sleep as android accuracy review

sleep as android accuracy review is a critical examination of one of the most popular sleep tracking applications available for Android devices. In an era where understanding our sleep patterns has become paramount for overall health and well-being, the accuracy of the tools we use for this purpose is a subject of significant interest. This comprehensive review delves into the various aspects of Sleep as Android's performance, from its core tracking mechanisms to the data it presents, and how it stacks up against scientific benchmarks. We will explore the technology behind its sleep detection, the factors influencing its accuracy, and how users can interpret the data to gain meaningful insights into their sleep quality. Ultimately, this article aims to provide a thorough understanding of Sleep as Android's capabilities and limitations in delivering an accurate sleep analysis.

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Introduction to Sleep as Android

Sleep as Android has established itself as a leading contender in the realm of mobile sleep tracking applications. Its rich feature set, coupled with an emphasis on user control and customization, has garnered a substantial user base. Beyond simple sleep duration logging, the app aims to provide detailed insights into sleep cycles, sleep quality, and even potential sleep disturbances. This review will assess the core functionality of Sleep as Android, focusing on its ability to accurately reflect the user's nocturnal activity. We will explore how its algorithms interpret sensor data and translate it into actionable information, helping users understand their sleep on a deeper level.

The app's approach to sleep tracking is multifaceted, incorporating various data points to paint a comprehensive picture of your sleep. This includes motion detection, sound analysis, and even integration with wearable devices. Understanding these underlying technologies is crucial to evaluating the overall effectiveness of Sleep as Android's accuracy. We will break down these methods, explaining how they work and their inherent strengths and weaknesses in capturing the nuances of human sleep.

Understanding Sleep Tracking Technology

The effectiveness of any sleep tracking application hinges on the technology it employs to monitor and interpret sleep. At its core, sleep tracking aims to differentiate between periods of wakefulness, light sleep, deep sleep, and REM sleep. These stages are characterized by distinct physiological changes, including brain wave activity, heart rate, and muscle movement. While professional polysomnography (PSG) in a sleep lab is the gold standard for measuring these changes, mobile applications rely on more accessible sensors.

Mobile sleep trackers primarily leverage accelerometers to detect movement. During sleep, individuals exhibit varying degrees of movement corresponding to different sleep stages. More movement often indicates lighter sleep or awakenings, while stillness suggests deeper sleep. Heart rate variability (HRV) is another crucial metric, as different sleep stages exhibit characteristic patterns in heart rate fluctuations. Advanced trackers may also incorporate ambient sound analysis to identify snoring, talking, or environmental disturbances that could impact sleep quality.

The Science Behind Sleep Stages

Human sleep is a cyclical process composed of several distinct stages, each with unique neurological and physiological characteristics. These stages are broadly categorized into Non-Rapid Eye Movement (NREM) sleep, which is further divided into N1 (light sleep), N2 (deeper sleep), and N3 (deep or slow-wave sleep), and Rapid Eye Movement (REM) sleep. NREM sleep is crucial for physical restoration, while REM sleep is associated with cognitive functions like memory consolidation and emotional processing.

During N1, the transition from wakefulness to sleep, brain waves slow down, and muscle activity decreases. N2 constitutes the majority of sleep and is characterized by further slowing of brain waves and the appearance of sleep spindles. N3, or deep sleep, is the most restorative stage, with very slow delta waves dominating brain activity. REM sleep is distinct, characterized by rapid eye movements, increased brain activity resembling wakefulness, and muscle atonia (paralysis) to prevent acting out dreams.

Limitations of Consumer-Grade Sleep Tracking

It is essential to acknowledge the inherent limitations of consumer-grade sleep tracking devices, including smartphone applications. Unlike PSG, which directly measures brain waves (EEG), heart electrical activity (ECG), and breathing patterns, mobile trackers infer sleep stages based on indirect measures like movement and sound. This indirect measurement can lead to inaccuracies. For instance, periods of stillness might be misclassified as

deep sleep when the user is simply lying very still while awake or in a lighter sleep stage.

Furthermore, factors such as ambient noise, bed partners' movements, and even the placement of the device can interfere with accurate readings. The algorithms used by these apps are designed to interpret these signals, but they are essentially educated guesses rather than direct physiological measurements. Therefore, while valuable for identifying trends and general sleep quality, data from consumer trackers should be viewed with a degree of skepticism when it comes to pinpointing precise sleep stage durations.

