



Everyone dreams! If you are sleeping normally at night - that is, your sleep is not affected by drugs, alcohol, depression or sleep apnea - you are dreaming for at least an hour and a half per night. Somewhere between four and seven times per night, you will enter a period of REM sleep and dream.

While everyone dreams every night, many have difficulty remembering their dreams. Dreamwork is a practice. The more you practice paying attention to your dreams, the easier it will get. Because dreamwork is so powerful and can have such a deep effect on your life, it is well worth the effort. Here are some steps that will help to improve your dream recall.

Ten Tips for Improving Dream Recall

1. **Prepare.** Put a notebook and pencil by the bed and date the page with tomorrow's date before falling asleep. If you'd rather not use a notebook, a tape recorder is another option. This action tells your Dream Self, "I'm listening!"
2. **Affirm.** As you are falling asleep, affirm, "I will sleep well and dream, and in the morning I will recall my dreams." This is setting an intention to remember.
3. **Record Right Away.** If you half-wake in the night with some dream recall, write down or record the dream immediately. If you prefer not to do this in the middle of the night, at least run through the dream in your mind and mentally note the key elements, affirming that you will remember these upon awakening. Dreams are fleeting - the sooner you record them, the better your chances of remembering.
4. **Wake Gently.** If at all possible, wake naturally, without an alarm. If you must use an alarm, try using soft music or ambient sounds instead of a buzzer. If using any kind of alarm, turn it off immediately rather than leaving it playing in the background where it can distract you from remembering your dreams.
5. **First Thought for Dreams.** Upon waking, think back to what was just in your mind instead of thinking forward to your to-do list for the day. Once your mind starts racing ahead, your chances of remembering a dream are all but lost.
6. **Stay Drowsy.** Stay in the half-awake, half-asleep state as long as you can. Keep your eyes closed and move slowly through your common sleeping positions to stimulate dream recall. I often recall three separate dreams by lying on my right side, my back and my left side - a different dream for each position.
7. **Daily Dream Journaling.** Write something in your journal every morning, even if you don't recall a dream. Write down the feelings, emotions, phrases, images or snatches of music that come to mind upon first awakening. These vague fragments are often partial dream recall. In addition, you are reaffirming the message, "I'm listening," to your Dream Self.
8. **No Censoring.** Don't censor or dismiss what you remember as meaningless, too small or too silly to record. Every dream has meaning and even the smallest fragment can bring a huge "Aha!" when honored and explored.
9. **Sleep Well.** Depression, anxiety, stress, work overload, alcohol, drugs and prescription medications can all interfere with dream recall. Do what you can to minimize these interferences.
10. **Practice, practice, practice.** The more you work at recalling, recording and honoring your dreams, the easier and more natural dream recall becomes.