Key Steps — Making an occupied bed

A LevelUpRN clinical-skills video: changing the bed linen with the patient still in the bed. The checklist follows the demonstration.

- ☐ 1. Explain the procedure and provide privacy. Gather all the clean linen before you start, so the patient is never left unattended mid-change.
- ☐ 2. Perform hand hygiene and put on gloves; raise the bed to a comfortable working height and lower the side rail on your side.
- ☐ 3. Loosen the top bedding and remove any layers being changed, keeping a sheet or bath blanket over the patient for warmth and dignity.
- ☐ 4. Help the patient roll onto their side, facing away from you toward the far rail, and stay with them at the bed's centre.
- ☐ 5. Loosen the soiled bottom sheet and any pad on your side, and roll them up tightly against the patient's back.
- ☐ 6. Fit the clean bottom sheet to the cleared half of the bed — corners tucked — and fan-fold its remaining half in a roll against the patient's back, adding a draw sheet the same way if one is used.
- ☐ 7. Raise your side rail, move to the other side, lower that rail, and help the patient roll gently over the linen roll onto the clean half.
- ☐ 8. Pull the soiled linen out completely and drop it straight into the linen bag without shaking it; then pull the clean linen through, smooth and tuck it, finishing the corners.
- ☐ 9. Replace the top sheet and pillowcase, arrange the top layers, and settle the patient in the centre of the bed.
- ☐ 10. Finish with the bed at its lowest height, side rails as the care plan directs, and the call bell within the patient's reach; remove gloves, perform hand hygiene, and document.

Watch the demonstration:
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Steps summarise this demonstration for education and do not replace your institution's protocol, which always governs. Content reviewed by Dr. Mohamed Ibrahim, MD, PhD — physician-scientist. October 2026.