

# Mood Music

Music definitely affects the brain. Mozart enhances cognitive performance and even calms seizures. Repetitive music has been used to induce trances for centuries, and in its modern form people listen to *binaural beats* to improve focus, relaxation or sleep.

Researchers have looked at how happy and sad songs affect mood, and the results are mixed. Some people with depression find that positive songs distract them from negative thoughts and lift their mood. For others, happy music is annoying at best and isolating at worst. They prefer songs that match their mood and validate what's going on inside them.

It may be more useful to think about how music impacts your energy rather than your emotions. Energy – whether wired and up all night or slowed down and groggy – defines mood disorders more than emotions do.

With that in mind, you might use music to aid your recovery. In 2015 researchers discovered that a simple technique can significantly enhance recovery from depression and bipolar. It involves two steps that help set the body's internal clock:

- ☛ **Morning:** Wake up at the same time each morning, get out of bed briskly, and start your day with energizing activity.
- ☛ **Evening:** Create a 30-minute wind-down routine before bed, with low lights and no electronics. Do relaxing or meditative activity during that wind-down.

This is where music may play a role in healing. Think of songs that get you moving, and add them to your morning routine. Use music in the evening only if it helps you fall asleep. Below are ideas to get you started. Tell us what works for you.

## Morning wake-up playlist

Put your records on, Corinne Bailey Rae

Best day of my life, American Authors  
Beauty in the world; I try, Macy Gray  
Girls just wanna have fun, Cindi Lauper  
Three little birds; Coming in from the cold, Bob Marley  
Smile, Uncle Kracker  
Happy, Pharrell Williams  
Lean on me; Lovely day, Bill Withers  
Can I kick it, A Tribe Called Quest  
Don't stop believin', Journey  
Man in the mirror; Hold my hand, Michael Jackson  
Send me on my way, Rusted Root  
Take on me, A-ha  
I'm a believer, The Monkees  
Love shack, Roam, The B-52's  
Praise you, Fatboy Slim  
Walkin' on sunshine, Katrina and the Waves  
Brown eyed girl; Bright side of the road, Van Morrison  
Shout, Isley Brothers  
I get around; Do it again; Wouldn't it be nice, The Beach Boys  
Groove is in the heart, Deee-Lite  
Beautiful day; Where the streets have no name, U2  
Rise up, Andra Day  
Good Day, Nappy Roots  
I will survive, Gloria Gaynor  
Come dancing, The Kinks  
The circle of life, The Lion King  
I feel good, James Brown  
Wotless, Kes The Band  
Back in the highlife; The finer things; Higher love; While you see a chance, Steve Winwood  
Zoll!, BLK JKS  
My Shot, Hamilton Cast  
Pick Yourself Up, Nat King Cole & George Shearing  
Tubthumping, Chumbawamba  
Stayin Alive, The Bee Gees  
Money on my mind, Sam Smith  
Pumpin Blood, NONONO  
Cecilia, Simon & Garfunkel  
I'm gonna be (500 miles), The Proclaimers  
MMMBop, Hanson  
Dance tonight, Paul McCartney  
Come on Eileen, Dexys Midnight Runners  
These are days, 10,000 Maniacs  
Hold on tight, Greg Holden  
Hey ya!, Outkast  
Hey soul sister, Train  
Can't stop the feeling, Justin Timberlake  
Everyday people, Sly & the Family Stone  
I can see clearly now, Johnny Nash  
Songs from Grease (e.g. You're the one that I want) Bubbly; Goldmine, Colbie Caillat

