

Beginners Guide To Lucid Dreaming

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RECALLING YOUR DREAMS

It is important to improve your dream recall because it is possible to have a lucid dream without remembering it! It is worth getting your dream recall up to a few dreams per night for exactly that reason. Becoming familiar with your dreams will also increase your chances of becoming lucid in one.

First, a quick reminder about how often and for how long we dream. We have REM dreams approximately every 90 minutes of sleep, and while they start off at about 10 minutes, they increase in length to over 45 minutes. If you wake up while you are dreaming, you have roughly an 80% chance of remembering what you dreamt. Therefore, try setting an alarm clock to 4½, 6, or 7½ hours after you think you will fall asleep. This should wake you up directly from a dream.

The most important part of improving your dream recall is keeping a dream journal (a.k.a. dream diary). You could use an office notebook, artist's sketchpad, an online journal, a sheet of paper, or even a Dictaphone — whatever seems

natural to you. Here are some general tips for keeping your journal:

Write all your dreams and only your dreams.

Write down everything you remember about the dream. Phrases, colours, feelings, everything. Write it down in the morning.

Sketch pictures into your notebook to help you remember symbols, places, faces, or whatever you think you will forget about your dream over time.

Ritualize your diary

Using a dedicated pen in a special colour helps to make keeping your journal more of a ritual.

You might want to copy out rough notes into a neater dream diary later on in the day. This helps engrain the dream in your mind.

Try to go to bed early enough to ensure that you wake before your alarm clock rings. In the time you get, mull over any dreams you had and do a reality check.

You may want to keep your eyes closed for as long as possible, particularly if you wake up near the sunrise.

Try to use a notebook which holds a pen and scribble down whatever you can with your eyes still closed.

Stay in the same position and run your dreams over in your head a few times before jumping out of bed. After you have remembered your dream, move to a different position (with your eyes still closed) that you normally sleep in, and try and remember other dreams. The position that you are in may help your brain remember what dream you had while sleeping in that position.

If you can't remember anything, allow your mind to wander through events of yesterday or issues you've been thinking about. These may be a link to your dreams.

Throughout the day

Keep a small dream diary notebook with you all the time. It is quite easy to remember a dream in the day and then forget it by the time you get home.

Even if you only get a fleeting feeling of some dream during the day, note down as much as you can remember about the dream and what triggered the

memory.

Think about your dream or dreams throughout the day, and ask yourself “What did I dream?” several times. Often, you only get a good answer to this an hour after you woke up. You can try to remember your dream by “back-tracking” — start from the moment when you wake up, and try to remember what you were doing before that. You may even be able to reconstruct your dream to the beginning.

If you find that many of your dreams are about certain items, such as cars and painting, then, if you cannot remember your dream in the morning, think about whether it contained your specific dream signs, in this case, cars and painting. You can even make a “dream lexicon” — a piece of paper with common dream items written on it, so you can read it every time you wake up.

Also, use the ***autosuggestion technique*** to improve your dream recall (see the full description of the autosuggestion

technique in the next chapter).

Once you have a lot of dreams in your diary, you can start looking through it for dreamsigns. Common ones include flying, running to chase something, and being in an old house. However, it could be anything, such as crouching, skateboarding, or having one shoe missing! Try to look for these dream signs in real life and always do a reality check when you notice them.

“I Sometimes Remember More Dreams Than The Time I Was Asleep Could Allow. How Is This Possible?”

You may have had several dream scenes within a single dream period or some memories could be from past nights. It is also possible that dream time doesn't strictly correspond to real time. Days may pass in a dream during a single night's sleep. Dreams which seem to last for hours while you have them have sometimes been found to actually have a duration of only a few minutes.

“In What Order Should I Write My Dreams?”

It is usually very hard to tell if the dreams you dreamt happened in the order you recalled them. Generally you should write them in the order you remember them, or in a random order. If you dream that you told somebody about a previous dream that happened the same night, then that previous dream probably came before the other one (though the “previous dream” could have been a false memory).

INDUCTION TECHNIQUES

Preliminary

There are some things which are common to many techniques and these will be handled first.

Waking Up and Getting To Sleep

Firstly, you need to know how to wake yourself up and then to go to sleep just 10–60 minutes later. Probably the easiest method is a fairly quiet alarm clock. You can put it on the other side of the room to force you up. However, you could also use the MILD technique (see below) to try and wake yourself up immediately after your dreams. This should also help with your dream recall. You might want to drink lots of water or some tea, which is a **diuretic** (makes you go to the toilet). However, you might just wake up in the morning feeling very uncomfortable! Also note that the diuretic effects of tea come from caffeine, which may affect your ability to sleep.

If you have trouble getting to sleep in the first place, don't drink water for about an hour before you think you'll turn your lights off. In fact, *do* drink water an hour before, to stop you from getting thirsty later on. Avoid caffeine and sugar before bed.

If it still takes very long for you to fall asleep, you can take advantage of this by reading books about lucid dreaming before going to sleep. This could greatly increase your chances of getting a lucid dream. You definitely need a light next to your bed to read until you're too sleepy to carry on, as getting up to turn the light off can often wake you up fully.

Reality Checks

Reality checks are a method of discerning between dreams and reality. It is ***extremely important*** to perform these.

One could say they are the “keys” to lucid dreaming. It is also ***extremely important*** to make sure that you expect these to produce dream results — you accept your reality, even when

it is a dream. It would be counterproductive to expect real-life results in a dream, as the outcome of a reality check can be modified by the placebo effect. It won't affect outcomes in real-life (unless you are mentally ill!), but you will probably have a higher success rate in dreams. (...)

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