

Spring clean *your* SLEEP

Get a handle
on this year's
all-new trends
before the
return of those
hot, sticky
summer nights

Struggling to sleep? Now the clocks have changed and, while overnight temperatures are low, it's the ideal time to experiment with 2022's hottest sleep tips. 'In spring, increased light exposure first thing in the morning and throughout the day helps regulate the body's circadian rhythm – our internal 24-hour sleep-wake cycle – and makes sleeping that bit easier,' says Dr Verena Senn, sleep expert at Emma Sleep*.

Consistency is key. Once you've found what works for you, it's important to stick to the same routine for several weeks. So, it's time to revamp your bedtime routine.

RESPECT YOUR CHRONOTYPE

Your circadian rhythm can be trained, but your chronotype – your inclination to sleep and wake at a certain time every day – is more fixed. Sleep guru Dr Michael Breus devised an online quiz that characterises four chronotypes: bear, wolf, lion and dolphin. 'Understanding your biological chronotype is important,' says sleep coach Tracy Hannigan**. 'If you let it determine your bedtime, you will likely sleep better.'

Visit
thepowerof
whenquiz.com
to take the quiz
and find out your
chronotype.

SUGGEST A 'SLEEP DIVORCE'

One in four*** people say the biggest factor keeping them awake is their bed partner snoring. If you're struggling to get the recommended seven to nine hours of sleep due to a noisy partner, you should consider a 'sleep divorce'. It's more common than you think. Emma Sleep found 22% of British couples who suffer with sleep issues, sleep separately every night, while 25% do so more than once a week.

**TWO
IN A BED**
You can still reap benefits from sharing your sleep space. 'Cuddling increases levels of oxytocin, a hormone known to improve mood and strengthen bonds,' says Dr Senn.

ADD WEIGHT TO SINK DEEP

'Scientifically proven to improve sleep quality, weighted blankets can reduce symptoms of insomnia and depression,' says Dr Senn. They simulate the pressure of a hug, activating the parasympathetic nervous system. This lowers the heart rate, helps you fall asleep faster and improves sleep quality.

MONITOR YOUR MOVEMENT

Using an array of high-tech motion, temperature and sound sensors, sleep trackers measure the quantity and quality of your kip. They reveal when you've had a restless night, helping you correlate whether your daytime activities or night-time environment are impacting your slumber. Some trackers monitor your sleep cycles and time your alarm to go off during a period when you're sleeping less deeply. Tracy advises against sleep tracking if you're really struggling to sleep, as it can fuel your anxieties and make it even harder to drift off. Try The Sleep Analyzer from Withings (£119.95, withings.com). It offers sleep coaching and can detect sleep apnoea.

**One
in five adults
are estimated to
have obstructive sleep
apnoea – 80% of them
are unaware they
suffer from it, found
Withings.**

SET THE TONE

The colour you choose to paint your bedroom can affect your mood, and the right shade can even improve sleep. Research shows that people who sleep in a blue bedroom regularly get the best night's sleep†, as it promotes feelings of tranquillity, serenity and security. This year you can stay on trend and conjure up a relaxing ambiance in your room with the same pot of paint. Pantone's colour of 2022, Very Peri, is described as 'periwinkle blue with a vivifying violet red undertone', and combines the renowned calming properties of blue with a hint of sophistication.

ORCHESTRATE SWEET DREAMS

Nine in 10 people occasionally struggle to fall asleep due to noise disruptions***. 'Irregular sounds are more likely to disturb you,' says Tracy. 'Muting them by playing other more regular, soothing sounds can be helpful.'

Natural (rolling thunder or running water) or 'coloured' noise are popular options. White noise is made up of sound across the entire spectrum, brown noise is mainly at the lower end and sounds deeper, and pink noise falls somewhere in between. Choose from over 100 soporific sounds on the NoiseZ app (free, iOS).

YOUR SLEEP-WELL CHECKLIST

'Good sleep hygiene is all about being relaxed at bedtime and having a good physical environment for sleep,' says chartered psychologist Dr Lindsay Browning, author of *Navigating Sleeplessness* (£8.99, Welbeck).

- ✦ Have a regular sleep and wake time, to boost your circadian rhythm.
- ✦ Avoid caffeine at least five hours before bed.
- ✦ Get outside to have sunlight exposure every day, to help your body produce melatonin at night.
- ✦ Have a warm bath.
- ✦ Don't use your phone in bed.
- ✦ Keep the bedroom cool (around 18C is ideal) and dark.