



10 Ways to Wake Up Early (And Like It)

by Caelan Huntress

*"The world belongs to those who get up early." -
Jules Renard*

A Day Well Started is a Day of Power

Many people have found that early morning hours are the best time for creative pursuits, because the waking mind is closer to the subconscious than any other time of the day.

Others use the pre-dawn hours for a daily practice that enriches and rejuvenates them all day long, such as exercise or meditation.

If you woke up one hour earlier each morning, you would gain 15 more days each year.

Waking up early is a challenge - even for people who have been waking up early for a long time. Early risers have developed a pattern of routines that makes it easy to do, and with a little bit of planning, you can make it much, much easier to wake up early in the morning.

What could you do with those 15 extra days each year? Who could you become?

Let's find out.

1. Do something you love

Take the early morning time for something you really love to do.

Choose something you don't often have time to do during the rest of your day. Something that makes you really look forward to waking up. If you wake up to do chores and things you think you 'should' do, your sapped early-morning willpower will not be sufficient to get you out of bed.

Anticipation of something exciting, something you really look forward to, can help propel you out of bed. What could you do in the morning that would really make it worth the effort?

"It had long since come to my attention that people of accomplishment rarely sat back and let things happen to them. They went out and happened to things." - Leonardo Da Vinci



2. Reward yourself for waking up early

What present could you give yourself for keeping an early morning routine?

A quick drive to get your favorite breakfast? A subscription to a new magazine that you only read in the pre-dawn hours? A new journal or yoga mat? A bicycle to ride?

Give yourself a reward for doing behaviors that are good for you. Using this reward will make you feel obligated to keep waking early.



"The early morning has gold in its mouth." – Benjamin Franklin

3. Set your alarm across the room

If you can roll over and hit snooze, you're much more likely to stay in bed than if you have to actually stand up and cross the room. Once your feet are on the floor, you've already got momentum, and that will help to keep you awake.

The app Step Out Of Bed (\$1.99 for iPhone) will continue ringing until you take 30 steps.

Another useful iPhone app is SleepCycle (also \$1.99) which will track your movements, if you have the phone next to your bed. This app will begin playing music when your sleep cycle is the lightest, and your alarm will go off when it determines your brain is most ready to wake.



"I never knew a man come to greatness or eminence who lay abed late in the morning." – Jonathan Swift

4. Set up your morning the night before

Lay out all of the equipment, clothes, tools, and implements you need for your perfect morning, and do it before you fall asleep.

Have you ever tried to search for a sock or a towel as soon as you wake? It's an easy way to get aggravated, and your whole morning can be derailed by a bad mood.

Be your own servant. Lay out your clothes, set up your coffee or tea, put everything you need in a place where it will be easy and fluid for you to go through your morning routine. Set it up so well that you don't have to think about anything, because everything is all ready for you.

"Be pleasant until ten o'clock in the morning and the rest of the day will take care of itself." – Elbert Hubbard



5. Sleep a multiple of 3 hours

Due to the cycles of our brain during sleep, we go into and out of periods of deep sleep approximately every three hours.

Sleeping for 3 hours or 6 hours is much easier than sleeping 4.5 hours - waking up in the middle of a sleep cycle makes you groggy and disoriented, but your brain naturally returns to a theta state at 3 hour intervals, making this the best time for you to wake.

When do you want to wake up? Subtract 3, 6, or 9 hours and you know when you should fall asleep. If you get in bed before then, allow yourself to stay awake with some light reading.

(Just don't read on a screen.)

“Do you wake up as I do, having forgotten what it is that hurts or where, until you move? There is a second of consciousness that is clean again. A second that is you, without memory or experience, the animal warm and waking into a brand new world. There is the sun dissolving the dark, and light as clear as music, filling the room where you sleep and the other rooms behind your eyes.” — Jeanette Winterson

6. Turn off your screens an hour before your scheduled sleep time

The wavelengths of light coming from your smartphone, television, or computer are similar enough to daylight that it will keep your brain artificially alert. Stopping screen time for the last hour of your day will help you to transition into sleep quickly, instead of laying awake in bed, and robbing your body of sleep.

(Bonus tip: if you are on a mac, the app f.lux (<http://justgetflux.com>) will modify the colors of your monitor the moment the sun goes down in your time zone.)

