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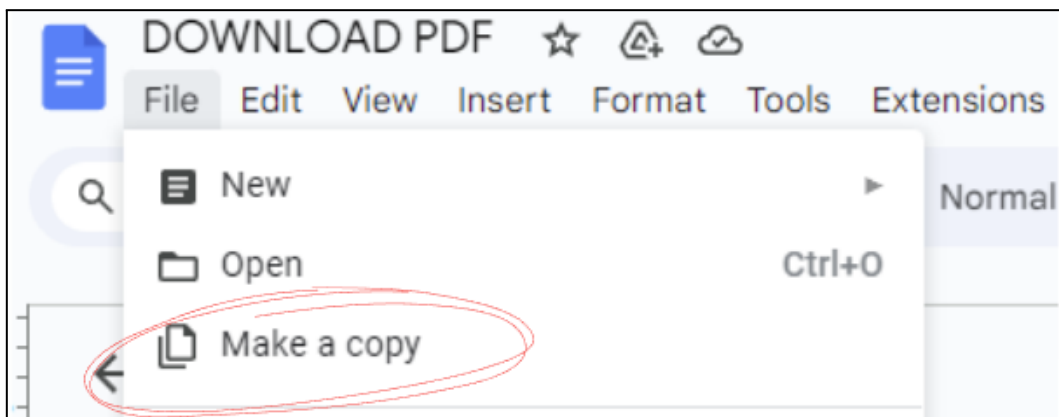
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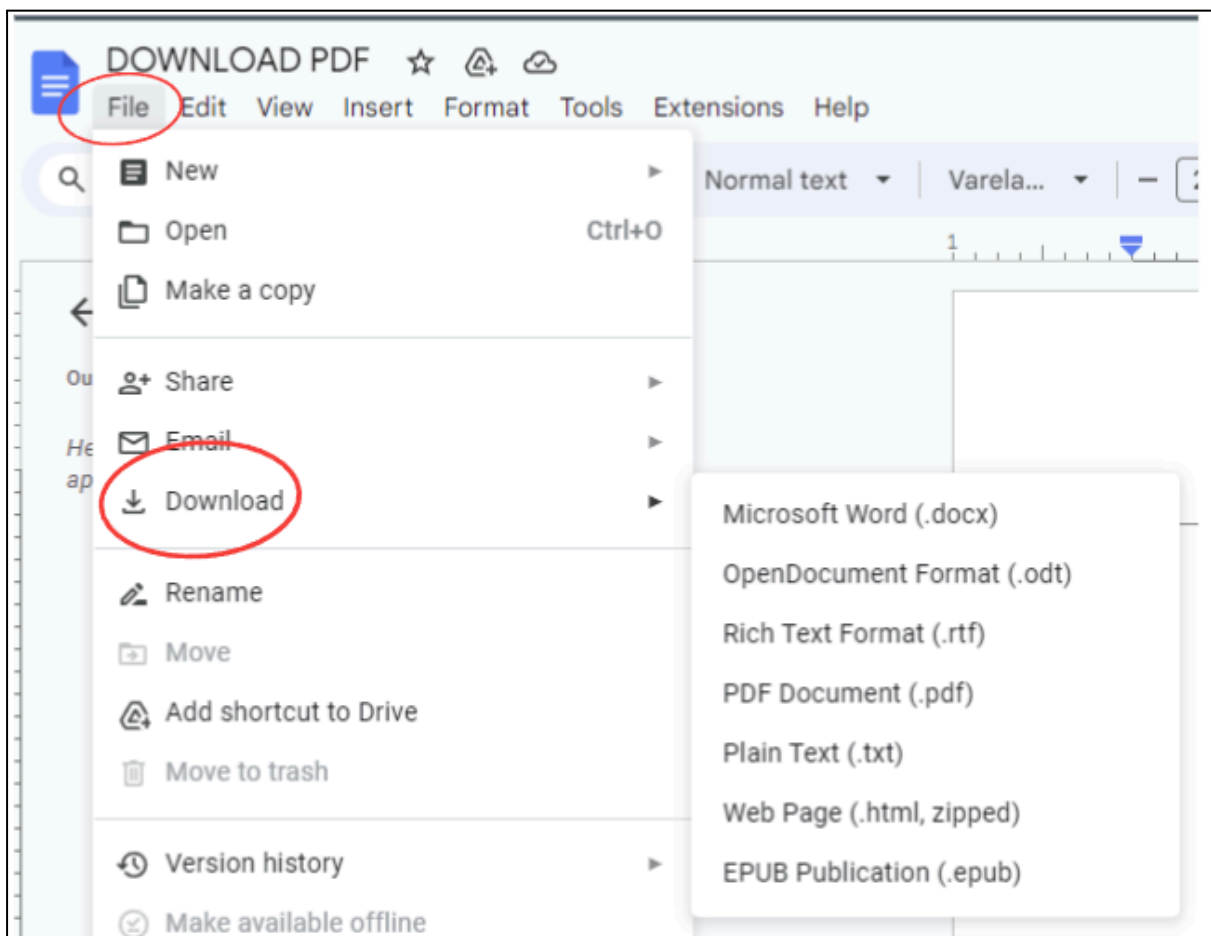
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Can We Hack Our Sleep for A Smarter Brain? | 🎙️ Podcast n Chill