You got it, Roy Orbison  
 Sunshine, Matisyahu  
 Down under, Men at Work  
 Uptown funk, Mark Ronson & Bruno Mars  
 Love train, The O'Jays  
 On top of the world, Imagine Dragons  
 Stronger (what doesn't kill you), Kelly Clarkson  
 Karma chameleon, Culture Club  
 Up, up, and away, Kid Cudi  
 Dancing in the streets, Martha and the Vandellas  
 Vacation, The Go-Go's  
 It's amazing, Jem  
 Wake me up before you go-go, Wham!  
 Carolina girls, General Johnson  
 Centerfield, John Fogerty  
 Raise your glass, Pink  
 Faith, George Michael  
 Everyday, Buddy Holly  
 Sweet persuasion, Brett Dennen  
 Peace train, Cat Stevens  
 Happy, Natasha Bedingfield  
 Footloose, Kenny Loggins  
 Heroes, Alesso  
 Ten feet tall, Afrojack  
 Sweet Caroline, Neil Diamond  
 How will I know, Whitney Houston  
 Just like starting over, John Lennon  
 Respect, Aretha Franklin  
 You can call me Al, Paul Simon  
 Nothings gonna stop us, Starship  
 Seasons of love, Rent  
 Right by your side, Eurythmics  
 All about that bass, Meghan Trainor  
 Break my stride, Matthew Wilder  
 I'm still standing, Elton John  
 Better things, The Kinks

### **Slower happy songs (unlikely to wake you, but they may distract from depression)**

Somewhere over the rainbow, Israel Kamakawiwo'ole  
 Lithium sunset, Sting  
 The lazy song, Bruno Mars  
 Simple pleasures; Don't worry be happy, Bobby  
 McFerrin (warning: not for everyone)  
 What a wonderful world; La Vie en Rose, Louis  
 Armstrong  
 Touch of gray, Grateful Dead  
 Thinking out loud, Ed Sheeran  
 Here comes the sun, The Beatles  
 Diamonds on the soles of her shoes, Paul Simon  
 Do-wop music (e.g. Under the boardwalk, Up on the  
 roof, The Drifters; One fine day, The Chiffons;

Stand by me, Ben E. King; Mr. Sandman and  
 Lollipop, The Chordettes)  
 Pure Shores, All Saints  
 I just called to say I love you, Stevie Wonder  
 Watching the wheels, John Lennon  
 Sittin' on the dock of a bay, Otis Redding  
 Don't forget to dance, The Kinks  
 Your hand in mine, Explosions in the Sky  
 Beautiful world, Colin Hay  
 Good vibrations, The Beach Boys

### **Evening wind-down playlist**

Around a dozen studies have concluded that music can improve sleep. Try instrumental music with regular rhythm, bass tones, tranquil melodies, and a slow tempo (60-80 BPM; you can check tempos for specific songs at [songbpm.com](http://songbpm.com)).

*Weightless*, by Marconi Union, was designed by sound therapists to induce sleep and one study found it worked best among 10 options they tested. Runners up: *Electra*, Airstream; *Mellomaniac (Chill Out Mix)*, DJ Shah; *Watermark*, Enya.

Search for sleep playlists. Options include Celtic harp, Gregorian chants, Indian and Chinese Classical, and New Age. Classical favorites include Beethoven (*Moonlight Sonata, Symphony 9 movement 3*), Satie (*Gymnopédie No.1*), Bach (*Air, Suite No. 3 in D major, BWV 1068*), Brahms (*Clarinet Quintet in B Minor*), Debussy (*Clair De Lune*), Pachelbel (*Canon in D*), Mozart (*Serenade no.10*), Barber (*Adagio for Strings*), Jules Massenet (*Méditation from Thaïs*).

*Binaural beats*: these electronic sounds also have research support, specifically for theta wave beats (5 to 7 Hz). If they sound too electronic, try searching for "Binaural beats nature."

Nature sounds, such as rain, wind, or ocean, and white noise can also help insomnia.

Music can be used before and during sleep. Find what works best for you, and keep in mind there are always people who sleep better in silence.

### **What's in our waiting room**

Celtic harp music, including Cheryl Ann Fulton (*The Airs of Wales*), Nancy Allen (*Celebration of Harp*), Claire Hamilton (*Magic of the Celtic Harp*), Emily Mitchell (*Celtic Visions*), Anne Roos (*Haste to the Wedding*).

Enya, Brian Eno (*Apollo*), S.L. Weiss (Lute), Chopin, Bach, Satie (*Gymnopédie*), Debussy (Oboe).

—Chris Aiken, M.D., Updated 11/28/16