“Program yourself for total success.” —Tony Robbins

7. Get support from everyone you live with

If your spouse, roommates, or neighbors want you to stay up drinking on a weeknight, it's harder to stick to your early rising habit. Especially when you're first getting a new routine going, their support is crucial.

Tell everyone you see late at night and early in the morning about your morning routine, ask them for their support, and work out any logistics in advance.

"Morning is an important time of day, because how you spend your morning can often tell you what kind of day you are going to have." – Lemony Snicket

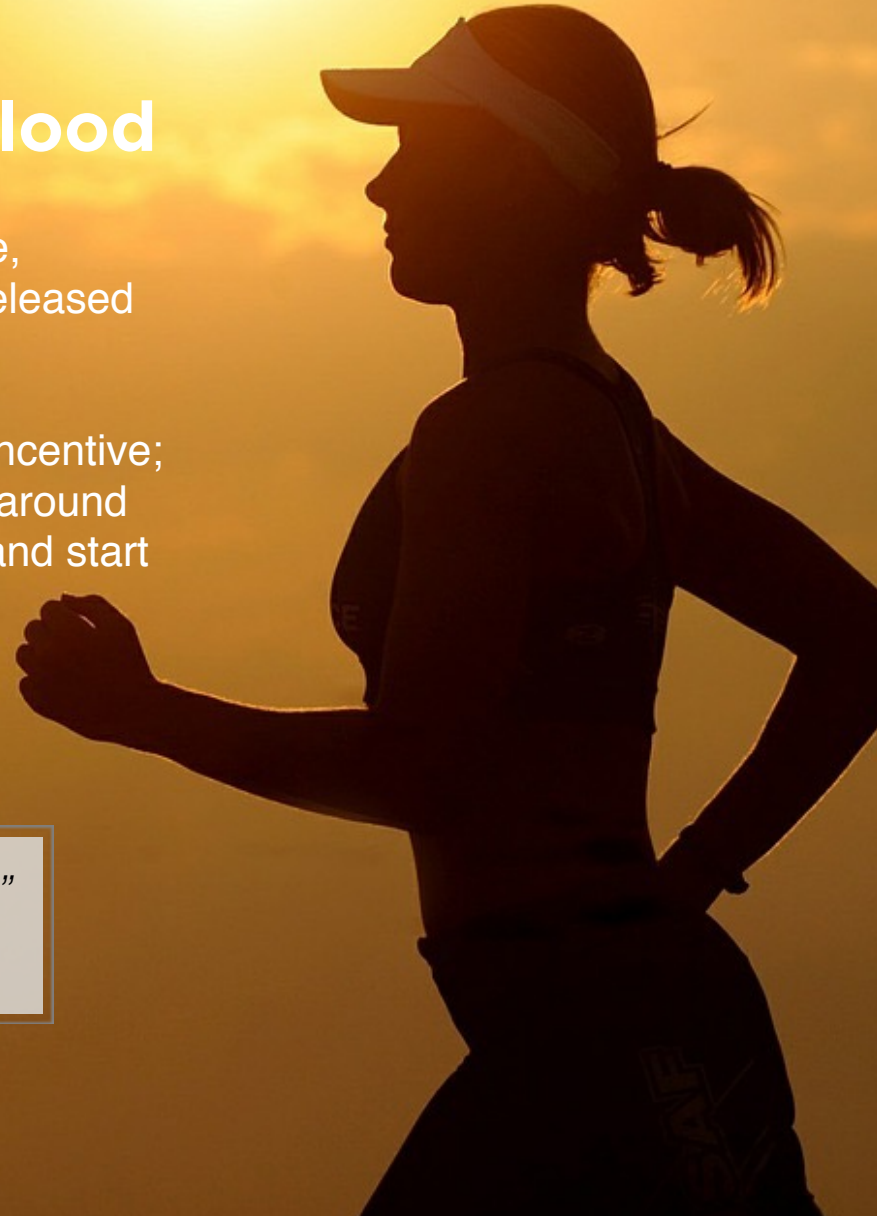


8. Move your body, move your blood

Exercise is one of the best components of a morning routine, because it naturally wakes your body, and the endorphins released put you in a great mood.

If you are already active, you know that exercise is its own incentive; but no matter what shape you are in right now, a brisk walk around the block, or some light stretching, will brighten your mood and start your morning with a positive attitude.

