

# How to Catch Those Elusive Dreams

Everything we've created was dreamed or imagined first.

When you give it importance and provide yourself with a few tools to do this, you will remember dreams.

- Make it Important: Decide it's important to remember your dreams. This in itself alerts your dreaming self you're ready to remember. Select and organize your tools by your bed: dream journal, pen, colored pencils, smart phone or other recorder.
- Incubate a Dream: Ask for a dream before you go to sleep. Do this every night, and be persistent; it may take some time to wake up to your dreaming self. You can put a slip of paper with a dream request, or any other symbol, under your pillow at night. Try doing this with a crystal, a little figure, a picture, or anything that will remind you of your dreaming self. The fragrance of the herb mugwort is a traditional dream enhancer, and lavender is relaxing.
- Dreams are Experiences: Revise your concept of what is a dream. What we call a dream is a memory of an experience our dreaming self has had. This dream memory is a glimpse of a larger event, and gives us a view of something we've done in the world of dreams, which is now a memory. More can be found in the dream experience that is unseen and forgotten. Even a fragment of a dream can be expanded. Fragments, snippets, and flashes are all bits of dreams that are valuable.
- Scan: Get into the habit of scanning your body and your awareness both before you fall asleep and when you wake, and even while moving through your waking day. Watch for images, sounds, emotions, body sensations, words, unexpected sentences, fragrances, and memories, and anything else that catches your attention. Do this every time you wake. Pay attention to these sensations and write them down, draw or record them. You may recognize a distinct physical sensation you experience when you wake, alerting you to start your scan.
- Stay Still: Don't move immediately when you wake. Try to stay in the same body position you were in when you were dreaming. If you use an alarm, set it close enough to reach the snooze button without changing your body position. Dreams may linger longer if we keep our body still. And after we've scanned, more of the dream may return if we get into a body position we experienced in the dream. Try assuming the position of a dream character other than yourself and see what comes to you. Play at becoming that character.
- Add the Hypnagogic State: This is the layer of consciousness we experience briefly as we are transitioning from being awake into sleep. Practice becoming aware of what is happening when you dip into this state. It is a richly creative initial phase of sleep and it brings images, ideas, words, advice, feelings, memories, and sensations. Try to sustain it and see if you can catch something.

- Include the Hypnopompic State: Watch what happens in this short period of consciousness we experience just as we wake, between sleeping and waking. Do you have a physical sensation of re-entering this world? Where have you just been, or are you still there? What does it look like? Is it day or night? Who are you with? How do you feel physically? Do you feel any emotions? Do any words come?
- Look for Nightly Gems: Instead of expecting a fully formed dream story every night begin to look for some kind of a “gem from the night” when you wake. What did the night bring? Was it a dream, a memory, an image, interesting squiggly lines, a powerful word, an inspiring phrase, some words of wisdom, an idea, a deep knowing, or a good night’s sleep?
- What’s Happening in Your Day? Watch for coincidences and symbolic objects in your waking life. Is a life question somehow answered? Does something happen that you dreamed previously? Do you experience a Déjà Vu feeling? You may find you dreamed the event before it happened, and these events can be very simple and mundane, or important and big. Look for these in your dream journal. Predictive dreams may be clear and unmistakable, or the precognition may be hidden in the symbols of a dream that looks nothing like what unfolds in waking life, but the tone, and the feeling of the dream is the same. Look for symbols in your day that have meaning for you, and engage with these in some way. Scan your waking life for interesting occurrences.
- Get Plenty of Sleep: Make sure you get enough rest and sleep. It’s much easier to rouse yourself to log a dream if you’re not sleep deprived. Try going to bed early and enjoy the luxury of a good night’s sleep.

Like the almost invisible little air bubble floating in this drop of water, there are hidden surprises in your dreams and in your natural ability as a dreamer.  
Your dreams can change your world.