Sleep as Android's Tracking Methods

Sleep as Android employs a sophisticated blend of sensor data to approximate sleep patterns. Its primary method involves utilizing the smartphone's accelerometer to detect movement throughout the night. The app intelligently analyzes the amplitude and frequency of these movements to infer sleep stages.

In addition to motion detection, Sleep as Android offers sound analysis as a supplementary tracking method. This feature can detect snoring, sleep talking, and environmental noises that might disrupt sleep. By correlating sound events with movement patterns, the app aims to provide a more nuanced understanding of sleep quality and identify potential issues like sleep apnea or restless leg syndrome, although it is not a diagnostic tool for these conditions.

Accelerometer-Based Motion Detection

The accelerometer within your smartphone is the workhorse of Sleep as Android's motion tracking. When placed on your mattress, the phone detects the subtle movements you make during sleep. The app's algorithms are designed to interpret these movements as indicators of different sleep stages. For example, minimal movement suggests deep sleep, while more significant shifts might be interpreted as light sleep or awakenings.

The effectiveness of this method is heavily influenced by the phone's placement and sensitivity settings. A phone placed too loosely might exaggerate movement, while one wedged too tightly might miss subtle shifts. Sleep as Android allows for some customization of sensitivity, enabling users to fine-tune the tracking to their specific sleeping environment and personal movement habits. However, it's important to remember that this is an inference based on physical motion, not a direct measure of brain activity.

Sound Analysis for Sleep Disturbances

Sleep as Android's sound analysis feature adds another layer to its tracking capabilities. By listening to the ambient sounds in your bedroom, the app can identify specific events like snoring, coughing, or even talking in your sleep. This data can be incredibly useful for understanding factors that might be negatively impacting your sleep quality.

The app records snippets of audio during detected events and presents them alongside your sleep graph. This allows you to correlate awakenings or restless periods with audible disturbances. For instance, if you consistently wake up at the same time with loud snoring sounds, it might indicate a recurring sleep issue. While this feature is excellent for identifying potential disruptions, it's not a substitute for medical diagnosis of sleep disorders.

Integration with Wearable Devices

For users seeking potentially more accurate and comprehensive data, Sleep as Android offers integration with a wide range of wearable devices. This includes smartwatches and fitness trackers that are equipped with more advanced sensors, such as heart rate monitors and SpO2 sensors.

When integrated, Sleep as Android can leverage the richer data stream from these wearables. Heart rate variability (HRV) is a particularly valuable metric derived from wearables, as it can provide more precise insights into autonomic nervous system activity during sleep, which is closely linked to sleep stages. By combining motion data from the phone with physiological data from a wearable, Sleep as Android aims to offer a more robust and nuanced sleep analysis, potentially improving its overall accuracy.

Factors Affecting Sleep as Android Accuracy

While Sleep as Android is a feature-rich application, its accuracy is not absolute and can be influenced by several external and internal factors. Understanding these variables is crucial for users to interpret their sleep data effectively and to optimize their tracking experience. These factors range from the physical environment of the bedroom to the user's individual sleeping habits.

The effectiveness of motion tracking, for instance, can be significantly impacted by the type of mattress, the presence of a bed partner, and even the user's tendency to move during sleep. Similarly, sound analysis can be compromised by background noise or the placement of the phone. Awareness of

these potential influences allows users to make informed adjustments to improve the reliability of the data they collect.

Bed Partner and Pet Movements

One of the most common challenges for accurate sleep tracking with motion-based systems is the presence of a bed partner or pets. Any movement from them can be registered by the phone's accelerometer, potentially leading to misinterpretations of your own sleep stages. If your partner tosses and turns frequently, or if a pet jumps on and off the bed, the app might register this as your own movement, falsely indicating more restless sleep than you are actually experiencing.

To mitigate this, Sleep as Android offers a "sensitivity" setting. Lowering the sensitivity can help filter out minor movements. Additionally, placing the phone closer to your side of the bed and ensuring it is stable can improve its ability to distinguish between your movements and those of others. However, significant disturbances from a bed partner will always present a challenge for purely accelerometer-based tracking.

