



How to End Your Friendship with the Snooze Button

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For most people, mornings are the most productive part of their day. However, many of us waste these precious morning hours just trying to wake up! Then by the afternoon and evening, we get hungry, tired, or even bored. Why? Well, our brain has already begun to slow down for the day and we don't tend to be as sharp as we'd like.

Advantages to Rising Early

Besides being more productive, there are a number of advantages to waking up earlier.

Here are 4 of the biggest advantages to rising early:

- 1. You have time for breakfast.** If you've been hitting the snooze alarm for 20 minutes, you've effectively cut out the time you would normally spend fixing a healthy breakfast. Now you only have time to grab a donut and coffee on your way to work.
- You've heard it before, but breakfast really *is* the most important meal of the day. ***This meal jumpstarts your metabolism and gives you energy that will last throughout the most productive portion of your day.*** You'll also be less likely to eat unhealthy snacks all day long.
- 2. You have an early start to work.** Many people deal with rush hour every morning during their commute to work. This ends up creating a frustrating start to your day. You may be able to avoid this headache by simply waking up a few minutes earlier.
- Have you ever noticed that leaving even 10-15 minutes earlier can make a difference in how much traffic you encounter on your commute? ***Getting an early start can help eliminate stress.***

3. You have time to exercise. Many of us say that we're going to start an exercise regimen but after a long day of work, the last thing you feel like doing is working out. Mornings are the perfect time to get your blood flowing and adrenaline pumping.

- You'll work up a hearty appetite for a healthy breakfast by exercising in the mornings and you'll be less stressed during your commute. Plus, once you get to work, you'll notice that ***you'll have more energy to tackle any problems that arise.***

4. You can enjoy peace and quiet. We have so much noise and chaos in our lives. You could have such a peaceful start to your day by enjoying a little quiet solitude before the rest of the world is awake and demanding your attention.

- ***When was the last time you had me time?*** Spend some time enjoying your breakfast while reading the newspaper or your favorite book each morning.

How to Become an Early Bird

Now that we know that getting up early has its advantages, how do we go about making this a regular habit? It's certainly easier said than done, but it's not impossible!

Here are some ways to make the transition a little easier so you, too, can become an early bird:

- 1. Start waking up at the same time every day.** Decide how much time you need to accomplish what you want when you get up, then set your wake-up time accordingly.
 - Experts say we should even follow this schedule on the weekends or days off so we don't wreak havoc on our internal sleeping pattern.
- 2. Do *not* hit the Snooze button.** If your alarm clock is too convenient to your bed, put it clear across the room so you have to get out of bed to shut it off. From there, force yourself to leave your bedroom. If you let yourself even *think* about sleeping in, you probably will. So just get up and start your day.
 - Go to the bathroom and splash some water on your face and you'll be less tempted to get back in bed.
- 3. Go to bed earlier.** The last thing you want to feel is sleep-deprived, so this may mean that you need to give up your *night-owl* ways. There will be a few days of adjustment since your body won't be used to going to bed early. However, after a few mornings of getting up early, you'll feel tired early enough in the evening that you should have no problem going right to sleep.

- If you're tempted to stay up late watching television, ***record your favorite shows and watch them in the morning during your peaceful me time.***

By nature, we are creatures of habit. When you develop a bad habit (*like continually hitting the snooze*), you'll likely continue to fall into that trap. Breaking this routine will force you to start fresh, and you'll be happy that you did!