



SHOW ME YOU MEAN IT
GRACIE BARRA BONDI

PILLAR 04 OF 06 • REGIMENTED AND PROTECTED RECOVERY

SLEEP

Eight hours is the floor. Same wake time every day, and no phone in the first or last hour.

SHOW ME VERSION

PRO VERSION

8 MIN READ

01

WHY IT MATTERS

When it comes to recovery, sleep is number one. You will be sore and fatigued in a hard block no matter what. Consistent sleep is what makes that manageable.

Six hours of sleep dampens your brain about as much as a 0.05 blood alcohol reading. You would never train drunk. Don't train on six hours.

25%

WORSE REACTION TIME ON SIX HOURS

40%

WORSE EMOTIONAL REGULATION

30%

WORSE THINKING

Flip it around. When athletes in the sleep studies paid off their sleep debt and kept good habits, shooting accuracy improved by 10 to 15%, they sprinted about a second faster, and they were about half as likely to get injured.



FROM THE COACH

In my camps the rule was simple: no eight hours, no training. Eight hours felt like I'd been hit by a bus. Nine felt like a car. Ten felt like I'd just played a game of rugby. I was sore every day either way. Sleep decided how sore.

RICKY

02

THE STANDARD

NON-NEGOTIABLE

- **8 to 9.5 hours a night** for teen athletes. Eight is the floor. When the training load goes up, so does the number.
- **The same wake time seven days a week**, weekends included.
- **No phone for the first hour after you wake up or the last hour before bed.** Not less phone. No phone.
- **The phone charges in another room.** A separate alarm clock wakes you up.
- **A night routine and a morning routine**, every day.
- **A cool, dark, quiet room.** No snooze button.
- **A rest day that is actually rest.**

Sleep covers more than hours in bed: your room and habits (sleep hygiene), consistent wake and sleep times, less screen time, eating so food doesn't wreck your sleep, and the routines either side. Most of this page is a sleep aid. I will ask how you slept. If you didn't, expect to sit out.

03

HOW TO DO IT

STEP 01

WORK OUT YOUR NUMBER

Your sleep need changes with your training. Work it out like this:

PART	WHAT IT MEANS	EXAMPLE
Baseline	What your body needs on a normal day	8 hours
+ Load	Extra for hard training (more sessions, harder sessions)	1 hour 30 min
+ Sleep debt	What you owe from short nights this week	40 min
- Nap	Any nap you got today	0

PART	WHAT IT MEANS	EXAMPLE
= Sleep need	Tonight's target	10 hours 10 min

Then audit a real week: write down the hours you actually slept every night for seven nights. Most athletes find a short week and a long weekend. That's the first thing to fix.

STEP 02

SET YOUR WAKE TIME FIRST, THEN COUNT BACK

Pick a wake time you can hold every day, including weekends. That's the anchor. Your bedtime is your wake time minus your sleep need. A consistent wake time also sets your body clock, which makes falling asleep easier at night.

STEP 03

GET THE PHONE OUT OF YOUR FIRST AND LAST HOUR

- **Set a bedtime** and an alarm that tells you to put the phone away.
- **Charge it in a different room.** It does not sleep in your bedroom.
- **Buy an alarm clock.** About \$20, less at Kmart.
- **Use a lock app** if you can't trust yourself. Most phones have screen-time limits built in, and there are free apps that lock you out.



FROM THE COACH

I used an Android app that disabled my phone completely and cost money to unlock. It wouldn't even let me turn the alarm off, so I bought a battery analog alarm and used that every day. In my pro camp the phone locked from 10pm to 10am: ten hours of sleep plus an hour either side. It was intense. It worked.

RICKY

"But I need my phone." Then your parents can buy a basic flip phone for about \$100. You don't need maps or Snapchat first thing in the morning. If you need to call home 30 minutes after waking, now you can, without a phone that wrecks your sleep. Usually the real issue is that parents want to reach their kids, so we sit down together and agree on what they're comfortable with (see [For Parents](#)). Putting the phone down is also mindset training: see [Mindset](#).

STEP 04

RUN A NIGHT ROUTINE

Example for a 10pm sleep. Shift the times to fit your number.

8:00PM

Dinner and water. Dinner about two hours before sleep (see [Diet](#)). Sip water, don't skull it.

8:30PM	Shower , one to two hours before sleep, if you haven't already. On training days you shower straight after the session with your disinfectant wash (see Skin).
9:00PM	Screens off. Phone to its charger in another room.
9:00PM	Wind down, 10 to 30 minutes. Read your 10 minutes, write, stretch, pack your bag, do your chores.
9:50PM	Bed, lights off.
10:00PM	Sleep.