Mattress Type and Firmness

The type and firmness of your mattress can also play a role in the accuracy of Sleep as Android's motion tracking. Softer mattresses tend to absorb more motion, meaning that your movements might not be as readily detected by the accelerometer. Conversely, very firm mattresses might transmit even minor movements more intensely.

If you notice consistent discrepancies, consider experimenting with the phone's placement on the mattress. Placing it directly on top of a pillow might provide a different sensitivity profile compared to placing it under the mattress or on the bedside table. The goal is to find a position that reliably captures your natural sleep movements without being overly sensitive to external vibrations.

Ambient Noise and Phone Placement

For users who utilize the sound analysis feature, ambient noise levels are a critical factor. A noisy environment, such as a room with street traffic or noisy neighbors, can lead to the app falsely identifying sleep disruptions or misinterpreting sounds. Conversely, very quiet environments might make it difficult for the app to differentiate between subtle sleep-related sounds and ambient silence.

The placement of the smartphone is equally important for both motion and sound tracking. For motion tracking, placing the phone on the mattress, near your body, is generally recommended. For sound analysis, placing the phone within earshot of your sleeping position without being too close to potential noise sources is ideal. Experimentation with different placements can help you find the optimal spot for reliable data collection.

User's Personal Movement Patterns

Each individual has unique sleeping patterns and levels of restlessness. Some people naturally move very little during sleep, while others are quite active sleepers. Sleep as Android's algorithms are calibrated to a general understanding of sleep movement, but they may struggle to accurately differentiate sleep stages for individuals with extreme movement patterns.

For very still sleepers, the app might underestimate awakenings or periods of light sleep. For highly active sleepers, it might overestimate restlessness. Users can help the app learn their patterns over time by consistently using the app and providing feedback if they notice obvious inaccuracies. Reviewing the sleep graphs and correlating them with how you feel upon waking can help you identify if the app is consistently over or underestimating your sleep quality based on your personal movement habits.

Comparing Sleep as Android to Scientific Standards

When evaluating the accuracy of any consumer sleep tracking technology, it is crucial to compare its performance against the established scientific gold standard: polysomnography (PSG). PSG, conducted in a sleep laboratory, involves direct measurement of brain waves (EEG), eye movements (EOG), muscle activity (EMG), heart rate (ECG), and respiratory patterns. This comprehensive data allows for precise identification of sleep stages.

Sleep as Android, like other mobile sleep trackers, relies on indirect measurements. While it has become remarkably adept at correlating movement and sound with sleep states, it cannot achieve the same level of precision as PSG. This section will explore the typical concordance rates between consumer trackers and PSG, highlighting where Sleep as Android generally falls within this spectrum.

Concordance Rates with Polysomnography

Studies evaluating the accuracy of consumer sleep trackers, including those using accelerometer and sound data, often report moderate to good concordance with PSG in distinguishing between sleep and wakefulness. However, the accuracy of differentiating specific sleep stages (light, deep, REM) tends to be lower.

Research generally indicates that consumer wearables and smartphone apps can correctly identify wakefulness with high accuracy. They also tend to perform reasonably well in distinguishing between consolidated sleep and fragmented sleep. However, distinguishing between NREM stages (N1, N2, N3) and REM sleep based solely on movement is inherently challenging. While Sleep as Android's algorithms are sophisticated, they are still inferential. Therefore, expecting a perfect match with PSG for sleep stage durations would be unrealistic. Users should focus on the trends and overall quality metrics the app provides rather than precise minute-by-minute sleep stage breakdowns.

Strengths and Weaknesses in Stage Detection

Sleep as Android's strengths lie in its ability to detect periods of wakefulness and significant disturbances. If you are awake for extended periods, the app will likely register this accurately through movement and potentially sound. It is also good at identifying overall restlessness and sleep duration, providing a valuable overview of how much time you spend in bed versus actively sleeping.

The primary weakness, as with most consumer trackers, lies in the fine-grained differentiation of sleep stages. Accurately distinguishing between light sleep (N2) and deep sleep (N3), or between light sleep and REM sleep, based solely on accelerometer data can be problematic. The app might infer deep sleep from stillness, which could also be a state of quiet wakefulness or a less-active REM phase. Similarly, differentiating REM sleep's subtle physiological cues from light sleep can be difficult without direct brainwave monitoring.

