

Helpful hints to improve your sleep at home



- Catch-up sleep – give yourself the opportunity to have a couple of extra hours of sleep – you need it.
- If you go to bed and feel “wired” get up.
- Avoid bright light at night. Read quietly or listen to music in dim light. Stay up until you feel comfortable or sleepy.
- Have your bedroom cool and dark as possible.
- Wear ear plugs to block out noise.
- Give yourself some time to have a nap during the day if you are sleepy but again only for around 20-30 minutes.
- When at home for a few days set aside some time for exercise at least once a day. Morning light helps your sleep.
- Have some “time out” for yourself, your partner and your family.

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and on the road

- Avoid wearing your sunglasses for the first couple of hours of the day.

Light in the morning shuts down the night time sleep hormone and will help you to be more alert.

Want to know **more** about driving safely, sleeping better and related topics such as **shiftwork health**? – email your query and your contact details to drivers@woolcock.org.au or visit www.woolcock.org.au/drivers.htm

The **Woolcock Institute of Medical Research** is a leading Australian respiratory and sleep research organisation. Our aim is to foster, develop and promote research into the fields of respiratory and sleep medicine.

We have research groups in areas such as physiology, imaging, cell biology, molecular medicine, epidemiology, sleep and upper airway disorders, circadian rhythms and chronobiology, insomnia, restless legs, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), asthma, allergy, cystic fibrosis, and a clinical trials unit.

The Woolcock also has engineering capabilities, utilising the latest technology in electronics, software, and analysis to make devices in support of research.

The Woolcock Institute of Medical Research is a non-profit organisation which relies on funding from competitive grants, government, industry and public donations.

As all individuals are different, the Woolcock strongly urges you to consult with your physician to discuss any sleep problems and for professional medical advice. The Woolcock Institute of Medical Research accepts no liability for loss or damage arising from information provided within this document – the information presented here is of a general nature only and is not intended as a substitute for the advice of a qualified healthcare professional. Your doctor can help.

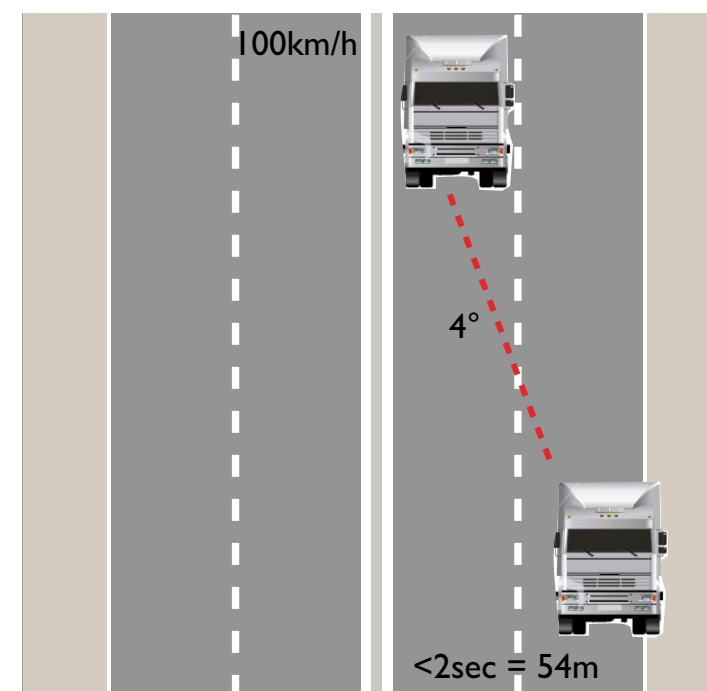
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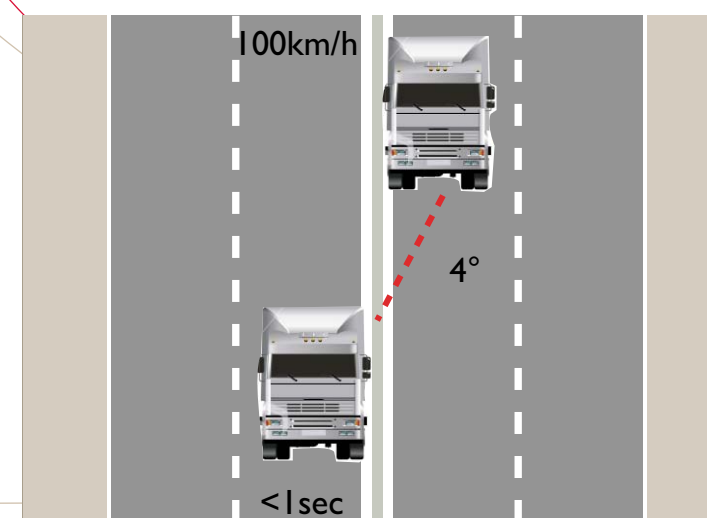
Driving Safely and Sleeping Better

Being sleepy behind the wheel can easily lead to a **microsleep** and a serious accident for you, your passengers and other people travelling on the road.

