

The Cool Night Checklist



Practical, research-backed ways to set up your bedroom, your evening, and your day for fewer 3 a.m. wake-ups and more comfortable nights.

First, the honest part. Up to 80% of women get hot flashes during the menopause transition¹, and for women with frequent symptoms they last a median of 7.4 years². Cooling and comfort steps are low-risk and many women like them. But The Menopause Society says there isn't strong evidence that cooling tricks or avoiding "triggers" actually reduce how often hot flashes happen³. Mayo Clinic notes these steps aren't harmful, though⁴. Think of this list as *comfort and better sleep conditions*, not treatment. If symptoms are affecting your life, talk with your healthcare provider or a Menopause Society certified practitioner.

1 Set up the bedroom

- ☐ Lower the thermostat. Cleveland Clinic suggests **60–67°F** for sleep⁵; the Sleep Foundation says 65–68°F⁶. Start around 65°F and adjust to what feels right.
- ☐ Put a **fan** by the bed, aimed at you⁷.
- ☐ **Layer your bedding** (sheet + light blanket + throw) so you can kick off one layer at a time instead of the whole duvet⁷.
- ☐ Choose **breathable fabrics** such as cotton for bedding and sleepwear⁸.
- ☐ Keep a **cold pack under your pillow** and flip the pillow to the cool side⁸.
- ☐ Keep the room **dark, quiet, and cool**, and use it mainly for sleep and sex⁹.
- ☐ Leave a **glass of ice water** on the nightstand⁹.
- ☐ *Comfort tip:* keep a spare top and a small towel within reach so a sweat doesn't mean getting fully out of bed.

2 Your evening wind-down

- ☐ Sip a small amount of **cold water** before bed⁷.
- ☐ Ease off **alcohol and caffeine**, especially later in the day. Both can make it harder to sleep⁸, and NIA lists them, along with spicy food, as things that can worsen menopause symptoms⁷.
- ☐ Exercise during the day, **not right before bed**⁸.
- ☐ Choose a wind-down you actually enjoy (reading, a shower, stretching). Mayo notes relaxation may not stop hot flashes but can help you sleep and cope^{4,8}.

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3 When a night sweat hits

- ☐ Kick off a **layer** right away rather than waiting it out⁷.
- ☐ Take a few **slow, deep breaths**. The Office on Women's Health says it may shorten a hot flash⁹. (Honest note: The Menopause Society found "paced breathing" doesn't reduce hot flashes³, but many women still find it calming.)
- ☐ Sip your **ice water**, flip to the cool side of the pillow, and change into your spare top if needed^{8,9}.
- ☐ If you're lying awake for a long time, try something calm and low-light until you feel sleepy again. (General sleep tip; ask your healthcare provider about insomnia.)

4 Daytime habits that help at night

- ☐ **Track your hot flashes:** when they happen and what came before. It helps you spot your personal patterns and gives your healthcare provider real information^{7,9}.
- ☐ **Dress in layers** you can take off quickly⁷.
- ☐ Carry a **portable fan** for the day⁷.
- ☐ If you smoke, quitting is linked to fewer hot flashes and better overall health^{4,7}.
- ☐ Some women find healthy lifestyle changes help with hot flashes^{3,4}. If that interests you, talk it through with your healthcare provider.

My 7-night log (bring it to your next appointment)

Night	Bedtime / room temp	# wake-ups	Earlier that day (alcohol, caffeine, stress, spicy food)	What helped?	How rested (1–5)?
Mon					
Tue					
Wed					
Thu					
Fri					
Sat					
Sun					

This log is just for you, on paper. Cooldown Society never asks you to send us your symptoms.

5 When to check in with a professional

If symptoms are affecting your life, talk with your healthcare provider or a Menopause Society certified practitioner. Your 7-night log on page 2 is a great thing to bring along.

Check in sooner if night sweats happen regularly or disrupt your sleep, come with fever, unexplained weight loss, pain, cough, or diarrhea, or start months or years after your menopause symptoms ended. Night sweats can have other causes¹⁰.

Here's to cooler nights, The Cooldown Team

Sources (accessed October 2026)

1. The Menopause Society, Hot Flashes: menopause.org/patient-education/menopause-topics/hot-flashes
2. Avis NE et al., Duration of Menopausal Vasomotor Symptoms (SWAN), JAMA Intern Med 2015: pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25686030
3. The Menopause Society, 2023 Position Statement on managing hot flashes: menopause.org (position statement, PDF)
4. Mayo Clinic, Hot flashes: Diagnosis & treatment: mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/hot-flashes/diagnosis-treatment/drc-20352795
5. Cleveland Clinic, The Best Temperature for Sleep: health.clevelandclinic.org/what-is-the-ideal-sleeping-temperature-for-my-bedroom
6. Sleep Foundation, The Best Temperature for Sleep: sleepfoundation.org/bedroom-environment/best-temperature-for-sleep
7. National Institute on Aging (NIH), Hot Flashes: What Can I Do?: nia.nih.gov/health/menopause/hot-flashes-what-can-i-do
8. Mayo Clinic, Menopause: Diagnosis & treatment: mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/menopause/diagnosis-treatment/drc-20353401
9. US Office on Women's Health, Menopause symptoms and relief: womenshealth.gov/menopause/menopause-symptoms-and-relief
10. Mayo Clinic, Night sweats: When to see a doctor: mayoclinic.org/symptoms/night-sweats/basics/when-to-see-doctor/sym-20050768

This guide is for general information only and is not medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. It has not been reviewed by a clinician. Please consult your own healthcare provider about your symptoms.