

RHYTHMS GUIDES · FREE EDITION

The Evening Wind-Down

A gentle beginner's guide to calm evenings and deeper sleep

Rhythms

Welcome

This guide is for anyone whose evenings feel rushed, wired or scrolled away, and who wants calmer nights and better sleep. You don't need a perfect bedtime or a long ritual. A few small, repeated steps are enough.

- Read one chapter at a time.
- Pick just one idea to try tonight.
- Use the 7-night plan near the end to get started.
- Come back when you're ready to add the next step.

Why an evening wind-down helps

Your body doesn't switch off like a light. It needs a slow, predictable signal that the day is over.

Easier sleep

A steady routine tells your body it's time to rest, so falling asleep feels less like a fight.

A quieter mind

Closing the day on paper stops thoughts from looping at midnight.

Better mornings

A good night and a ready plan make the next morning lighter.

Time for you

A calm hour is a small daily gift you give yourself.

Start small: one step at a time

Trying to fix every evening habit at once rarely lasts. Choose one small step and let it become automatic.

- Choose one step that takes 5 minutes or less.
- Tie it to something you already do, like "after I brush my teeth, I put my phone on the charger."
- Repeat it for one week before adding more.
- Keep it easy on purpose. Easy is what lasts.

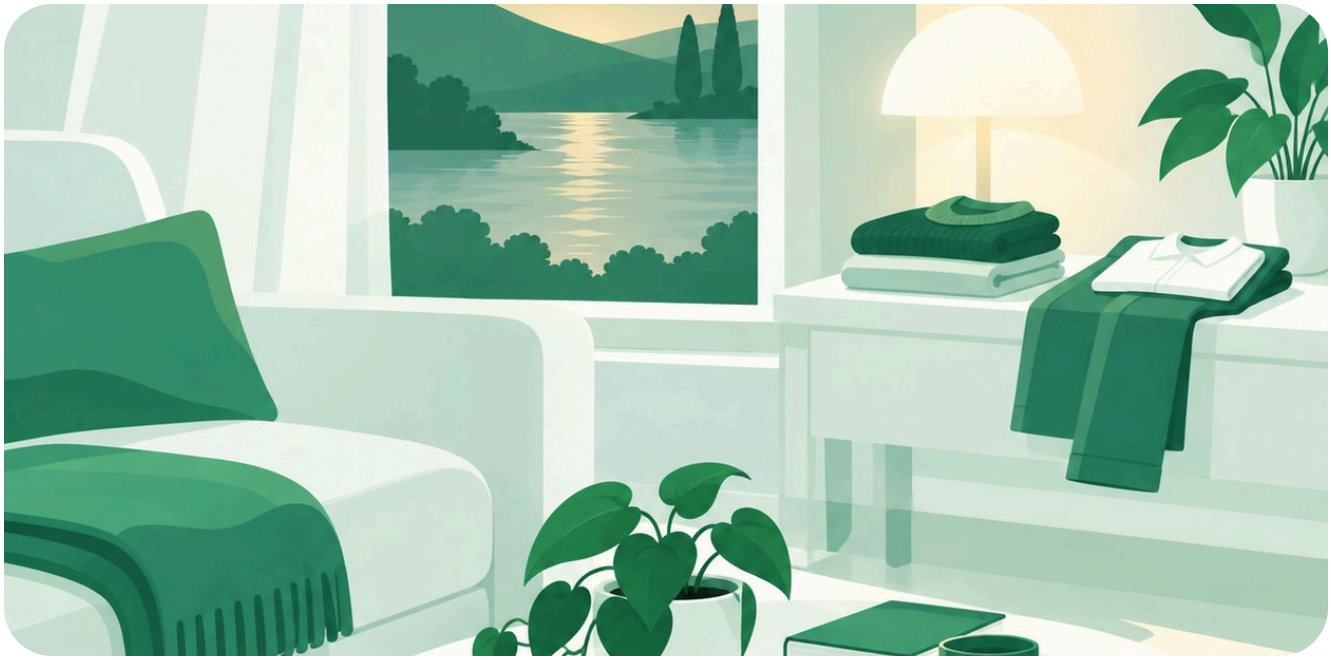
Tip: a 5-minute wind-down you actually do beats a perfect hour you skip.



Set a screens-off time

Bright screens and endless feeds keep the mind alert. Giving them an end time is the single biggest step for most beginners.

- Pick a screens-off time 30–60 minutes before bed.
- Charge your phone outside the bedroom, or across the room.
- Use an old-fashioned alarm clock if your phone is your alarm.
- If you need something to hold, choose a paper book.



Close the day

A few minutes of reset turns tomorrow into a fresh start instead of yesterday's leftovers.

- Do a 10-minute tidy: dishes, surfaces, one basket for loose things.
- Set out clothes, keys and bag for the morning.
- Fill a glass of water for your nightstand.
- Dim the lights in the rooms you're leaving.



Relax your body

Gentle movement and warmth help the body release the tension it carried all day.

- Do 3–5 minutes of slow stretches: neck, shoulders, back.
- Take a warm shower or wash your face with warm water.
- Try slow breathing: in for 4, out for 6, five times.
- Choose light, comfortable clothes for sleeping.



Quiet your mind

Most sleepless nights start with a busy head. Moving thoughts onto paper gives them a place to wait until morning.

