Sleep-Cool Checklist

For the nights when the low never drops below 80°F — the room numbers that matter, a 60-minute wind-down, and fan placement that actually moves heat.

Set the room

- ☐ **Thermostat:** 68–72°F if you can. Every degree above 75°F makes deep sleep harder for most people.
- ☐ **Humidity:** 30–50%. A cheap hygrometer tells you more than the forecast.
- ☐ **Block the afternoon sun:** close blinds or hang a light curtain on the west-facing window before 3 p.m.
- ☐ **Bedding:** cotton or linen sheets, one light blanket. Skip heavy comforters in summer.
- ☐ **Mattress pad:** a breathable cotton pad beats a waterproof plastic layer.

The 60-minute wind-down

- ☐ **60 min before bed:** screens dim; stop work email.
- ☐ **45 min:** cool shower or lukewarm rinse — the cooldown afterward drops core temperature.
- ☐ **30 min:** lights low, phone out of reach, ceiling fan on medium.
- ☐ **15 min:** cross-ventilate: open two windows on opposite sides, box fan blowing OUT of one.
- ☐ **At lights out:** switch the fan to circulate air in the room, not point at your face.

Fan and window timing

- ☐ **Evening:** box fan in the window blowing outward pulls cooler outside air in.
- ☐ **After midnight:** switch to circulating; outside air can be warmer than indoors.
- ☐ **Two fans beat one:** one intake, one exhaust, on opposite sides of the room.
- ☐ **Do not:** aim a fan directly at your face all night if you wake with congestion.
- ☐ **Ceiling fan:** counter-clockwise in summer pushes air down.

Fall-asleep helpers

- ☐ **Cool the body, not just the room:** cool cloth on the wrists or back of the neck.
- ☐ **Water by the bed:** small sips, not a large glass that wakes you at 3 a.m.
- ☐ **Alcohol:** skip within 3 hours of bed — it fragments the second half of the night.
- ☐ **Late caffeine:** none after 2 p.m. if you are sensitive.
- ☐ **If you wake hot:** get up for 10 minutes in dim light rather than thrashing under the covers.

> **One hard rule:** if your bedroom stays above 80°F and you have heart disease, are pregnant, or are 65+, sleep in the coolest room you have — even if it means the living room floor.

General information for Texas readers, not medical advice. If this is an emergency, call 911. For mental health crisis support, call or text 988.