Winding down takes effort too. Find some quiet, relax your body, slow your breathing, and stay out of arguments and stress.

STEP 05 RUN A MORNING ROUTINE

Hydrate, move a little, see the sun. That sets your circadian rhythm, which makes it easier to fall asleep that night.

6:00AM	Wake up. First alarm. No snooze.
6:05AM	Drink water. A full glass.
6:10AM	Sun. Get outside. A short walk if you can.
6:20AM	Light exercise. Your run, the weights gym, or the morning bodyweight routine on the Strength page. Just get moving.
7:00AM	Breakfast.
7:20AM	Get ready. Still no phone until the hour is up.

STEP 06 SET UP YOUR ROOM

CONDITION	WHY	HOW
Cool room	Your body needs to cool down to get to sleep and stay asleep.	16 to 19 degrees. Moving air, a fan, or the aircon.
Socks on	A steady body temperature helps you get to sleep.	Warm feet, cool room.

CONDITION	WHY	HOW
Dark room	Darkness gets you into deeper, more restful sleep.	Blackout blinds or a sleep mask. No glowing screens.
Quiet room	Noise you can't control breaks up your sleep.	Earplugs or a white noise machine.
No screens	Screens stop you winding down, and the light works against your sleep hormones.	Phone charges in another room.
No snooze	All of your sleep time should be sleep, not twenty minutes of half waking up.	Set the real time. Get up the first time. If you have to, put the alarm across the room.

STEP 07

USE YOUR REST DAY PROPERLY

Have a full rest day each week (in my camps it was Saturday) and know how to use it. Your body and your brain switch off: wake at your normal time, eat well, see people, swim at the beach, read. More in [Recovery](#).

04

SHOW ME AND PRO

SHOW ME YOU MEAN IT

DISCIPLINED SLEEP, CHEAP TOOLS

ABOUT \$20 FOR AN ALARM CLOCK (MAYBE \$100 FOR A FLIP PHONE)

- Same wake time every day, 8 to 9.5 hours asleep.
- No phone first hour and last hour. Logged honestly.
- Phone charges outside the bedroom. Analog alarm.
- Night routine and morning routine, every day.
- Cool, dark, quiet room. No snooze.

PRO

LOCKED DOWN AND MEASURED

LOCK APP, SLEEP TRACKER (AROUND \$85 AND UP)

- Phone locked for your full sleep window plus an hour either side.
- A sleep tracker, so you know your real hours, not your guess.
- Your sleep need worked out every week with the formula.
- Blackout blinds, earplugs, the room set up properly.
- Sleep data shared with your coach and your dietitian.

Consistent wake and sleep times, a real night routine and a lot less screen time already puts you ahead of most athletes I've coached.

COMMON MISTAKES

-
- ✗ **Paying back sleep on the weekend.** Six hours Monday, five Wednesday, ten Saturday. Your body doesn't work like a bank. Be consistent instead.
-
- ✗ **Sleeping in until noon on rest days.** Rest day still starts at your normal wake time.
-
- ✗ **Using the phone as your alarm.** Then it's the first thing you touch. Buy the \$20 clock.
-
- ✗ **Hitting snooze.** Twenty minutes of half sleep isn't recovery.
-
- ✗ **Calling three hours of TikTok a rest day.** That almost doesn't count as recovery.
-
- ✗ **Eating dinner right before bed.** Aim for about two hours between dinner and sleep.
-
- ✗ **Counting time in bed as sleep.** Lying awake scrolling isn't sleep. Log what you actually slept.
-

CHECKLIST

DO THIS

EVERY DAY

- ☐ Woke up at my set time, first alarm.
- ☐ No phone for the first hour.
- ☐ Water, sun and light movement in the morning.
- ☐ Dinner about two hours before bed.
- ☐ Screens off an hour before bed. Phone in another room.
- ☐ Wind down: read, write or stretch.
- ☐ In bed on time. Logged my hours.

NOT PROFESSIONAL ADVICE

This is general sleep guidance from a coach, not medical advice. If you regularly can't fall asleep or stay asleep, snore heavily, or feel exhausted no matter how long you sleep, see your GP. And if you feel like you need something (including weed or alcohol) to get to sleep, that's a sleep problem we fix properly, not a habit we keep. See [Clean Athlete](#).