

A man with short dark hair and a beard is shown from the chest up, sitting on a beach. He has his eyes closed and a serene expression, suggesting he is meditating or practicing mindfulness. He is wearing a dark, long-sleeved shirt. The background shows the ocean waves gently crashing onto the shore under a soft, blue-toned sky, indicating early morning. The overall mood is calm and focused.

10 MORNING ROUTINES OF THE
**WORLD'S TOP
PERFORMERS**

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INTRODUCTION

Ever wanted to know what the top performers in the world do every morning to set their days off right? Many of the best consider their mornings the most important part of the day. If you own the morning, you can own the rest of the day. This compounds and before you know it, you are at your best physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually, day in day out. The techniques on this list have been pulled from top performers in all fields of life. From world-renowned motivational coach Tony Robbins to former Navy Seal Commander Jocko Willink to Founder of the Huffington Post, Arianna Huffington herself. All of their morning methods are in here as well as those of much, much more. The goal of this mini eBook is to be a sort of buffet. Come and go as you please and take what you like. See what works, what doesn't and maybe try something else. Hopefully by the end you have an awesome morning routine completely tailored to you and ready for you to completely smash the rest of the day.



MAKE YOUR BED

A so simple yet so effective and often overlooked part of the morning. This isn't just so your partner or mother doesn't have to do it for you, but because of the many psychological benefits.

Naval Admiral **William McRaven**, a man who was head of Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) during the Osama Bin Laden raid and who has no doubt had many a stressful morning, has this to say about making your bed:

'If you make your bed every morning, you will have accomplished the first task of the day. It will give you a small sense of pride, and it will encourage you to another task and another and another.'

It's the little things that matter and it only takes one domino to make them all fall. Not only that but if you have the shittiest day ever where you don't manage to hit any of your goals, at least the last thing you will come back to is something that you did for yourself, which is a good way to finish.



MEDITATE

This is meditation in whatever it means in the sense to you. It doesn't have to be climbing on to the top of your house dressed in monk's clothes gazing into the horizon. But it can be. Likewise it doesn't have to be a long time that you 'meditate', perhaps just a few minutes

Tony Robbins spends 10 minutes doing it each morning. His routine involves a minute of breathing exercises, a few minutes expressing gratitude for the things in his life, a few minutes of sitting and experiencing connection to the world around him and then a few minutes visualising the successes that he will accomplish during the day.

Ariana Huffington has a similar meditative approach. She takes a few minutes to breathe deeply, taking in large amounts of oxygen to fuel the body. She then thinks about the things that she is grateful for to keep her grounded and happy. Finishing off by setting out her intentions and goals for the day.

Tim Ferriss will do a similar mindfulness session often supplemented with a sort of yoga exercise flow to stretch out the muscles a bit.



MOVEMENT / WORKOUT

Exercise of some variety is an integral part to most superstars' morning. Whether or not you get your full workout in in the morning is down to your work schedule, but it is pretty unanimous that you should get the blood flowing in some way which not only stimulates the body but also the brain.

Tim Ferriss suggests at least doing 5 to 10 reps of *something* pretty soon after waking whether that be simple push ups or burpees. Getting into the body first thing quietens chatter and improves mood.

Aubrey Marcus, CEO of the reputable lifestyle brand Onnit, either hits out 23 burpees (his favourite number apparently) within 20 minutes of waking or chooses a slower series of briefly held yoga poses to get the body awake. The emphasis for him is not a morning workout but morning *movement*. This results in the release of endorphins that make you feel alert.

Then we have **Jocko Willink** and **Serena Williams** who get their main workouts in first thing. This brings all of the benefits of a workout and leaves the rest of the day to do the other things that need doing.



JOURNALING

This pairs very nicely with the meditation that we discussed earlier. Physically writing down all of your thoughts, tasks, goals and things you are grateful for can sometimes reinforce all of those things more strongly than just meditation might.

Tim Ferriss is a big advocate of the journal. He splits the process into two sections and only spends around 10 minutes completing them both. The first he calls 'Morning Pages' and the other '5 minute Journal'. The Morning Pages is where Ferriss writes down anything on his mind and where 'I'm just caging my monkey mind on paper so I can get on with my fucking day'. He also quotes **Julia Cameron** in his book *Tools of Titans*: 'Once we get those muddy, maddening, confusing thoughts [nebulous worries, jitters, and preoccupations] on the page, we face our day with clearer eyes.' The 5 Minute Journal is more like the meditation stuff we saw before. He writes down 3 things he is grateful for and 3 things that would make the day great. He then revisits these at night.



MORNING BEVERAGE

If you think we have arrived at the great coffee recipe part, I'm afraid I'm going to have to let you down. Before reaching for the caffeinated beverages, it's important to get other fluids down to rehydrate and start the day off right.

Tony Robbins reaches for what he calls a 'adrenal support cocktail'. This is a shake consisting of a whole host of nutrients and vitamins to fuel the body first thing: greens powder, Vitamin C, antioxidants, capsules of methylated B vitamins mixed with additional nutrients. Wow.

Tim Ferriss sits down with a hot cocktail of turmeric, ginger, pu-erh tea and green tea. He mentions liking the ritual aspect of this combo as well as of course, its vast nutritional benefits.

If those things are a little too complicated for you first thing in the morning, you can stick to what **Aubrey Marcus** recommends. A 'morning mineral cocktail' which is simply a mix of water, sea salt and squeezed lemon. Mix it all up and you will have all of the minerals and rehydration properties in you ready to start the day.