Focus on Trends and Overall Quality

Given the inherent limitations, the most valuable aspect of Sleep as Android's data is its ability to track trends over time and provide an overall assessment of sleep quality. While a single night's sleep stage breakdown might have some inaccuracies, consistent patterns over weeks or months can reveal valuable information about the impact of lifestyle changes, stress, or environmental factors on your sleep.

For example, if you notice that your deep sleep percentage consistently drops after a period of high stress, or if your total sleep time decreases on

nights you consume caffeine late, these are meaningful insights. Sleep as Android excels at highlighting these correlations, helping you identify what might be helping or hindering your sleep hygiene. It's a tool for self-discovery and improvement, rather than a definitive medical diagnostic device.

Interpreting Sleep Data from Sleep as Android

Once you have collected data from Sleep as Android, the next crucial step is understanding how to interpret it meaningfully. The app presents a wealth of information, from simple metrics like total sleep time to more complex breakdowns of sleep stages and disturbances. Effectively interpreting this data allows you to translate raw numbers into actionable insights for improving your sleep health.

Key metrics to focus on include sleep efficiency, time in different sleep stages, and the number and duration of awakenings. Understanding what constitutes a "good" range for these metrics, and how they can be influenced by various factors, is essential for drawing accurate conclusions about your sleep patterns.

Key Metrics and What They Mean

Sleep as Android typically presents several key metrics after each night's tracking:

- **Total Sleep Time:** The total duration you were asleep.
- **Time in Bed:** The total time you spent in bed, including periods of wakefulness before falling asleep or after waking up.
- **Sleep Efficiency:** Calculated as (Total Sleep Time / Time in Bed) 100%. A higher percentage indicates more efficient sleep. Generally, 85% or higher is considered good.
- **Time in Sleep Stages:** The duration spent in Light Sleep, Deep Sleep, and REM Sleep. These are estimates, as discussed.
- **Awakenings:** The number and duration of periods when the app detected you were awake.
- **Snoring/Noise Events:** Detected instances of snoring or other disruptive sounds.

Understanding these metrics in context is vital. For instance, having a low

sleep efficiency might not always be due to poor sleep quality but could be influenced by the time you spend on your phone before trying to sleep.

Understanding Sleep Stage Distribution

While the exact percentages for each sleep stage are estimates, the distribution can still offer valuable clues. A typical healthy adult sleep cycle has a distribution that changes throughout the night. Generally, the proportion of deep sleep is higher in the first half of the night, while REM sleep becomes more prominent in the latter half.

If your data consistently shows very little deep sleep, or if your REM sleep duration appears unusually short, it might suggest that your sleep is not as restorative as it could be. Factors like alcohol consumption, certain medications, and disrupted sleep schedules can negatively impact these stages. However, remember these are estimations, and consistent patterns are more indicative than single-night anomalies.

Identifying Patterns and Correlations

The true power of Sleep as Android lies in its ability to help you identify patterns and correlations within your sleep data. By using the app consistently over weeks and months, you can begin to see how various lifestyle factors influence your sleep.

- **Diet and Exercise:** Notice if late-night meals or intense workouts before bed affect your sleep efficiency or time in deep sleep.
- **Stress Levels:** Observe if periods of high stress correlate with increased awakenings or reduced REM sleep.
- **Sleep Environment:** Track if changes in room temperature, light, or noise levels impact your sleep quality.
- **Medications and Substances:** Identify potential links between specific medications, caffeine, or alcohol consumption and disruptions in your sleep stages.

Keeping a simple journal alongside the app can further enhance your ability to draw these connections. For example, noting down your daily activities, mood, and any significant events can help you pinpoint why a particular night's sleep data might look different.

Practical Tips for Maximizing Sleep as Android Accuracy

To get the most out of Sleep as Android and ensure the highest possible accuracy for your sleep tracking, a few practical adjustments can make a significant difference. These tips focus on optimizing the app's settings, your sleeping environment, and your usage habits. By implementing these strategies, you can improve the reliability of the data and gain more meaningful insights into your sleep.