*“An early-morning walk is a blessing for the whole day.”
- Henry David Thoreau*

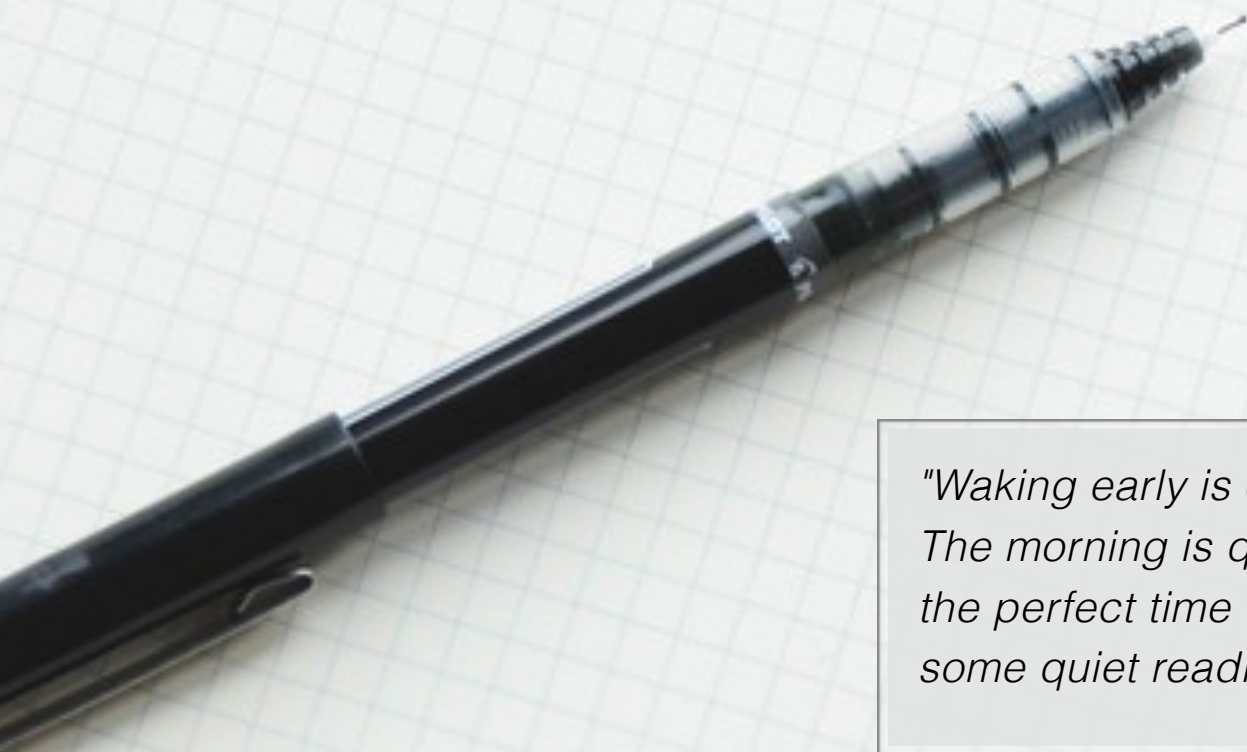


9. Plan your morning schedule

Make a list of everything you could do in the morning, and the number of minutes you want to set aside for each activity. Total them up.

How much time is needed for a great morning routine? What time do you need to wake up in order to do everything on your list?

If this wake-up time is too early, cut some activities. Go through a few drafts. Revise and tweak until it's a perfect morning, full of things you love to do.



"Waking early is one of my favorite things in the world. The morning is quiet as the world hasn't begun stirring, the perfect time for meditation, writing, exercise and some quiet reading." - Leo Babauta

10. Create a Power Playlist

Assign a favorite song to each activity in your morning routine. Make the soundtrack to your ideal morning, and you will give yourself a musical cue for every time you need to change activities.

If you want to spend 30 minutes running, put together 30 minutes of great running songs in a playlist, and load it up on a portable device. Start the playlist with a five minute song that you always listen to while you warm up and stretch.

When you wake up in the morning and hit play, your body will follow the subconscious instructions provided by the repetition of the song.

For a one-hour video training course on how to make your own Power Playlist, go to <http://gum.co/power-playlist>.

"The world has the habit of making room for the man whose actions show that he knows where he is going." - Napoleon Hill

About The Author



My name is Caelan Huntress. I make things happen.

You can follow me on Twitter and Medium, or subscribe to my newsletter, Habits of Excellence.

My mornings got easier when I made a Power Playlist. Can I show you how to make one too? Go to gum.co/power-playlist.