Transcript

Leo: Gwen, I am officially a mess.

Gwen: What's wrong with you?

Leo: I went to bed at 2 AM watching random videos about... why giraffes don't need much sleep.

Leo: And guess what?

Leo: My brain is on airplane mode. No, scratch that, it's on low battery mode.

Gwen: Leo, I think you just described the morning routine of half our listeners.

Gwen: How many of you out there have ever promised yourself, "Tonight, I'll sleep early," then only find yourself deep-diving into cat videos, conspiracy theories, or learning about... giraffe sleep cycles?

Leo: Hey, it was very educational!

Leo: But yeah, I feel personally attacked.

Gwen: Well, let me return the favor.

Gwen: Let me guess.

Gwen: When you woke up, your brain felt foggy, your body felt like it had been hit by a truck, and for the first five minutes, you couldn't even remember your own name?

Leo: Wow.

Leo: Are you secretly watching me?

Gwen: Nope. Just experience.

Gwen: Keep watching, because today we're diving into uncovering hacks that can make you smarter, sharper, and more creative. These hacks will optimize your sleep and make your brain function more efficiently.

Leo: I like where this is going. Because if I can wake up every day feeling like a genius, I am so in.

Gwen: Let's get into it!

Leo: Okay, so I know sleep is important.

Leo: But let's be honest. Sometimes it feels like a waste of time.

Leo: Like, why do we need so many hours just lying there, unconscious? Can't we just... I don't know, take a short nap and call it a day?

Gwen: Absolutely not. Sleep isn't just about resting your body. It's when your brain does some of its most important work.

Leo: Oh, you mean when my brain decides to replay every embarrassing moment from my childhood at 3 AM?

Gwen: That's one function of the brain, I suppose.

Gwen: But I was actually talking about memory consolidation, problem-solving, and creative thinking.

Gwen: Studies show that during sleep, especially in the REM stage, your brain is organizing everything you learned during the day, making connections, and even solving problems without you realizing it.

Leo: Oh, I know what REM stage is! Let me give listeners some useful information!

Leo: The REM stage, or Rapid Eye Movement stage, is an important part of sleep when dreaming happens. The brain is very active, but the body stays still.

Gwen: Completely correct!

Gwen: REM starts about 90 minutes after you fall asleep and happens several times a night, lasting longer in the early morning. It helps with memory, learning, and emotional health.

Leo: Informative!

Leo: And yeah, I've totally experienced that! There've been times when I was stuck on a problem, then after a good night's sleep—boom!

Gwen: The answer just popped into my head like magic.

