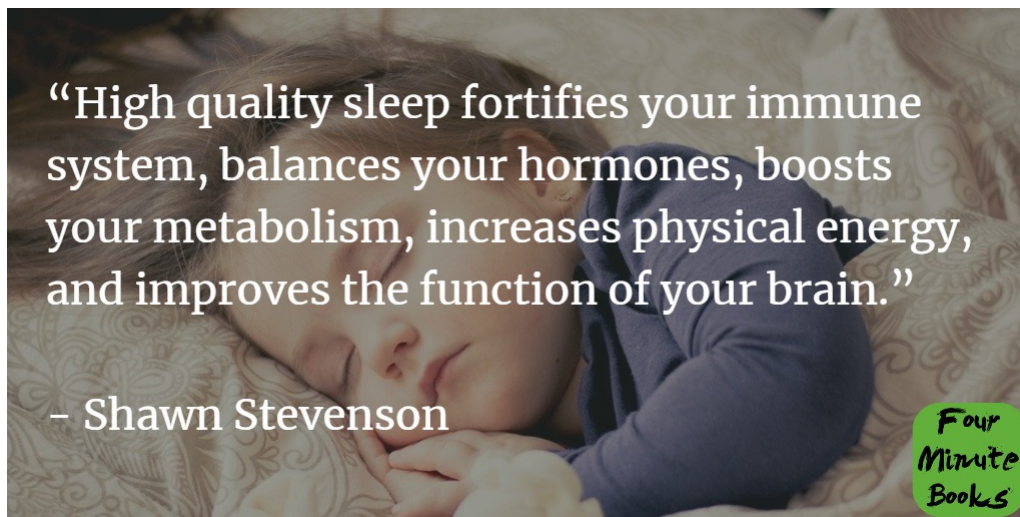
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 [fourminutebooks.com/sleep-smarter-summary/](https://fourminutebooks.com/sleep-smarter-summary/)

**1-Sentence-Summary:** *Sleep Smarter* will give you the ingredients for better sleep and inspire you to take action on them.

**Read in:** 4 minutes

**Favorite quote from the author:**



| “Whew, I’m exhausted!”

How many times have you found yourself saying this at the *beginning* of the day? You slog through your morning routine and get to work feeling like a zombie. Uncontrollable and perpetual yawning plagues your entire day. It’s a struggle to focus because you’re so tired.

If you can relate to the above, you’re not alone. Many of us have a difficult time with sleep. We want more of it from the moment we wake up, but when our head hits the pillow we’re wide awake. The good news is that there is hope for your sleep hygiene.

Shawn Stevenson’s *Sleep Smarter: 21 Essential Strategies to Sleep Your Way to A Better Body, Better Health, and Bigger Success* will show you exactly what you need to do to get better sleep. You’ll also feel more motivated to get better sleep when you see the science around it. Some of these tips may surprise you. But following them will leave you feeling refreshed and energized when you wake up and throughout each day.

Here are the 3 most helpful lessons about quality sleep from this book:

1. Light can be the worst enemy of quality sleep, but also it’s best friend, too.
2. Not every eight hours of sleep is created equal, timing is vital to a good night’s rest.

3. Make your bedroom into a sanctuary for sleep to get the best quality shuteye.

Are you ready to discover the keys to better Zs? Let's go!

## Lesson 1: Light is both the best friend and worst enemy of good sleep.

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When it comes to getting a good night's sleep, light plays a vital role. To understand the relationship between light and sleep, we need to understand melatonin. It's the hormone primarily responsible for regulating our circadian rhythm, or the internal clock that helps us know when to sleep. How much melatonin our bodies release depends a lot on the light around us. Less light signals melatonin release, making us sleepy come sundown.

To take advantage of melatonin's help getting us to be sleepy at night, make sure you get as much sunlight as you can during the day. The most important time to soak up rays is in the early morning because it helps us wake up. And studies show that when people are exposed to more light early in the day, they make more melatonin at night.

**In the evening, you should try to make things as dark as possible because this will increase melatonin production and help you be sleepy.** Avoid nightlights and try blackout blinds to ensure you aren't absorbing light when you want to sleep. Having light in your bedroom suppresses melatonin production by a whopping 50 percent! Eliminating light will help you sleep deeper and longer.

Lastly, avoid those little glowing screens at night. The blue light in electronic screens inhibits melatonin production and makes it harder to sleep. The author suggests putting down electronic devices 60 minutes before going to sleep. Rather than scrolling through the news or social media before bed, try reading a book.

## Lesson 2: Get your timing right to make your sleep hours effective.

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If you want to get better rest throughout the week, start respecting your internal clock and keep your bedtime within the same 30 minutes every night. Many of us live in the cycle of not getting much sleep during the week and then catching up and sleeping in over the weekend. This pattern is terrible for our circadian rhythm. Think about it, our bodies won't know the difference between a work night or the weekend. Going to sleep and waking up at drastically different times all week messes up your natural rhythm.

If possible, waking up early every day is the best sleep schedule to be on. A study comparing night owl students to morning bird students found that morning people had better grades. The morning people had a 3.5 GPA on average, while the night owls had a 2.5.

We have been evolutionarily conditioned to react to light patterns and sleep during the night. Our ancestors were wired to want to sleep at sunset because sleeping during the day was more dangerous because more predators were around. **The best window of sleep is from 10:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. because in this window, our body has the peak production of melatonin and growth hormone.** This results in a much more rejuvenating and deeper sleep than after 2:00.

## Lesson 3: The best Zs happen when we turn our bedroom into a sanctuary for sleep.

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Lastly, if you're *really* going to prioritize sleep in your life, ensure your bedroom is a sleep haven. Naturally, our surroundings are a huge influence on the quality of our sleep. A sleep sanctuary should have clean and fresh air and help you feel relaxed. Having house plants in your bedroom helps you achieve this. Studies have shown that seeing and smelling greenery induces both feelings of happiness and calmness.

As we know, plants are also excellent at filtering air. Clean air is crucial to sleep because clean air is full of negatively charged ions such as oxygen. Negatively charged ions energize the body and oxidize toxic chemical gases, parasites, and mold, which improves our health. The air we breathe can be stale, and plants fix this by turning carbon dioxide to oxygen and recharging the ions in the air. Try English Ivy, which is the best air-filtering houseplant, or Mother-in-Law's Tongue, one of the only plants that converts carbon dioxide into oxygen during the night.

The final key to building your sleep sanctuary, though, is keeping your work out of the bedroom. Bringing a phone or laptop to text, call, or email in our space for sleeping causes spikes of cortisol, which is associated with both stress and wakefulness. But what's worse is that it builds negative associations with the bedroom, and that makes it harder to fall asleep there. **So if you want a truly relaxing sleep space, keep work and electronics elsewhere and designate the bedroom only for sleep and relaxing activities.**

## Sleep Smarter Review

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*Sleep Smarter* is definitely a book that I would highly recommend! I knew a few of the tips for better sleep already, but some of these were new and exciting. I'm going to buy myself some plants for my bedroom now!

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## Who would I recommend the Sleep Smarter summary to?

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The 45-year-old productivity junkie who thinks that it's not worth their time to get better sleep, the 32-year-old insomniac who is at their wit's end with terrible sleep, and anyone who wakes up feeling exhausted.