

Snoozing and losing ^[1]

Dear Alice,

I have the biggest problem getting out of bed in the morning. I set two alarms and I still go right back to sleep. For this reason, I am always running late to work. Do you have any suggestions on how I can make myself get up earlier in the mornings?

Thanks in advance for your help!
Gabi

Answer

Dear Gabi,

Not quite saved by the bell — sounds as though the alarm isn't really cutting it as a sufficient tool to help you get up in the morning. That being said, allowing more time for sleep, going to sleep earlier, keeping a consistent sleep schedule (which means going to bed and waking up around the same time each day, including on weekends), and making adequate time for your bedtime routine may help you rest better and wake up more easily. If you've already incorporated these practices but are still struggling to wake up, here are some techniques that might help you wake up more readily:

- **Go the distance.** Place the alarm clocks further away from you, so you have to get up to turn them off. Taking those extra steps might just be what you need to stay out of bed and keep from falling back asleep.
- **Mix it up.** If you're used to waking up to music, switch it to a buzzer sound and vice-versa. How about waking up to your favorite podcast or radio program? Being interested in the discussion topic may pique your interest enough to stay awake.
- **Let there be light.** Leave your curtains open and let the sun gradually wake you up in the morning. In the winter months when the sun rises later, consider investing in a light alarm clock that mimics the sunrise. Another potential option is to use light timers that turn on when you'd like to wake up so you're forced out of your deep, dark slumber.
- **Harness the power of technology.** If you have a smartphone, there are a number of apps that require you to complete certain tasks before the alarm will turn off. You might also try changing the sound of your alarm to something similar to a ringtone to see if that gives you

a little extra motivation to get out of bed!

- **Order a wake-up call (from nature).** You may find that drinking a glass of cold water helps you wake up in the morning, even more so than a cup o' joe!

If you find that you've tried these strategies to no avail, it might be a sign that you're not getting enough "good" sleep, which could result from a number of underlying conditions. It's possible that these fitful nights can be caused by everything from sleep disorders, such as restless leg syndrome, to anxiety. Talking with a health care provider may lead you to some answers and potential solutions. As you prepare for your visit, it'll be good to document the strategies you've tried and any factors that may impact your sleep habits such as caffeine consumption, physical activity, or meal times.

Finally, don't underestimate your own powers of positive thinking. You might find it helpful, when your alarm goes off, to think about things you're looking forward to that day — something as simple as that first sip of coffee or the people you'll see. Identifying those things that bring you pleasure may be the motivation you need to get you up and going! For more information about sleep, check out the [Sleep](#) [2] category in the *Go Ask Alice!* [General Health](#) [3] archives.

Alice!

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