COLD EXPOSURE

Now before you see the title, think 'absolutely no way' and skip on to the next morning routine, just hear me out. Cold Exposure, though not the most comfortable thing in the world, has a LOAD of health benefits, from physiological to psychological.

Wim Hof aka 'The Ice Man' is a guy who has pushed cold exposure to the most extreme. Some of his feats include climbing Everest in nothing but shorts and shoes and the world record time in an ice bath - 1 hour 13 minutes. These aren't his usual morning routines, but he, and many others, preach the benefit of some sort of cold exposure early in the morning. Physical benefits include an increased metabolism, more efficient mitochondria and this one I can certainly advocate for: increased alertness.

It is also worth mentioning the psychological benefits that many of the experts discuss when it comes to cold exposure. It trains the mind to not hesitate but to act, and to face tasks that it finds uncomfortable. This mindset transfers over to other parts of life.

So jump in a warm shower, get yourself washed as normal and then for 30 seconds + at the end, turn that sucker to cold water. You will reap the benefits.



WAKE UP EARLIER

The interesting thing about this routine is that based off what most of the experts say, it could also have been titled 'go to bed earlier', but then I suppose it wouldn't technically be a morning routine. Nevertheless, waking up earlier shouldn't mean get less sleep. Sleep is incredibly important for an incredible amount of different functions.

Most of the world's top performers manage to do their best work in the morning after rattling off some of the other routines on this list. You may convince yourself that you aren't a morning person but it is certainly something that can be learned pretty quick after setting a few alarms. Your body is cool and adaptable like that. Plus how else are you going to fit in all of the other great things on this list if you wake up late?

Speaking of alarms, if you need them to get you up, absolutely use them. However, many uber-productive people like **Ariana Huffington, Oprah Winfrey and Jeff Bezos** no longer use alarms because their circadian rhythm is so tight and well-practiced day in day out. Their bodies know exactly when to get them up and that is the perfect scenario.

If you prefer to take it to the other extreme, there are some performers that can still perform well on as little as 5/6 hours sleep such as **Jocko Willink**. He sets his watch alarm at 4:30 am, 7 days a week and then publishes the watch interface on Twitter with date and time every day. This is a way of holding himself accountable and doing what he knows he needs to do.



LIGHT EXPOSURE

This is an often very overlooked part of the morning that many don't even consider. It is however, an integral part to setting up your day right.

Aubrey Marcus highlights this routine in his book 'Own the Day, Own Your Life'. We are biologically wired to wake up with the sun and fall asleep with the stars. If we don't manage to get any natural light on to our bodies then they won't even realise that we are awake. The sun acts not only as a stimulant to let us know that our bodies are awake, but also acts as a reset to our natural 24-hour circadian rhythm. This is how you adapt to a different time zone you are in rather than forever being behind or in front. Natural light is the mind and body's visual cue that it is time to get going.

That big, burning orb in the sky is key to the secretion of serotonin in the body, a hormone that when depleted is linked with depression. It also triggers Vitamin D in the body when the sunlight reacts with the receptors of our skin. This vitamin is essential for functions such as bone health, the immune system, fighting cancer and creating a positive mood.

If you can get 5-10 mins of sunlight in the morning, you are sure to get your day off right. Even the sun behind the clouds in winter still provides many of the benefits above.



DON'T CHECK SMARTPHONE

Not checking the smartphone is becoming an increasingly popular and adapted routine of the world's top performers and with good reason. Not only can the infinite number of distractions on there hijack all of the other morning routines, but any notifications and unwanted emails trigger an acute stress response in the body. Not a great start to the day.

In the number of times that **Ariana Huffington** has been quizzed on her morning routines, she always begins with what she *doesn't* do and that is check her smartphone. After breaking her cheekbone in 2007 after fainting from sleep deprivation and exhaustion from overworking, she began to take her mornings more seriously. Smartphones have their times and uses but that time isn't in the morning.

As well as unnecessarily high stress levels, psychiatrists such as **Dr Nikole Benders-Hadi** have weighed in on the subject too and she says specifically 'The information overload that hits [you] before you're fully awake also interferes with your ability to prioritize tasks'.

If you use your phone as an alarm, put it on airplane mode so its not as easy for you to jump straight on to social media. Get your other important morning routines done first.



BREAKFAST

This is certainly an interesting subject because many of the top performers have pretty different approaches depending on their schedule, priorities among many other things. Since we are all different too, I want you to take a glance at how some of them approach the topic of breakfast and see if you can apply any to your own life.

Before we jump in, what 99% of the top performers agree on about breakfast is to avoid refined carbohydrates and sugar. This combo of a blood sugar bomb throws the body and mind completely off balance before the day has even really started. Sorry Tony the Tiger but there is no room for you on this list.

Quite a few top performers, particularly sports people such as top UFC fighter **Georges St-Pierre** don't actually eat breakfast at all and participate in what is known as intermittent fasting. This involves only eating in specific time windows of the day to increase insulin sensitivity amongst many other health benefits. Breakfast generally doesn't fall into this time window so may well be skipped, which isn't as bad as you might have previously been led to believe.

Aubrey Marcus and many of the best that come through his health and lifestyle brand Onnit ensure that they are getting plenty of fat into their breakfast. Despite what was popular in the 80s and 90s, fat is actually your friend, while sugar is the real foe. Reach out for things like bacon, avocado, full fat yogurt, nuts and butter for healthy fats that slowly release energy and will set you up nicely for the day.



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