NEWS LESSON

How Dark Is Your Bedroom at Night?



BEFORE YOU READ

1 Warm up

Talk about these questions with a partner.

1. What makes a bedroom feel restful?
2. Would you choose complete darkness or a little light at night?
3. Which bedtime habit would be easiest for you to change?

2 Key words

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

1	**rhythm**	☐	A	the place and things around you
2	**artificial**	☐	B	a pattern that repeats again and again, like a body clock
3	**exposed**	☐	C	covers that you pull down over a window
4	**combined**	☐	D	in a place where something can reach you or affect you
5	**nightlight**	☐	E	made by people, not natural
6	**brightness**	☐	F	how strong and shining a light is
7	**environment**	☐	G	a small light that stays on in the night
8	**blinds**	☐	H	put together into one group

3 Read

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

A 2026 review of 15 studies found more sleep problems among people with the most light at night. Thick curtains are a sensible place to start.

1 Look around your bedroom when you turn off the light. Is it completely dark? You may notice light from the street, a phone charger or a television. These small lights are common, but researchers are interested in how they affect our sleep.

2 Our bodies follow a daily rhythm. Light helps tell us when to be awake, and darkness helps prepare us for sleep. Bright light at the wrong time may make this rhythm less clear. The problem is not only what we do before bed. Light can also enter a room while we are sleeping.

3 In 2026, researchers published a review of 15 studies involving more than 765,000 participants. In the combined results, sleep problems were 27% more common in the group exposed to the most artificial light at night than in the group with low or no exposure. As an example only, if 10 in 100 people in the low-light group had sleep problems, 27% more would be about 13 in 100. This was a link, not proof that the light caused the problems.

4 There are other reasons people sleep badly, including noise, stress, illness and irregular working hours. Some of the studies also had problems measuring exactly how much light people experienced. That makes it difficult to know how large the effect is for any one bedroom.

5 Still, a dark room can be a sensible place to start. Thick curtains or blinds may block streetlights. Turning off unnecessary lamps and moving bright devices away from the bed are simple changes. Not everyone can control lighting outside their home.

6 During the day, daylight helps us stay awake and understand what time it is. In the evening, many people enjoy softer light, especially when they are getting ready for bed. A room that is comfortable in the afternoon may not be the best room for sleeping at night. Some people need a small nightlight for safety, particularly when they get up to use the bathroom.

7 That is an important reason not to tell everybody to switch off every light. The aim is to avoid unnecessary brightness while keeping the home safe. It can also help to have regular sleeping and waking times. Light is only one part of a much bigger picture of healthy sleep.

8 The research does not mean one small light will ruin your night. But it suggests that the environment around us deserves attention. We often think about how many hours we sleep. Perhaps we should also think about what our bedrooms are like during those hours.

Sources: Environmental Research. Picture: AI illustration.

4 True, false or not given

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

1. Thick curtains may block streetlights. T F NG
2. The study proved that light causes sleep problems. T F NG
3. Most bedrooms in cities are too bright at night. T F NG
4. The review involved more than 765,000 participants. T F NG
5. The writer says everybody should switch off every light. T F NG

5 Vocabulary

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

block **estimate** **ignore** **irregular** **participants** **proof** **sensible**

1. Nurses who work _____ hours often find it hard to sleep well.
2. The researchers asked thousands of _____ how well they slept.
3. Wearing earplugs is a _____ way to cope with a noisy street.
4. A tall building can _____ the sun from a small garden.
5. A strong link between two things is not _____ that one causes the other.

6 Verb forms

Write the correct form of the verb in brackets.

1. Light _____ tell us when to be awake. (HELP)
2. In 2026, researchers _____ a review of 15 studies. (PUBLISH)
3. These small lights _____ common, but they may affect our sleep. (BE)
4. This was an association, not proof that light _____ every problem. (CAUSE)
5. Light can enter a room while we _____ . (SLEEP)

7 Language focus: collocations

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed. A collocation is a pair of words that go together naturally. Learn the whole pair, such as pay attention, not just one word.

bright	do	fall	keep	make	pay	take

1. Try to _____ a short walk before bed.
2. Neighbours who play loud music _____ a lot of noise at night.
3. The _____ light from the street shone into the room.
4. Most of us don't _____ attention to the small lights in our bedroom.
5. It's easy to _____ asleep on the sofa when you're tired.

SPEAK

8 Talk about it

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

1. How could a city make nights darker without making streets feel unsafe?
2. Would you change your bedroom because of one study?
3. What makes health advice easy enough to fit real life?

9 Role-play: lights on or lights off?

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

Student A · the light sleeper

You share a flat. Your flatmate leaves a bright lamp on all night and you can't sleep. Ask for a change. Listen to the reason before you decide what to agree.

Student B · the flatmate

You like a small light on because you get up in the night and want to feel safe. Explain why total darkness worries you and suggest a fair compromise.

Useful phrases

I've been having trouble sleeping lately.
Would you mind turning the lamp off at night?
I'd feel safer with a small light on.
How about a dim nightlight instead?
That's a fair point, but I'm still tired.
Let's try it for a week and see.

Afterwards, tell the class what you agreed and whether it's a fair deal.

ANSWER KEY

2 Key words

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

4 True, false or not given

1 T · 2 F · 3 NG · 4 T · 5 F

5 Vocabulary

1 irregular · 2 participants · 3 sensible · 4 block · 5 proof

6 Verb forms

1 helps · 2 published · 3 are · 4 caused · 5 are sleeping

7 Language focus

1 take · 2 make · 3 bright · 4 pay · 5 fall

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