Gwen: See?

Gwen: Sleep is like a cheat code for your brain. It even helps you regulate emotions. That's why when you're sleep-deprived, everything feels ten times worse.

Leo: Oh, 100%. I once stayed up for two days straight, and by the end of it, I was this close to crying over a missing sock.

Gwen: I can't believe it!

Gwen: You need to be careful.

Gwen: I found crazy information from the American Heart Association. People who sleep less than 5 hours a night have three times the risk of having a stroke compared to those who get 7 hours!

Gwen: Moreover, adults who sleep less than 6 hours a night have a 200% higher risk of developing depression and anxiety. That statistic comes from Harvard Medical School.

Leo: That's wild!

Leo: Anyway, each person has their own habits, just telling listeners to go to sleep will not be effective. It is only effective when we really know how to make that sleep really help us have a smarter brain.

Gwen: Today you really sound like a good host, Leo!

Leo: Hey, don't mock me!

Leo: I officially want better sleep. But here's the thing. I feel like I've tried everything already.

Leo: Warm tea? Check. Counting sheep? Check.

Gwen: Well, that last one might not be the most effective method. But don't worry, we've got science-backed hacks that actually work.

Leo: Alright, hit me with them. But if one of these involves giving up my midnight phone scrolling... I might cry.

Gwen: Well... about that.

Gwen: You know how you stare at your phone right before bed, and then somehow, two hours disappear?

Leo: Lies! I would never—okay, yes, I do that every night.

Gwen: That's the problem!

Gwen: Blue light from screens tricks your brain into thinking it's still daytime, which messes up your melatonin production. That means you take longer to fall asleep, your sleep quality drops, and the next morning, you feel like a zombie.

Leo: Ah, so that's why I wake up feeling like I've been hit by a truck.

Gwen: Yep. Try using night mode on your devices or, better yet, put the phone down at least 30 minutes before bed.

Leo: Put the phone down?

Leo: Gwen, that's like asking me to give up oxygen.

Gwen: Okay, okay. Baby steps.

Gwen: Try blue-light-blocking glasses instead. At least pretend to care about your brain health.

Leo: I get it. No more staring at my phone at 2 AM. But honestly, I need something to do before bed. I can't just... lie there and wait to fall asleep.

Gwen: That's fair.

Gwen: So, what's your game plan?

Leo: Well, I actually tried switching things up. Instead of doom-scrolling, I started playing chill music like lo-fi beats or soft jazz. Turns out, it really helps me relax.

Gwen: Oh yeah, science backs this up!

Gwen: A study in The Journal of Advanced Nursing found that listening to relaxing music before bed improves sleep quality. It lowers stress and heart rate.

Gwen: What else do you do?

Leo: I also tried journaling. Nothing complicated. Just writing down three good things from my day. It helps me stop overthinking and actually unplug before bed.

Gwen: That's smart. It's like giving your brain a little closure for the day.

Leo: Exactly!

Leo: Okay, let's talk about something really hard: waking up at the same time every day. Even on weekends.

Gwen: I know, I know, it sounds painful.

Gwen: But your body loves consistency. When you stick to a regular sleep schedule, your internal clock adjusts, making it easier to fall asleep and wake up refreshed.

Leo: And I get it. Sleeping in on weekends feels great. But if you sleep till noon on Sunday, good luck trying to fall asleep at a normal time that night.

Leo: And then Monday morning? Pure suffering.

Gwen: Yep. So, set a realistic wake-up time and stick to it. Even if it's just one hour later on weekends instead of five..

Leo: Your sleep environment is also important. If your room is too bright, noisy, or hot, your sleep is going to suffer.

Gwen: Think of it like this. Your bedroom should be the sleep equivalent of a five-star hotel. Cool, dark, and quiet.

Gwen: Blackout curtains? Amazing. White noise machine? Even better.

Leo: And if noise is a problem, earplugs or white noise apps can help.