It’s not just about downloading the app and letting it run; actively engaging with its features and understanding how it works will lead to better results. Consider these recommendations for enhancing your sleep tracking experience.

Optimizing App Settings

Sleep as Android offers a range of settings that can be adjusted to fine-tune its tracking capabilities. One of the most important is the **sensitivity setting** for motion detection. If you find the app is too sensitive and registering minor movements as awakenings, try lowering the sensitivity. Conversely, if it seems to be missing periods of restlessness, you might need to increase it.

Another setting to consider is the **sound sensitivity**. If you are in a noisy environment, you may need to adjust this to prevent false positives. Ensure that battery optimization settings on your Android device are not interfering with the app's ability to run continuously in the background. Some devices aggressively manage background processes, which can interrupt tracking.

Ensuring Proper Phone Placement

The placement of your smartphone is critical for accurate motion tracking. For most users, placing the phone on the mattress, near your torso, offers the best results. This position allows the accelerometer to reliably detect your body's movements.

Avoid placing the phone on a bedside table or on top of your duvet, as these locations might not accurately reflect your movements or could pick up vibrations from the environment. If you share a bed, try to position the phone on your side of the mattress to minimize the impact of your partner's movements. Experimenting with different placements might be necessary to find what works best for your specific sleeping habits and mattress type.

Maintaining Consistent Usage

Consistency is key when it comes to sleep tracking. To build a reliable dataset and identify accurate patterns, it's important to use Sleep as Android every night. Avoid skipping nights, as this can create gaps in your data and make it harder to discern long-term trends.

Furthermore, try to maintain a relatively consistent sleep schedule. Going to bed and waking up around the same time each day, even on weekends, will help the app capture more predictable sleep patterns. When your sleep schedule is erratic, the data can become more fragmented and difficult to interpret.

Utilizing Smart Alarms Effectively

Sleep as Android's smart alarm feature is designed to wake you during a lighter sleep stage, making waking up feel less jarring. While not directly related to tracking accuracy, it complements the data by ensuring you are woken at an opportune moment, potentially leading to a more accurate reflection of your overall sleep cycle completion.

To use this feature effectively, set a reasonable wake-up window (e.g., 15-30 minutes). This allows the app sufficient time to monitor your sleep cycles and identify the optimal moment to sound the alarm. A shorter window might not capture a light sleep phase, while an excessively long one could lead to waking up too early.

Conclusion: The Verdict on Sleep as Android Accuracy

Sleep as Android stands as a robust and highly capable sleep tracking application for Android users. Its advanced features, including sophisticated motion and sound analysis, coupled with the flexibility of wearable device integration, make it a powerful tool for understanding personal sleep patterns. While it may not replicate the precise scientific accuracy of a clinical polysomnography study, its ability to detect trends, identify disturbances, and provide a comprehensive overview of sleep quality is commendable.

The accuracy of Sleep as Android is undeniably influenced by a range of factors, from the user's sleeping environment to their individual movement habits. By understanding these variables and implementing practical tips for optimization, users can significantly enhance the reliability of the data they collect. Ultimately, Sleep as Android is best viewed as a valuable

personal analytics tool that empowers users to make informed decisions about their sleep hygiene and overall well-being, rather than a definitive diagnostic instrument.

FAQ

Q: How accurate is Sleep as Android at distinguishing between deep sleep and REM sleep?

A: Sleep as Android, like most consumer-grade sleep trackers relying on accelerometer data, has limitations in precisely differentiating between deep sleep and REM sleep. While it can make educated inferences based on movement patterns, it cannot achieve the same accuracy as polysomnography (PSG) which directly measures brainwave activity. Users should focus on the overall trends and consistency of sleep stage data rather than minute-by-minute precision.

Q: Can Sleep as Android detect sleep apnea?

A: No, Sleep as Android is not a medical device and cannot diagnose sleep apnea or any other sleep disorder. While its sound analysis feature can detect snoring, which is a symptom of sleep apnea, it does not provide the comprehensive physiological data (like oxygen saturation levels or detailed respiratory events) required for a medical diagnosis. If you suspect you have sleep apnea, consult a medical professional.

Q: How does placing the phone differently affect Sleep as Android's accuracy?