This truck driver will only take **2 seconds** to veer onto the side of the road:

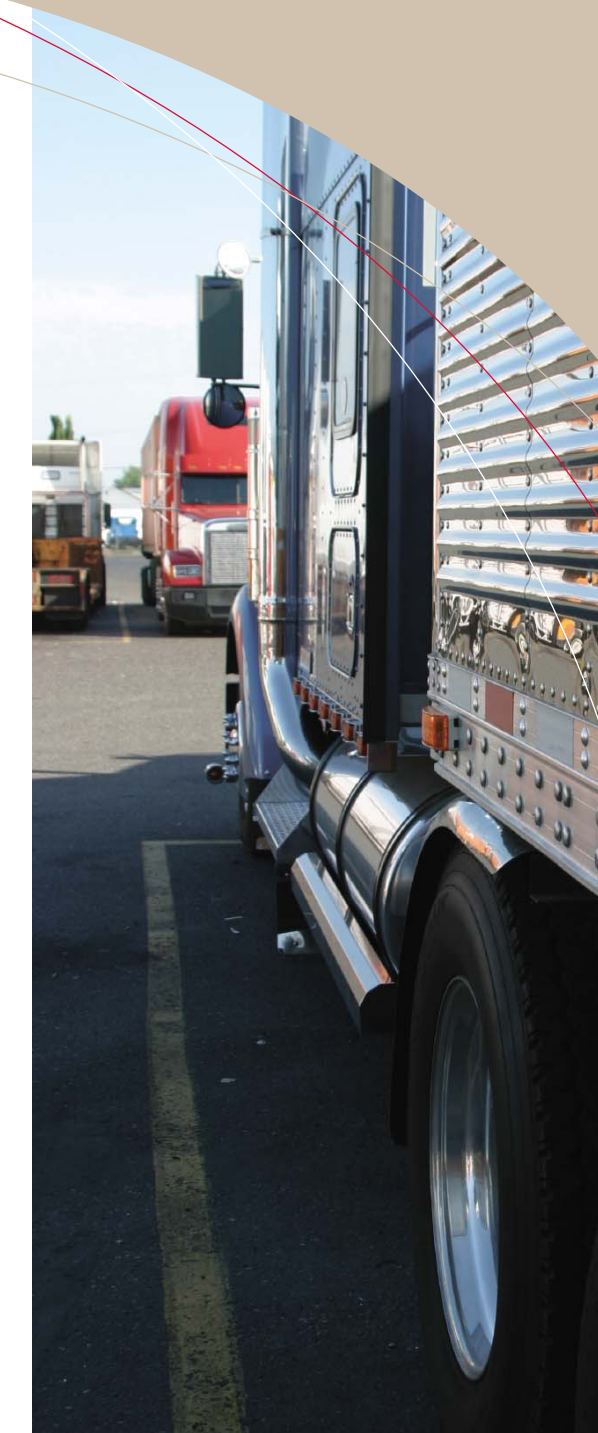


It will take only **1 second** (which is the time it takes to say “one and”) to cross the median and into the opposite lane of traffic:



Inside

- Signs of sleepiness whilst driving
- Counter measures for sleepiness
- Helpful hints to improve your sleep at home and on the road



Signs of sleepiness whilst driving

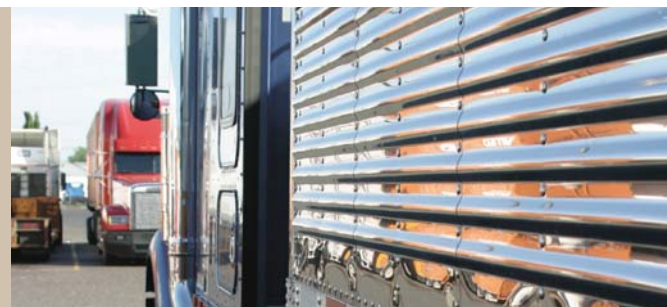
Most people **know** when they are sleepy – but they often ignore those signs due to the pressure of delivery deadlines or because they have managed feeling sleepy before.




Signs include:

- Yawning
- Increased eye blinking or 'droopy' eyelids
- Difficulty concentrating
- Difficulty staying in lane position on the road
- Feeling cold

If you experience ANY of these signs **PULL OVER** at the nearest safe place or truck rest stop.



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Counter measures for sleepiness – “do’s”



- **Naps** – a 10 to 20 minute nap will make you more alert for at least 2 hours.

Give yourself at least 30 minutes to achieve that nap time. Longer naps will allow you to go into deep sleep which is harder to wake from and will disrupt your sleep/wake pattern.



- **Caffeinated drinks** – will also help you to be more alert for 2-3 hours.



- **Short walk** – around the truck or at the trucking stop, in combination with a nap or caffeine, is also useful.

and “don’ts”



- **Alcohol** – excessive alcohol disturbs your sleep.
- **Alcohol and Drugs** – mixing alcohol with medications is a lethal combination.

Avoid using drugs to try to get to sleep or to keep yourself awake – especially when on the road. This includes over-the-counter remedies and antihistamines.

- **Too much caffeine** (more than 4 drinks in 24 hours) may make you feel “wired”, making it hard for you to go to sleep at your usual sleeping time.

Morning shift: use caffeine to wake you up and keep you going. Avoid after lunch.

Afternoon shift: use it when you wake and early afternoon.

Night shift: use it when you wake but only if you have a consolidated sleep.

If you have a split sleep only use it after you wake up and before work at night.

- **Don’t “force” sleep** – let sleep happen. Give yourself “wind down” time.

Plan your sleep/wake period (see over-page for strategies that may assist).