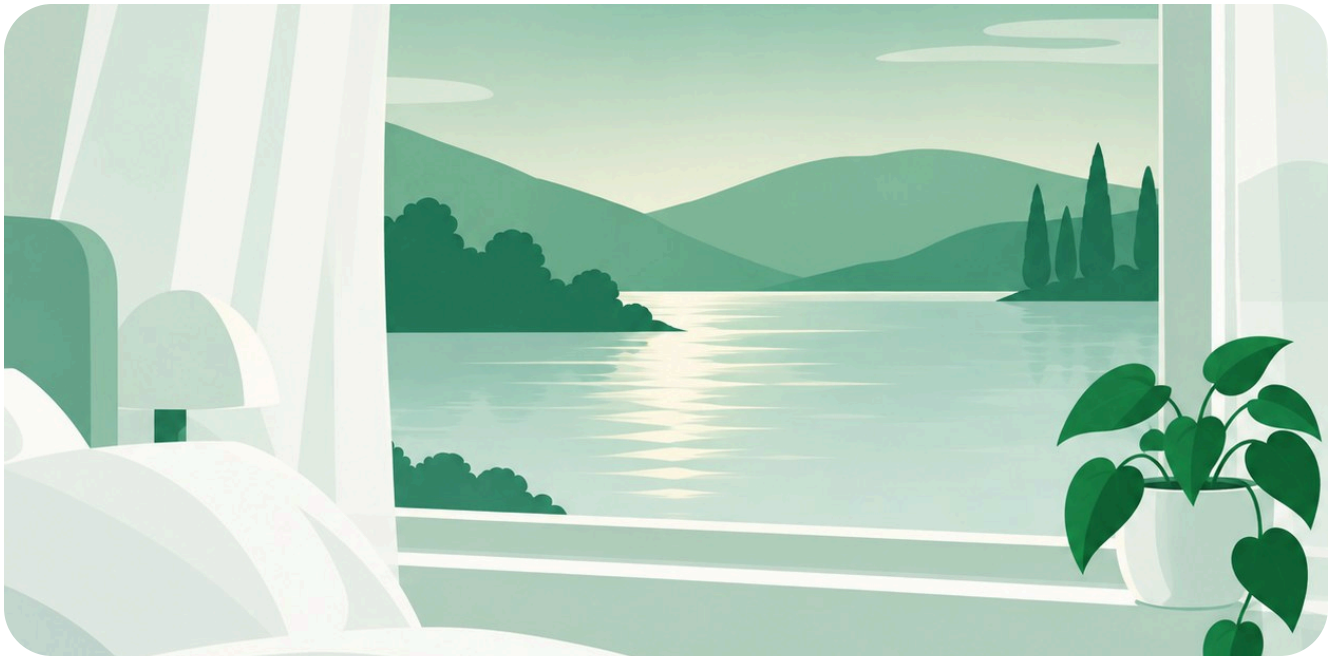
- Write down anything still on your mind, then close the notebook.
- Note three good moments from today, however small.
- Sip a caffeine-free tea like chamomile.
- If worries return in bed, remind yourself: it's written down.

Plan tomorrow in three priorities

Deciding tonight means you wake up knowing exactly where to begin.

- Write the three things that matter most tomorrow.
- Put the most important one first.
- Everything else is a bonus, not a must.
- Glance at your first meeting or task so nothing surprises you.

Tip: a short list in an app like Rhythms, or on a simple sheet of paper if you prefer, keeps your three priorities ready when you wake.



A calm bedroom

Your bedroom should feel like a place for rest, not for work or scrolling.

- Keep it dark: curtains closed, small lights covered.
- Keep it cool and fresh: open a window for a few minutes.
- Keep it quiet, or use soft steady sound if needed.
- Use the bed for sleep and rest, so your body links it with sleeping.

Three sample routines

Start with the one that fits your evening. You can always grow it later.

15 minutes

- Screens off
- Set out tomorrow's clothes
- Glass of water by the bed
- Lights out

30 minutes

- Screens off
- 10-minute tidy
- Write three priorities
- Warm wash and stretch

45 minutes

- Screens off
- Tidy and prepare the morning
- Journal and three good moments
- Tea, stretch, read a few pages

Build your own wind-down

Use this page to design an evening that fits your life. Write one step per line.

My screens-off time:

Step 1:

Step 2:

Step 3:

Step 4:

Lights out at:

Your 7-night starter plan

Add one small step each night. By the end of the week you'll have a full, calm wind-down.

☐	Night 1	Choose a screens-off time and keep it.
☐	Night 2	Charge your phone outside the bedroom.
☐	Night 3	Add a 10-minute tidy.
☐	Night 4	Set out clothes and bag for the morning.
☐	Night 5	Add 3 minutes of gentle stretching.
☐	Night 6	Write three priorities for tomorrow.
☐	Night 7	Write three good moments, then rest.

Common beginner mistakes

These are normal. Noticing them is half the fix.

- Doing too much at once. One new step per week is plenty.
- "Just one more episode." Decide the end time before you press play.
- Using the bed for work or scrolling.
- Going to bed hours apart each night. A steady time helps most.
- Heavy meals or caffeine late in the day.

When you miss a night

Late events, travel and busy weeks happen. A missed night doesn't erase your progress.

- Don't try to make up for it. Just do tonight's routine.
- On busy nights, keep only one step, like screens off.
- Avoid sleeping in for hours; keep mornings roughly steady.
- Be kind to yourself. Consistency beats perfection.

You're ready to begin

Tonight, choose one small step and do it. Tomorrow, do it again. That's how a calm evening becomes a habit, and better nights become better days.

Find more free guides and a calm to-do list at rhythms.cloud