Leo: Alright, we've got blue light, bedtime routines, and sleep schedules covered.

Leo: But what about food? Can I eat my way to sleep better?

Gwen: Absolutely!

Gwen: First rule: no caffeine too late in the day.

Gwen: Caffeine can stay in your system for up to 6 hours, so that 4 PM coffee? It might be why you're tossing and turning at night.

Leo: Great. My iced coffee addiction is under attack.

Gwen: Sorry, Leo.

Gwen: But instead of caffeine, try foods rich in magnesium and melatonin, like bananas, almonds, or even a cup of chamomile tea before bed.

Leo: Got it!

Leo: But Gwen, do you actually follow all these rules, or are you just making me suffer?

Gwen: I try!

Gwen: Actually, I used to have terrible sleep. I'd wake up feeling exhausted even after eight hours. Turns out, my problem was sleep compression.

Leo: Sounds fancy.

Leo: What is it?

Gwen: It's basically cutting out inefficient sleep.

Gwen: Instead of spending 9 hours in bed but only sleeping for 6, you train your body to get quality sleep in less time by sticking to a strict schedule and avoiding long naps.

Leo: So, sleep smarter, not longer?

Leo: I like the efficiency.

Gwen: And since I love a good challenge...

Leo, I dare you to try it.

Leo: This podcast is just turning into a personal intervention, huh?

Leo: Fine, challenge accepted!

Gwen: Deal!

Gwen: Guys, we've given you the hacks.

Gwen: Now it's your turn.

Leo: Which one are you gonna try first?

Leo: Let us know in the comments.

Gwen: Alright, listeners, do you want to know sleep hacks for specific situations?

Leo: I believe it's a "yes".

Leo: So what if I need to remember something important?

Leo: Like, say... my grocery list.

Leo: Or, I don't know, the entire plot of a movie I just watched?

Gwen: Easy. If you're trying to memorize something, study it right before bed. Research shows that your brain reinforces newly learned information while you sleep.

Leo: Okay, that's cool.

Leo: What about creativity?

Gwen: Sleep plays a huge role in creativity!

Gwen: The REM stage as I've mentioned above, in particular, helps you connect ideas in unique ways. That's why so many famous inventors and artists claim their best ideas came to them in dreams.

Leo: Wait, so if I want to be more creative, I just need to... sleep more?

Yes, but only if you complete full sleep cycles.

Leo: Okay, last one. Let's say I didn't sleep enough.

Leo: How do I survive the day?

Gwen: Power naps!

Gwen: A 20-minute nap can boost alertness, and if you really need an extra kick, try a "caffeine nap". Drink a cup of coffee right before your nap. By the time you wake up, the caffeine will have kicked in.

Leo: Oh, I love that. Productivity cheat codes.

Gwen: Again, we will learn some phrases today.

Gwen: It's your turn, Leo

Leo: Alright.

Leo: First up, we have the phrase 'Mess up.' To make a mistake or cause a problem. I totally messed up my sleep schedule by staying up too late watching movies.

Gwen: That happens to all of us!

Gwen: Here's another phrase: 'Feel like a zombie.' To feel extremely tired or sluggish. I only got four hours of sleep, so now I feel like a zombie at work.

Leo: Oh, I can relate!

Leo: Now, let's move on to 'Cheat code for something.' A trick or method that makes something easier. For example, drinking water first thing in the morning is my cheat code for waking up fast.

Gwen: That's a smart hack!

Gwen: The next phrase is 'Stick to a schedule.' To follow a routine or plan consistently. If you stick to a sleep schedule, you'll feel more energized every morning.

Leo: It's tough, but it really works!

Gwen: Finally, we have 'Turn into a habit.' To make something a regular practice. Reading before bed turned into a habit, and now I sleep much better.

Leo: That's a great way to wind down at night!

Leo: Let's put your knowledge to the test with a few questions! Share your answers in the comments below!

Gwen: The first question.

Gwen: What is one common habit that negatively affects sleep quality?

