

Brain Tricks to Try If You Can't Sleep

Sometimes, when you can't sleep, it can help to try a brain trick, to take your mind off any worries and help you relax. Have a look at the suggestions below and choose 2-3 to try. Practise this before bed, so you know what you need to do.

- Think of the highest number you can count to, and count backwards from that. If you can, you could try counting back in twos or fours or fives. As you count backwards, you could imagine each number in a different way eg written on a roadway sign, or as a pattern in the clouds.
- Go through the alphabet in your head and try to think of a country, or a name, starting with each letter. This works with lots of things – you could try food or animals, too.
- Imagine standing at the door of a plane or a boat or bus, and seeing all of your friends and family coming on board. You could also try this with famous people if you like. Say 'hallo and welcome' to each of them as they come on board.
- Think of as many different kinds of baby animals as you can.
- Imagine being in the back of a car on a long journey at night-time. Think about feeling comfy and safe in your seat, and looking out into the dark and passing hills and road-signs.
- Imagine painting a picture. Picture each different part of it, one after another, and imagine how you'll paint them.
- Imagine walking round a room or a place you know really well, like school or the park, or a friend's house. Picture yourself going from room to room and think about what you see.
- Visualise putting all of your worries in a big bag, then opening a door and putting it outside.
- Think of a word that makes you feel calm and say it over and over again in your head. This could be something like 'tree' or 'cloud' or even just something boring like 'the'.
- Or, choose a word that makes you feel calm or happy, and try to think of as many words as you can beginning with each letter in that word. So, if you think of 'bench', you would start with words starting with 'b', then 'e' and so on.
- Imagine redecorating your room. What would you change, bit by bit?
- Picture yourself in a lift, watching the numbers of the floors moving slowly in front of your eyes.