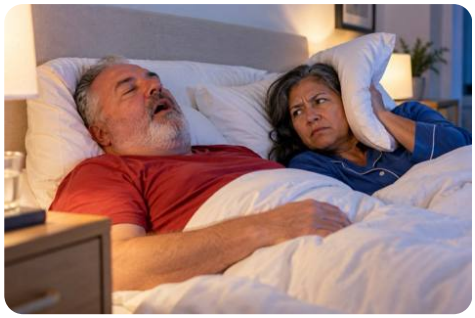
NEWS LESSON

Should Couples Sleep in Separate Rooms?



BEFORE YOU READ

1 Warm up

Talk about these questions with a partner.

1. Would separate beds make a relationship seem less close to you?
2. Which matters more for sharing a space: routines or plenty of room?
3. Why do some ordinary household choices make people feel judged?

2 Key words

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

1	**snoring**	☐
2	**habits**	☐
3	**arguments**	☐
4	**comfort**	☐
5	**survey**	☐
6	**connected**	☐
7	**disaster**	☐
8	**energy**	☐

A	a nice, safe and relaxed feeling
B	something very bad that happens
C	the loud noise some people make through their nose or mouth when they sleep
D	things you do often, without thinking about it
E	the strength you need to do things
F	close to another person, with a good feeling between you
G	a set of questions asked to many people to find out what they think or do
H	angry talks between people who do not agree

3 Read

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

Some people call it a sleep divorce, but nobody is leaving. They just want a quiet night and fewer arguments.

1 It is the middle of the night. One person is sleeping peacefully, but their partner lies awake and exhausted because of loud snoring. They try moving the pillow and turning over. Nothing helps. Would sleeping in another room be a terrible idea?

2 Some couples choose separate beds or bedrooms so they can get a good night's sleep. People sometimes call this a sleep divorce, although nobody is ending the relationship. They may love each other and enjoy spending time together but have very different habits at night.

3 There are many reasons for sleeping separately. One partner may snore, move around a lot or need a television on. The other may wake up easily or work different hours. In 2025, reporting on a US sleep survey suggested that separate sleeping arrangements were fairly common among adults.

4 For some couples, the change can mean fewer arguments and more energy during the day. However, other people enjoy sleeping close to someone they love. Sharing a bed can offer comfort and help them feel connected. There is no arrangement that suits every relationship.

5 Talking honestly is important. If a couple decides to sleep apart, they can still spend time together before bed or choose to share a room on some nights. A problem such as serious snoring may also need medical attention rather than only a different bedroom.

6 Couples can also try smaller changes before deciding to use separate bedrooms. One person may enjoy a cool room, while the other prefers warmer bedding. Different blankets might help. If a television keeps someone awake, headphones or watching in another room may be an option. People who work early shifts may need different bedtime routines.

7 It is important to talk about these things without making the other person feel responsible for every bad night. Nobody chooses to snore loudly or move while sleeping. And not everybody has a spare room at home. For some couples, separate bedrooms are not possible because they are too expensive. Good communication may help, but it cannot solve every practical problem. The aim is to find something that works for both people.

8 Perhaps the strangest thing about the phrase sleep divorce is that it makes a practical decision sound like a romantic disaster. Good relationships involve looking after each other. Sometimes that means sharing a bed. Sometimes it means letting the other person sleep.

Sources: American Academy of Sleep Medicine. Picture: AI illustration.

4 True, false or not given

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

1. Separate bedrooms suit every relationship. T F NG
2. Most couples who try separate rooms go back to sharing. T F NG
3. Couples who sleep separately have not ended their relationship. T F NG
4. Using different blankets is one way couples might solve a problem. T F NG
5. Headphones are one idea for a person who cannot sleep because of a television. T F NG

5 Vocabulary

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

exhausted **expensive** **medical** **practical** **responsible** **romantic** **spare**

1. The baby cried all night, so both parents felt _____ the next morning.
2. We keep a _____ key under the flowerpot in case we get locked out.
3. Nobody wants to buy a bigger flat if it is too _____ .
4. Using earplugs is a _____ way to cope with noise, and it costs very little.
5. Parents are _____ for keeping their children safe.

6 Verb forms

Write the correct form of the verb in brackets.

1. They try _____ the pillow and turning over. (MOVE)
2. Although nobody _____ the relationship, people call it a sleep divorce. (END)
3. In 2025, a survey _____ that separate sleeping was fairly common. (SUGGEST)
4. If a couple decides _____ apart, they can still share evenings. (SLEEP)
5. Nobody _____ to snore loudly. (CHOOSE)

7 Language focus: phrasal verbs

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed. A phrasal verb is a verb with a small word like up or back. The small word changes the meaning, so learn the two words together.

apart	around	back	off	over	through	up

1. The baby turned _____ onto her back.
2. I woke _____ when my neighbour's alarm rang.
3. Some couples sleep _____ but stay close in other ways.
4. My son moves _____ a lot in his sleep.
5. Many couples go _____ to sharing a bed after a few weeks.

SPEAK

8 Talk about it

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

1. Should a couple explain sleeping separately to anyone else?
2. What other relationship rule deserves to be questioned?
3. What would make a practical compromise feel caring rather than distant?

9 Role-play: your snoring or my sleep

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

Student A · the partner who cannot sleep

You have lain awake for weeks because of your partner's snoring. You want to try separate rooms. Explain how tired you are, but do not hurt your partner's feelings.

Student B · the partner who snores

You feel hurt that your partner wants a separate room. Say how you feel and suggest other ideas first, such as earplugs or different bedtimes. Agree to something if the plan is fair.

Useful phrases

I'm exhausted, and I can't go on like this.

It doesn't mean I love you any less.

Could we try earplugs first?

Let's try it for a month and see.

I'd feel lonely without you next to me.

We're not ending anything, we're just sleeping better.

Afterwards, tell the class: did you agree on a plan, and was it fair for both people?

ANSWER KEY

2 Key words

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

4 True, false or not given

1 F · 2 NG · 3 T · 4 T · 5 T

5 Vocabulary

1 exhausted · 2 spare · 3 expensive · 4 practical · 5 responsible

6 Verb forms

1 moving · 2 is ending · 3 suggested · 4 to sleep · 5 chooses

7 Language focus

1 over · 2 up · 3 apart · 4 around · 5 back

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