NEWS LESSON

Is Sleeping In Really Such a Bad Habit?



BEFORE YOU READ

1 Warm up

Talk about these questions with a partner.

1. What makes a weekend morning feel well spent?
2. Would you choose an extra hour in bed or an unhurried breakfast?
3. Can a day off become another thing to organise perfectly?

2 Key words

These words are in the article. Write the letter of the meaning (A to H) in each box.

1	**physiological**	☐	A	a good reason that explains why something is acceptable
2	**burden**	☐	B	connected with how the body works
3	**correlation**	☐	C	so attractive that you cannot say no
4	**causation**	☐	D	a suggestion or situation that you have to consider
5	**prescription**	☐	E	a link where two things change together
6	**justification**	☐	F	something heavy or difficult that you have to deal with
7	**proposition**	☐	G	the fact that one thing makes another happen
8	**irresistible**	☐	H	an exact instruction about what someone should do

3 Read

Read the article and underline the key words from task 2. The paragraphs are numbered.

A study of 40,000 adults linked about 87 minutes of catch-up sleep with slightly lower odds of high blood pressure. It shows an association, not a prescription.

1 Saturday morning offers a small but surprisingly complicated choice. The alarm is off, and another hour under the duvet sounds irresistible. Yet years of advice about consistent sleep schedules may leave you wondering whether a lie-in is harming your health. Recent findings add some nuance. For people who miss sleep during the working week, a modest weekend lie-in may help. The findings are more limited than a rule that sleeping late is always good or always bad.

2 At the European Society of Cardiology congress in August 2026, researchers presented an analysis of roughly 40,000 adults in South Korea whose data had been collected over seven years. Weekend catch-up sleep was associated with slightly lower odds of hypertension, or high blood pressure. The strongest favourable association was reported at approximately one hour and twenty-seven minutes of additional sleep. That specific figure makes an irresistible headline, but it would be misleading to interpret it as an exact prescription for every tired adult.

3 There is a plausible physiological explanation. Insufficient sleep can interfere with the body's usual night-time reduction in blood pressure, leaving the cardiovascular system under greater strain. For someone getting up before dawn, juggling childcare or working long hours, the weekend may be the only realistic opportunity to make up some of the shortfall. A little additional rest might help reduce the burden of accumulated sleep loss. It is a reassuring possibility for people whose lives make perfectly regular sleep difficult to achieve.

4 Yet the distinction between correlation and causation is crucial. The researchers did not assign people different amounts of weekend sleep and then prove that a lie-in prevented illness. Other influences, such as occupation, stress or existing health conditions, may help explain the pattern. Nor did the findings suggest that more sleep is always better. Very substantial differences between weekday and weekend routines can disrupt the body clock, potentially cancelling out some of the benefits. A Sunday morning spent sleeping until midday may therefore be a very different proposition from an extra hour in bed.

5 For this reason, sleep specialists still emphasise the importance of adequate, consistent rest throughout the week. Catch-up sleep should not become a convenient justification for five nights of deprivation, any more than one healthy breakfast can compensate for an otherwise poor diet. Physical activity, nutrition, stress management and appropriate treatment remain central to cardiovascular health. What the study offers is a more realistic view of how bodies respond when everyday responsibilities make an ideal routine impossible.

6 The most refreshing aspect of the research may be its challenge to the moral language surrounding rest. A person who sleeps late is often described as lazy, while somebody who rises early is praised for discipline. Neither judgement tells us much about how tired those people actually are. If your week has left you exhausted, getting a little more sleep may be sensible rather than self-indulgent. The larger goal is not to win a contest over who gets up earliest, but to build a life in which proper rest is possible most nights.

Sources: The Guardian. Picture: AI illustration.

4 True, false or not given

Circle **T** (true), **F** (false) or **NG** (the article does not say).

1. The conclusions rest on observing people's habits rather than controlling them. T F NG
2. The text suggests that sleeping until midday may bring the same benefits as an extra hour. T F NG
3. The study found that desk workers benefited more than manual workers. T F NG
4. The writer implies that early risers are not necessarily less tired than late risers. T F NG
5. The writer treats the figure of one hour and twenty-seven minutes as an exact instruction for everyone. T F NG

5 Vocabulary

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed.

adequate	assign	compensate	disrupt	emphasise	nuance	shortfall	substantial

1. The headline was blunt, but the full report contained far more _____ than the press coverage suggested.
2. The charity launched an urgent appeal to cover a _____ of nearly half its budget.
3. Strikes on the railways are likely to _____ travel plans across the region.
4. No amount of money can fully _____ for the loss of a family home.
5. The firm reported a _____ increase in profits, far beyond what analysts had predicted.
6. The hotel was merely _____ : clean and quiet enough, but nothing special.

6 Word forms

Use the word in brackets to make a word that fits the gap.

1. The scientists were careful to avoid any _____ when describing the results. (EXAGGERATE)
2. The _____ of the findings is limited because other factors were not checked. (RELIABLE)
3. It would be _____ to assume that one study settles the question. (WISE)
4. The _____ between sleep and mood is hard to measure precisely. (CONNECT)
5. He is a highly _____ athlete who trains every morning. (DISCIPLINE)

7 Language focus: linking words

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed. Some of these words take a noun, some a clause, and some mark a concession or a result. Check the punctuation before the gap.

albeit	hence	lest	notwithstanding	provided	whereas	whereby

1. The pilot scheme was a success, _____ a modest one.
2. _____ the objections of local residents, the council approved the plan.
3. The sample was small; _____ , the findings should be treated with caution.
4. In the first town rents have soared, _____ in the second they have barely moved.
5. The scheme will go ahead, _____ the funding is secured by March.

SPEAK

8 Talk about it

Discuss in pairs or small groups. Give reasons for your answers.

1. Should people feel bad about sleeping late on a free day?
2. Would a simple sleep routine make your weekend easier or less free?
3. What would a restful Sunday look like without tracking anything?

9 Role-play: a quiet Saturday morning

Work in pairs. Read your card, then have the conversation. Swap roles and do it again.

Student A · the flatmate who wants to sleep late

It's Saturday and you've had a long, tiring week. You want to stay in bed until ten. Explain why, and suggest a plan that works for both of you.

Student B · the flatmate who wants an early start

You want to go out for breakfast at eight and then tidy the flat. Ask your flatmate to join you. Listen to their reasons and try to agree on a compromise.

Useful phrases

I'd really like to stay in bed this morning.
It's been a long week and I'm exhausted.
Could we go for breakfast a bit later?
I'd rather start early, if that's okay.
That's fair, so how about we meet at nine?
Let's compromise: you tidy now and I'll cook later.

Afterwards, tell the class: what did you agree, and was it a fair compromise?

ANSWER KEY

2 Key words

1 B · 2 F · 3 E · 4 G · 5 H · 6 A · 7 D · 8 C

4 True, false or not given

1 T · 2 F · 3 NG · 4 T · 5 F

5 Vocabulary

1 nuance · 2 shortfall · 3 disrupt · 4 compensate · 5 substantial · 6 adequate

6 Word forms

1 exaggeration · 2 reliability · 3 unwise · 4 connection · 5 disciplined

7 Language focus

1 albeit · 2 Notwithstanding · 3 hence · 4 whereas · 5 provided

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