A: Phone placement is crucial. Placing the phone on the mattress near your torso generally provides the best motion detection. Placing it on a bedside table might miss subtle movements, and placing it on top of soft bedding can either dampen or exaggerate motion readings depending on the material. Experimenting with placement is recommended to find the most consistent and reliable readings for your specific mattress and sleeping position.

Q: What is the best way to improve the accuracy of Sleep as Android when sleeping with a partner?

A: When sleeping with a partner, their movements can be misinterpreted as your own. To mitigate this, try placing the phone on your side of the bed. You can also try slightly lowering the motion sensitivity in the app settings, as this may help filter out less significant movements that aren't yours. However, significant disturbances from a partner will always pose a challenge for motion-based tracking.

Q: Does Sleep as Android work better with certain types of phones?

A: While Sleep as Android is designed to work with a wide range of Android devices, the quality and calibration of the phone's built-in sensors (accelerometer and microphone) can subtly influence accuracy. Newer phones with more advanced sensors might offer slightly more refined data. However, the app's algorithms are robust enough to provide valuable insights across most modern Android smartphones.

Q: How does Sleep as Android's accuracy compare to wearable devices like smartwatches?

A: Wearable devices, especially those with heart rate sensors, often offer a more comprehensive data set than a smartphone alone. Integrating Sleep as Android with a compatible wearable can significantly enhance its accuracy by incorporating heart rate variability (HRV) data, which is a better indicator of sleep stages than motion alone. Generally, a combination of phone and wearable data will yield more nuanced results.

Q: Is it necessary to have the app running continuously overnight for accurate tracking?

A: Yes, for accurate tracking of sleep stages, duration, and awakenings, Sleep as Android needs to be running continuously throughout the night. The app monitors sensor data in real-time. Ensure your phone is charged or plugged in, and that battery optimization settings are not configured to close the app prematurely.

Sleep As Android Accuracy Review

sleep as android accuracy review: The Triumph of Profiling Andreas Bernard, 2019-07-24 Until fairly recently, only serial killers and lunatics had profiles. Yet today, almost everyone is profiled through social media, mobile phones, and a multitude of other methods. But where does the idea of “profiling” come from, how has it changed over time, and what are its implications? In this book, Andreas Bernard examines contemporary profiling’s roots in late-nineteenth-century criminology, psychology, and psychiatry. Data collection techniques previously used exclusively by police or to identify groups of people are now applied to all individuals in society. GPS transmitters and measuring devices are now unconsciously embraced to have fun, communicate, make money, or

even find a partner. Drawing perceptive parallels between modern technologies and their antecedents, Bernard shows how we have unwittingly internalized what were once instruments of external control and repression. This illuminating genealogy of contemporary digital culture will be of interest to students and scholars in media and communication, and to anyone concerned about the power technologies hold over our lives.

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Lausanne, Switzerland. It offers a timely survey and a practice-oriented reference guide to researchers and professionals dealing with design and/or management of the new generation of service systems.

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Informatics (MedInfo2017), held in Hangzhou, China, in August 2017, which also marked the 50th anniversary of the International Medical Informatics Association (IMIA). The central theme of MedInfo2017 was Precision Healthcare through Informatics, and the scientific program was divided into five tracks: connected and digital health; human data science; human, organizational, and social aspects; knowledge management and quality; and safety and patient outcomes. The 249 accepted papers and 168 posters included here span the breadth and depth of sub-disciplines in biomedical and health informatics, such as clinical informatics; nursing informatics; consumer health informatics; public health informatics; human factors in healthcare; bioinformatics; translational informatics; quality and safety; research at the intersection of biomedical and health informatics; and precision medicine. The book will be of interest to all those who wish to keep pace with advances in the science, education, and practice of biomedical and health informatics worldwide.

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nutrition, and weight management. These principles are applied to the prevention and or treatment of a wide variety of chronic conditions ranging from heart disease and diabetes to cancer, mental health, addiction, and injury prevention. This book serves as evidence base for individuals who wish to practice lifestyle medicine or incorporate some of its principles into either general medicine or subspecialty practice. It provides valuable information to healthcare workers in the fields of nutrition, exercise physiology, psychology, behavioral medicine, health promotion, and public policy where lifestyle medicine principles play an ever-increasing role.

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