



9 WAYS FROM UKRAINIAN GRANDMOTHERS

9 Ways to Keep the Bed Warm With No Heat

The cold does not come down from above. It comes up from the floor and in from the sides. These are the nine things Ukrainian grandmothers put between you and that cold, from the floor all the way up to your pillow. Keep this list by your bed.

with love, Maria

Your list: tick each one when it is done

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| ☐ A warm cup of uzvar, not vodka | ☐ The sheepskin under your back |
| ☐ Grandmother's foot basin | ☐ The sleeping bag on the bed |
| ☐ The pillow tower comes down | ☐ The featherbed goes underneath |
| ☐ The winter coat on your feet | ☐ The white lace to the floor |
| ☐ The blanket that runs from a battery | |

Tonight: tuck a fleece blanket under your mattress on the cold side, let it fall to the floor, and pull out what is stored under the bed. It takes five minutes.



9 A warm cup of uzvar, not vodka

«узвар» — a warm compote of dried fruit

Alcohol opens the small vessels in your skin. For a few minutes you feel warm, then all night you lose heat faster.

- ☐ Simmer a handful of dried apples, pears or prunes in a pot of water for fifteen minutes.
- ☐ Add a spoon of honey.
- ☐ Drink one warm cup sitting up in bed.
- ☐ Make a whole pot while your stove works; it keeps hot in a thermos, and it is good cold in the morning.



8 Grandmother's foot basin

Warm feet going into a bed is half of a warm night. Cold feet steal the heat from everything around them.

- ☐ Sit on the edge of your bed, so your bare feet never touch the floor.
- ☐ Soak your feet for ten minutes in warm water, not hot. Test it with your elbow.
- ☐ Dry them well, between the toes too, and put on dry wool socks at once.
- ☐ Skip the mustard powder. If you have diabetes or numb feet, ask your doctor first.



7 The pillow tower comes down

When you sleep alone, a tunnel of cold air forms behind your back, under the blanket.

- ☐ Lay a body pillow or two spare bed pillows lengthwise behind you, under the covers, on the open side of the bed.
- ☐ A cat or a small dog under the covers does the same job.



6 The winter coat on your feet

Your feet get one more layer, and your chest gets no extra weight, so you breathe easy.

- ☐ Lay your winter coat across only the bottom third of the bed, over the top layer. Wool or a down puffer.
- ☐ If your feet are sore and cannot bear weight, use the down coat.
- ☐ In the morning, hang it by the door and go out in a coat that is already warm.



5 The blanket that runs from a battery

A normal electric blanket is useless when the grid is off. A small one on a power bank warms the bed first.

- ☐ Get a USB heated throw with an automatic shut-off timer, and a power bank of 20,000 milliamp hours.
- ☐ Charge the power bank in the daytime.
- ☐ An hour before bed, spread the throw flat on the bed and set it to low. Switch it off when you get in.
- ☐ Keep it flat, never folded, and use it as its maker says. If you have diabetes or numb feet, ask your doctor first.



4 The sheepskin under your back

Wool holds a thousand small pockets of air. Your body warms them, and the sheepskin warms you back.

- ☐ Lay a sheepskin rug, real or washable faux, wool side up where your shoulders and back go.
- ☐ Put the sheet over it, so it stays clean and does not shed.
- ☐ Once a week, shake it out outside in the cold air.
- ☐ If wool makes you itch, use a thick fleece throw in the same place.



3 The sleeping bag on the bed

A sleeping bag is made to keep the air from moving, and it closes around you on every side.

- ☐ Choose a rectangular bag, not the narrow mummy kind, rated around thirty to forty degrees.
- ☐ Lay it on your bed over the sheet and put your usual comforter on top.
- ☐ If zipping in feels like a trap, unzip it and use it as a quilt.
- ☐ Never zip it shut on the side where you get out of bed.



2 The featherbed goes underneath

«перина» — the featherbed

A spring mattress is mostly air inside. In a cold room that air goes cold, and you lie on it all night.

- ☐ Take a featherbed or a thick foam topper you already own, even the one from the guest bed.
- ☐ Lay it on top of your mattress, under the bottom sheet.
- ☐ If the fitted sheet will not stretch over it, use a flat sheet and tuck it in deep.
- ☐ If feathers make you sneeze, use foam.



I am writing my grandmother's
ways down in a small book. You
are on my list, so you will hear
first when it is ready.

Maria

1 The white lace to the floor

«підзор» — the lace valance on the bed

Cold air is heavy. It lies on the floor and flows in
under the bed. A cloth to the floor closes that box.

- ☐ Fit a bed skirt that reaches all the way to the
floor.
- ☐ Or tuck an old fleece blanket between the
mattress and box spring, so it hangs to the floor
on the cold sides.
- ☐ On the side where you get out of bed, keep it
short, so it can never catch your feet.
- ☐ Clear the storage boxes from under the bed.