

How to create a relaxing master bedroom

By Irene Woodworth

Are you having any sleeping problems or a hard time relaxing in your master bedroom? Since we spend about a third of our lives sleeping, it is amazing how many articles are written about the importance of getting a good night's rest and the positive effects it has on our lives. The amazing benefits include helping you achieve better health, becoming more focused, increasing a more positive mood, and being more successful in losing weight. How do you do that? Did you know that one in three adults is sleep-deprived?

"As a nation we are not getting enough sleep," said Wayne Giles, M.D., director of CDC's Division of Population Health. "Lifestyle changes such as going to bed at the same time each night; rising at the same time each morning; and turning off or removing televisions, computers, mobile devices from the bedroom, can help people get the healthy sleep they need."

The word "relax" means "to make or become less tense or anxious."

It is easy to ignore the importance of the room where you sleep in your home. Women in particular are very visual and do not do well in cluttered rooms, with toys left from the kids, papers, bills or miscellaneous items left on beds or sitting areas. Do yourself a favor: stand at the door of your master bedroom and ask yourself what you feel when you look into the room? If you feel anxious or overwhelmed, then we have some work to do.



Irene Woodworth

How about changing that and creating a real oasis for yourself and your hubby, if you have one? Here are some tips that will help you accomplish this goal.

1. Your bed needs to be the center of this room and the most comfortable bed possible. Isn't it great when you go to a five-star hotel and stay in the rooms? It is a luxurious feeling to say the least. You just feel comfortable and pampered. The bedding is incredible. Invest in yourself by buying a good bed for your home.

Get an extra padded comforter cover and/or a bed foam topper that will add more luxury to your mattresses. Of course if you are in need of getting a new mattress, it might be time to do that since most mattresses last usually 8 to 10 years. Make sure to try the mattress out in the store; lay on it to

see how it feels.

2. Make sure to make your bed every day. I know some people feel, "Why make it if you have to undo it again at night?" However, in the world of challenges and chaos that we live in, it is comforting and relaxing walking into your bedroom and your bed is made. It gives you more peace and a sense of calm. It really does help.

3. Make sure you get rid of the clutter. This needs to be your sanctuary, so all the extra items like paper, bills and kid stuff do not belong in there. Can you really relax if you have your bills in there? I certainly cannot. A good idea for reducing clutter is storing items in decorative baskets. You can make some fun and decorative labels on them and it visually gives you a more cohesive and organized look and feel to your room.

4. Find pieces of furniture that will work and possibly do double duty. If you need a foot bench for dressing or sitting, perhaps it can have a place to store items, such as an extra blanket. If you have nightstands, do they meet your needs? If you like to read, perhaps you can get a basket or use a drawer to put your latest book or magazine in to help you relax before going to sleep.

5. Lighting needs to be subdued and not too bright to help you relax. I suggest a dimmer switch on your overhead light. Good table lamps for reading and seeing are essential for nighttime. You can convert your lamp to a touch-controlled lamp that has two or three settings that change when you tap it. One style is a small box that plugs into the wall and the lamp plugs into it. Another style screws between the bulb and the lamp. They are available at most home improvement stores and usually run about 10 dollars. My son found one of these at the thrift store and made my lamp a touch lamp. I love it. Another great idea is to use wall-mounted lamps that give you more space on your nightstands.

6. Is your paint color soothing? Perhaps it is time to give your room an update with some color. More subdued colors like tans, grays and pastels help you relax visually. Remember that the sheen of the paint is just as important. Do not use a semi-gloss in your bedroom because that will reflect the light like crazy on your walls. It is best to use a paint finish sheen like satin or pearl. Also, a flat finish on a paint color can



A master bedroom needs to be specially decorated to enhance a person's ability to relax and get a good night's sleep in the room. The effects of sleeping well can outweigh the costs of making a few needed changes that lead to a more calming, sleep-friendly atmosphere. (Photo contributed by Irene Woodworth)

show oily handprints on your walls. Who has the time to retouch the walls over and over?

7. You need a refreshing scent in your bedroom. Smell makes a difference. You can use a linen air freshener or lavender scent on your pillows or as spray in your room. It has a tendency to relax you and help you get a better night's sleep.

Live plants release oxygen into the room and purify the air, helping you sleep better. According to the Daily Health Post, "Stress and anxiety cause most sleep-related issues. Many studies show that being surrounded by nature helps lower cortisol level and blood pressure. It also boosts immune function and triggers relaxation. In addition, plants purify the air by absorbing odors and moulds that can impact breathing and lung health." (NASA recommends between 15-18 air purifying plants for an 1,800-square-foot home. Make sure to place a few in each bedroom.)

If you do not have room for anything too big, you can always put some plants in a corner on a plant stand and allow them to grow vertically. The best types of plants for this are jasmine, lavender, snake plant, aloe vera, gardenia, spider plant, valerian, English ivy, peace lily and golden pothos.

8. Turn all electronic devices off at least an hour before going to bed. You need to unplug so your brain is not stimulated and prevents you from sleeping. I know from experience that looking at my cell phone caused my brain to take at least one to two hours for calming and shutting down to sleep!

9. How is the sound in your room? One thing I have really enjoyed is downloading my Wholetones instrumental music that helps my husband and I relax. When my husband used to work nights, we used a sound machine. That is also something that can help you go to sleep by listening to the sounds of a waterfall,

the ocean waves or birds singing in the rain forest. These small devices can be purchased at various stores, such as Bed Bath and Beyond.

10. Use décor that reflects both of your personalities. Since my husband was born in Hawaii and lived his earlier life near the beach, and I grew up in Southern California, I have always loved the sight of the beach in our bedroom pictures, and reflecting that in our room's décor. When we look at the various ocean pictures, in spite of our eclectic, white, simple, upcycled, mid century-style furniture, it helps us to relax in our master bedroom.

Why do I know so much about this? I have sleep apnea and I have been a light sleeper most of my life — until I started making some major changes. It is getting better and better. I know how fragmented you can feel when you do not get enough restful sleep and can't relax in your bedroom. If you are not able to apply all of these tips, start by doing them one at a time bi-weekly or monthly. You will be amazed what a few simple changes can do to help you relax in your bedroom.

Mention this article and I will give you a 15 percent discount on any of our redesign or color consultation services to help you achieve your desired look. Contact me at Irene@RedesignBoise.com or (208) 450-2178. ●

Irene Woodworth is known as "Idaho's Color Lady" and is founder and CEO of Redesign Boise. She is a national redesign award winner, motivational speaker, certified redesigner and color consultant, and instructor on redesign and color. She has a degree in education and interior design and has taught various decorating and color classes throughout the country. For more information, visit RedesignBoise.com.

TIFFANY HIX
photography

boise's premier childhood & family photographer
www.tiffanyhix.com | 208.724.1303

K-12 CLASSICAL CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

**BELIEVE
WITH COURAGE**

THE AMBROSE SCHOOL
theambroseschool.org

THINK WITH DEPTH • BELIEVE WITH COURAGE • SERVE WITH COMPASSION