

June

Cut along the dotted lines. Place this handout on your refrigerator, nightstand, or somewhere in your home as a reminder of what to focus on each week.

Additional information and resources can be found at gatorcare.org/12tweaks.



Week 1: Create a Sleep Routine

Create a personalized sleep routine to help you fall asleep.

- Set a bedtime. Then start practicing your bedtime routine an **hour** before you want to go to bed.
- Turn off the television and put away any handheld electronic devices an **hour** before bed.
- Dim all lights an **hour** before bed.
- Do something relaxing. What makes you feel relaxed?
 - Reading? Choose something that won't get your heart pumping like a thriller. Avoid reading in bed. Only go to bed when you are ready to sleep.
 - Knitting or crafting? Be sure to do so in low light.
 - Listening to music? Make sure it's soothing.
 - A hot shower or bath? This helps your body temperature drop, which signals your body to start feeling sleepy.
 - Loosen up. Perform gentle exercises to help your body unwind. See the Bedtime Yoga handout for ideas.
 - Other great ideas include meditating, coloring and journaling.
- Prepare items for the next morning. This could include laying out clothes, making lunches, or setting an alarm.
- Only go to bed when you feel tired enough to sleep.
- Reflect on your day. Jot down some important moments and practice gratitude.

Week 2: Remodel Your Environment

Make your bedroom and home more sleep-friendly by removing distracting items or adding helpful items.

- Create a dark atmosphere. Bright light exposure increases alertness making it harder to fall asleep.
 - Add blackout curtains, blinds, or use a sleep mask.
 - Place night lights in bathrooms and hallways. Use lamps and soft lighting in common rooms or a book light when reading.
- Consider removing television, computer, or clocks from your bedroom.
 - The blue light stimulates brain activity; we want our brains relaxed!
 - When you have trouble falling asleep or falling back asleep, looking at the time can increase stress, making it even harder to fall asleep.
- Only use your bedroom as a place to sleep and only get in bed when you are tired.
- Assess your bed. Is it comfortable? Do you have appropriate sheets and blankets? Do you wake up in the night sweating or freezing? Change your bedding accordingly. You spend a significant amount of time here so don't scrimp.
- Lower air conditioning temperatures. The ideal sleeping temperature is 65°-73° F.
- Add aromatherapy like candles, essential oils or pillow mists. Try lavender, chamomile, peppermint, ginger or eucalyptus.
 - See pillow mists recipes on the 12 Tweaks website.

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Week 3: Tweak Your Daytime Habits

Think about your daily routine and habits. Evaluate how those may be affecting your ability to fall asleep and stay asleep.

- Get ample amounts of sunlight every day. Light exposure triggers an increase in serotonin, a hormone associated with improved mood and regulation of body functions like sleep.
- Limit caffeine consumption **six hours** before bed.
- Limit alcohol consumption **three to four hours** before bed.
- Regulate meal times. Try not to eat a heavy meal **two hours** before bed.
- Keep weekend sleep schedule similar to work week schedule. Restrain from taking naps later in the day.
- Turn off all lights before going to sleep.
- If you are having trouble **falling asleep**...don't stress.
 - Worrying about falling asleep can elicit the stress response, which can keep you awake.
 - If you don't fall asleep within 15 to 30 minutes, get out of bed. Engage in a calming activity until you are tired again.
- If you are waking up in the middle of your sleep cycle and having trouble **falling back asleep**...don't stress.
 - Engage in a calming activity. Dump your thoughts or worries that may be keeping you up on a sheet of paper to revisit in the morning.
 - Avoid clocks, television and electronic devices. Do not check the time!

Week 4: Incorporate Physical Activity

Exercising regularly keeps you energized throughout the day and can improve the quality of your sleep.

- Aim for 150 minutes of physical activity a week and at least two strength training workouts.
- Stay active throughout the day.
 - Revisit February's Morning Mile.
 - Revisit morning exercises from May's Jumpstart.
 - Revisit a variety of exercises from April's Crosstrain.
 - Go for a walk on your work break.
 - Check out the Deskercise handout on the 12 Tweaks website for exercises to perform at work.
- Physical activity reduces arousal and anxiety, which are two main causes of disrupted sleep.
- Take your exercise outside.
 - Sunlight triggers an increase in alertness, which can help you get through your day.
 - Go for a gratitude walk. Take in the beauty of your surroundings and give thanks for all the wonderful things in your life.
- Walk! Make it routine. Walk before a meal, after a meal, with your kids, with a friend or with your dog. Just go!
- Perform gentle exercises (like those from the Bedtime Yoga handout) before bed to relax your muscles and get your body primed for sleep. Make this part of your sleep routine.

June

Use this sheet to track your sleep. Use the last column to reflect on which activities each week were helpful.

Find additional resources on how to complete each week on gatorcare.org/12tweaks.



Week 1: Create a sleep routine	Rate your sleep quality	Did you have trouble falling asleep?	Did you wake up and have trouble falling back asleep?	What did you learn this week? Which activities helped you the most?
Monday	1 2 3 4 5	Yes / No	Yes / No	
Tuesday	1 2 3 4 5	Yes / No	Yes / No	
Wednesday	1 2 3 4 5	Yes / No	Yes / No	
Thursday	1 2 3 4 5	Yes / No	Yes / No	
Friday	1 2 3 4 5	Yes / No	Yes / No	
Saturday	1 2 3 4 5	Yes / No	Yes / No	
Sunday	1 2 3 4 5	Yes / No	Yes / No	
Week 2: Remodel your environment	Rate your sleep quality	Did you have trouble falling asleep?	Did you wake up and have trouble falling back asleep?	
Monday	1 2 3 4 5	Yes / No	Yes / No	
Tuesday	1 2 3 4 5	Yes / No	Yes / No	
Wednesday	1 2 3 4 5	Yes / No	Yes / No	
Thursday	1 2 3 4 5	Yes / No	Yes / No	
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Week 3: Tweak your daytime habits	Rate your sleep quality	Did you have trouble falling asleep?	Did you wake up and have trouble falling back asleep?	What did you learn this week? Which activities helped you the most?
Monday	1 2 3 4 5	Yes / No	Yes / No	
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