Leo: Looking at screens before bed because blue light disrupts melatonin production.

Gwen: Exactly!

Leo: Let's do one more.

Leo: What is a "caffeine nap," and why does it work?

Gwen: It's when you drink coffee before a 20-minute nap so that the caffeine kicks in right as you wake up, boosting alertness.

Leo: Correct! That's a great sleep hack!

Leo: Alright, let's wrap this up.

Leo: What's the big takeaway here?

Sleep isn't just about time, it's about quality.

Gwen: If you sleep the right way, your brain will be smarter, work better, remember more, and even be more creative.

Leo: So the real "brain hack" isn't a fancy trick... it's just better sleep.

Gwen: Exactly!

Leo: Well, in that case... I'm off to take a nap.

Gwen: Hey, let's wrap this episode with me!

Gwen: And to our listeners, if you're listening to this at 3 AM... go to bed.

Leo: Seriously. Your brain will thank you.

Gwen: And that's a wrap for today's episode!

Gwen: If you found these tips helpful, don't forget to share this episode with a friend who needs better sleep.

Leo: And don't forget to subscribe! Until next time...

Gwen: Stay chill and sleep smart!

Study Materials: Can We Hack Our Sleep for A Smarter Brain?



Vocabulary

Word	Pronunciation	Definition	Example
Deep-diving into	/di:p daɪvɪŋ 'ɪntu:/'	Getting deeply involved in researching or learning something.	I spent hours deep-diving into sleep research.
Cheat code	/tʃi:t kəʊd/	A shortcut or easy trick to achieve something.	Sleep is a cheat code for memory improvement.
Under attack	/ʌndər ə'tæk/	Being criticized or pressured.	My coffee addiction is under attack.
Challenge accepted	/'tʃælɪndʒ ək'septɪd/	A phrase used to agree to a difficult task.	- I dare you to try it! - Challenge accepted!
Call it a day	/kɔ:l ɪt ə deɪ/	To stop working or doing something for the day.	I'm too tired to continue; let's call it a day.
Be in	/bi 'ɪn/	To be interested or willing to participate in something.	If better sleep makes me smarter, I am so in.
Return the favor	/rɪ'tɜ:n ðə 'feɪvər/	Do something back for someone, often in response.	You teased me yesterday, so I'm returning the favor.

Officially a mess	/ə'fɪʃəli ə mɛs/	Completely disorganized or in a bad state.	After pulling an all-nighter, I am officially a mess.
On airplane mode	/ɒn 'eəpleɪn moʊd/	Functioning at a low level, mentally disconnected.	I didn't sleep well, so my brain is on airplane mode.
Memory consolidation	/'mɛməri kən'sɒlɪdeɪʃən/	The process of strengthening and storing memories.	Sleep helps with memory consolidation.

Pre-listening Question

1. What are some ways people try to improve their sleep?
2. Do you believe sleep affects creativity and intelligence? Why or why not?
3. What sleep-related myths have you heard before?
4. How do you usually prepare for bed? Do you have a nighttime routine?
5. How do you usually feel after a bad night's sleep?

Comprehension Questions:

1. What problem does Leo have at the beginning of the conversation?
2. Why does Gwen say sleep is important for the brain?
3. What happens in the REM stage of sleep?
4. What does blue light from screens do to the brain?
5. What is one alternative to reducing blue light exposure at night?
6. Why is having a consistent sleep schedule beneficial?
7. How does music help improve sleep quality?
8. What is "sleep compression," and how does it help with better rest?
9. What is a "caffeine nap," and why does it work?
10. What is the main message of the podcast episode?

Post-listening Questions:

1. Which sleep tip from the episode do you find most useful? Why?

2. What sleep habit do you think you should change?
3. Have you ever experienced a moment where sleep helped you solve a problem or be more creative?
4. Do you think your sleep environment is good? What could you improve?
5. What would be the hardest sleep habit for you to change? Why?