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Family Travel Tips



ALL AGES

5 Expert Tricks to Sleeping Better in a Hotel



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I'll admit it: I'm not the best sleeper, whether I'm at home or traveling. But I've actually found that I sleep *better* in hotels now that I travel with my kids. I'm obsessed with making sure my kids sleep well, and because they are good sleepers at home, they usually sleep well in hotels, too. These are our tricks to sleeping better in a hotel.



After a couple of not-so-great experiences when our first child was an infant, booking either a one-bedroom suite or adjoining rooms is a priority for us every time we travel. That might sound expensive, but we've found that in almost every destination we've traveled to, there are affordable suite- or apartment-style hotels that specialize in budget-friendly, value-added accommodations. It takes a little extra research and a bit of calling around sometimes, but it's totally worth it. Usually we book a room that has a single bedroom and a separate living area with a door that closes in between; that way we can put the kids to bed in the bedroom while we retire to the living area to hang out. If a multi-room situation isn't possible, try looking for a unit with a balcony or outdoor terrace.

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2. Avoid high-traffic areas.

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Another pro tip is to ask the front desk staff to put you on a quiet floor or at least a floor that is away from high traffic areas, such as the lobby and restaurant. We recently spent a night at a hotel in New York City and when we asked to be put on the same floor as our friends, the clerk let us know that the only room on that floor was one of the hotel's noisiest, as it was located just below the rooftop deck. We took her advice to stay in a different room, and everyone slept soundly despite our room overlooking a bustling city street. It's always good to ask, and the hotel would much rather put you in a room that you'll be happy with from the start than deal with a complaint or a poor review.

3. Block out light.

When researching hotels, check if the places you're considering have blackout drapes. This used to be standard in the hotel industry, but that's no longer the case. If you're set on a hotel that doesn't have blackout drapes, think creatively. You can bring a roll of aluminum foil to tape over windows, or use [towels](#) or [extra sheets](#).

hotel room. It usually buys us an extra hour of sleep in the mornings! Oh, and while you're at it, turn over the hotel room's alarm clock so the blaring red numbers aren't staring you in the eye.

4. Use white noise.

I originally started bringing a [white noise machine](#) on all of our trips when my son was a baby because it was a normal part of his bedtime routine and acted as a consistent sleep cue for him. My kids are old enough to fall asleep without white noise now, but it helps so much in noisy hotel rooms. We just turn the sound all the way up on high and it totally drowns out hallway noises or voices coming through thin walls. We love white noise apps such as [White Noise Lite](#) (free on iPhone); there are also [white noise apps just for babies!](#)

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5. Stick to your routine.

One of the most basic, yet often overlooked tricks to sleeping well in a hotel? Sticking to your routine! Even if you get in super-late and everyone's exhausted or the lure of 500 cable channels is keeping everyone up, stick to the routine. Bring along comfort items from home such as a [blankie](#) or [stuffed animal](#) for each child, take baths before bed if that's what you normally do, bring a couple of [books for bedtime stories](#), and do everything in the same order you do it at home. This will help the kids be more comfortable sleeping in an unfamiliar place and encourage them to sleep through the night, leaving you free to do the same.

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