KESTON SCHOOL

BODY & ENERGY · FREE SAMPLE

Beat the Afternoon Slump

Simple daily habits for steadier energy from lunch to evening

CHAPTER 1 + WORKBOOK SECTION

BEFORE YOU START

How to use this book

By the last page you will know what drives your own afternoon dip, have a lunch routine that does not sink you, a ten-minute light-and-walk habit, a reset break you can take at your desk, an afternoon plan that matches tasks to energy, and a routine that runs without willpower.

1. Read one chapter at a time. Each one gives you a single idea and a single action.
2. Open the Beat the Afternoon Slump Workbook and complete the matching section while the chapter is fresh.
3. Do the “Try this” action within seven days. Reading changes what you know; the action changes what you do.
4. Finish with the checklist in chapter 12 and come back to it whenever you slip.

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CHAPTER 1

The Three O'Clock Wall

Recognize your own afternoon slump, see why the usual quick fixes keep it going, and start a simple three-day energy log.

It is a quarter past two. Lunch was fine, the morning was productive, and you have a clear list for the rest of the day. You open the report you meant to finish and read the same paragraph three times. Your eyes feel heavy. You check your phone, then the news, then the snack drawer. Somebody suggests a coffee run and you say yes before they finish the sentence.

By four you feel a little better, but the report is still half done. By six you are wired and tired at the same time, and by ten you are scrolling in bed, wondering why you are not sleepy.

If that sounds familiar, you are in good company. The afternoon slump is one of the most common complaints of desk workers, remote workers and busy parents alike. This book is about making it smaller, shorter and far less disruptive, using habits you can start this week.

What a slump looks like

A slump is not the same as being exhausted. It is a dip: a stretch of the afternoon when your energy, focus and mood drop below where they were in the morning, and then slowly come back. For most people it shows up somewhere between lunch and late afternoon and lasts anywhere from half an hour to a couple of hours.

It tends to have a few signs:

- **Heavy eyes and yawning,** even when you slept reasonably well.
- **Foggy focus.** You read, but nothing sticks. Simple decisions feel oddly hard.
- **Restlessness.** You want to get up, check something, eat something, anything but the task.
- **A shorter fuse.** Small annoyances feel bigger than they did at ten in the morning.
- **Cravings.** Sweet snacks and another coffee suddenly seem like urgent needs.

Not everyone gets all of these. Some people mostly feel sleepy. Others feel scattered and irritable. Part of the work in this book is learning which version is yours.

The usual fixes and why they backfire

Most people already have a slump strategy. It is usually one of three.

Push through. You grit your teeth and keep working. Sometimes this works, but often you spend ninety minutes producing what would take thirty in the morning, and you end the day drained and behind.

Prop yourself up. Coffee, an energy drink, a sugary snack. These can feel like they help, and sometimes they do for a while. The trouble is the pattern. A late-afternoon coffee can make it harder to fall asleep, a sweet snack can leave you hungry and flat again an hour later, and the next day starts a little more tired than the one before.

Escape. You drift into email, chat or your phone. It feels like a break, but it is not much of one. Your eyes stay on a screen, your body stays in the chair and your brain keeps processing a stream of small inputs. Twenty minutes later you feel no more rested than before.

None of these makes you weak or undisciplined. They are reasonable reactions to a real dip. They just treat the symptom for a moment while leaving the causes in place.

> **Key idea:** The slump is not a willpower problem. It is a design problem, and design problems can be solved.

Slump or something more

Most afternoon dips are an ordinary part of a working day and respond well to everyday changes in sleep, lunch, movement and breaks. This book stays at that everyday level. It does not offer diets, supplements or medical advice.

Some tiredness is different, and it deserves a conversation with a doctor rather than a new routine. Book an appointment if you notice things like:

- Tiredness that lasts most of the day, most days, for weeks.
- Falling asleep without meaning to, especially while driving or in conversation.
- Exhaustion that does not improve after rest, weekends or holidays.
- Tiredness together with other changes that worry you, such as in weight, mood, breathing or sleep.

If any of these apply, see a doctor first. You can still use the habits in this book alongside their advice.

Why a log beats a guess

Before you change anything, it helps to know what you are dealing with. Most people describe their slump vaguely: “I always crash after lunch.” When they track it for a few days, the picture often gets sharper. The dip may start later than they thought, or only on days with a big lunch, or only after a short night, or mostly on days when they never leave the desk.

That detail matters, because each cause has a different fix. Someone whose slump follows a heavy lunch needs a different first step than someone whose slump follows five hours of video calls.

Try this

Keep a three-day energy log, starting tomorrow. It takes about two minutes a day, split into short check-ins.

1. **Set four reminders:** mid-morning, just after lunch, mid-afternoon and early evening.
2. **At each reminder, rate your energy** from 1 (barely awake) to 10 (sharp and alert), and add one or two words on how you feel: foggy, restless, fine, irritable.
3. **At the end of each day, add four notes:** roughly how long you slept the night before, what and when you ate at lunch, how long you sat without getting up, and whether you went outside before three.
4. **Mark the slump,** if there was one: when it started, how long it lasted and what you did about it.

Do not try to fix anything yet. Just observe. You will use these three days of notes throughout the book, starting with the next chapter, which looks at what is actually happening in your body and mind when the afternoon dip arrives.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The afternoon slump follows a pattern you can learn to predict.
- Coffee, sugar and scrolling borrow energy and pay it back later.
- A three-day energy log shows your real dip and its triggers.

→ Workbook, section 1

01 The Three O'Clock Wall

Log three days of real energy before you change anything.

FILL IN

Three-day energy log (rate 1-10)

Day	Mid-morning	After lunch	Mid-afternoon	Early evening
Day 1				
Day 2				
Day 3				

FILL IN

End-of-day notes

Day	Sleep last night	Lunch: what and when	Longest sitting stretch	Outside before 3?
Day 1				
Day 2				
Day 3				

When did my slump start, how long did it last, and what did I reach for?

CHECKLIST

Slump or something more? Tick any that apply, and if one does, see a doctor first

- [ ] Tired most of the day, most days, for weeks
- [ ] Falling asleep without meaning to
- [ ] Rest and weekends make little difference
- [ ] Tiredness with other changes that worry me

YOUR NEXT STEP

Want the whole book?

You just read chapter 1 of Beat the Afternoon Slump and tried the first workbook section. The full e-book has 12 chapters, a complete workbook and a final checklist. Here is everything inside:

01 The Three O'Clock Wall

02 Why Energy Dips After Lunch

03 What the Slump Really Costs

04 Plan for the Dip

05 A Lunch That Lifts

06 Daylight and a Short Walk

07 The Five-Minute Reset

08 Slumps in Real Life

09 When the Plan Slips

10 Put It on Autopilot

11 Afternoons That Add Up

12 Mistakes & Checklist

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