

$$SE = TST \div TIB (\times 100)$$

No, this is not the cheat code to answer the haunting question: "If Train A leaves the station traveling at 60 mph, and Train B leaves one hour later traveling at 85 mph, how long will it take for Train B to catch up to Train A?" Instead, this is a formula to learn your Sleep Efficiency (SE) percentage, as determined by your Total Sleep Time (TST) divided by your total Time In Bed (TIB) and multiplied by 100. For example, if you sleep a total of five hours but are spending a total of eight hours in bed, then your sleep efficiency is less than 63%!

$$62.5\% [SE] = 5 [TST] \div 8 [TIB] (\times 100)$$

Unfortunately, anything below 85% indicates your SE needs improvement as recommended by the *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*. The goal is to match up your *sleep ability* with your *sleep opportunity*, as this is linked to the total time in bed. So, if you use your bed for anything other than sleep or sex, you are decreasing your overall SE. In other words, you are conditioning yourself to adapt to bad sleeping behaviors and perhaps develop sleep disorders (if combined with external stressors). Sometimes, you may overhear individuals casually complain of having 'insomnia,' (just like people say they have Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder simply because they like to keep their desks clean), but in reality sleep disorders can cause distress, discomfort, and become detrimental to our quality of life. For the majority of us who do not have insomnia but simply suffer from bad sleep hygiene, below are guidelines recommended by our friends at the *Center for Deployment Psychology*. **Keep in mind that sleep hygiene alone is NOT the sole answer to addressing chronic sleep issues or impairment resulting from sleep disturbances. So, talk to your unit's Embedded Mental Health Team for private consultation if suffering from potential sleep-related conditions or disorders (such as insomnia).**

SLEEP HYGIENE GUIDELINES

- ✚ YOUR bed is only meant for sleep and sex!
- ✚ Avoid alcohol consumption after dinner
- ✚ Avoid nicotine use before bedtime
- ✚ A light, healthy snack at bedtime may promote sleep
- ✚ Avoid caffeine 4–6 hours before bedtime
- ✚ Sleep medications are temporarily effective (habit-forming though!)
- ✚ DON'T force yourself to fall asleep. After 15 minutes, get up and out of bed!
- ✚ Consider taking hot baths ~20 minutes each time and 1–2 hours before bedtime
- ✚ DON'T worry! Schedule time to worry during the day away from your bedroom (seriously)
- ✚ Avoid daytime napping, but if needed nap before 1500
- ✚ Avoid rigorous exercise within 2 hours of bedtime
- ✚ Have a routine wake up time, seven days a week, regardless of weekends/vacations
- ✚ Sleep only as much as YOU need for YOU to feel refreshed the next day
- ✚ YOUR bedroom should be comfortable and free from light/noises (goodbye 75" flat screens!)



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