

Jet-lag pre-flight plan.

Two templates: eastward (the hard direction — start 7 days out) and westward (easier — start 3 days out). Shift bedtime 30–60 min/day toward your destination's clock. Light timing matters more than melatonin.

EASTWARD SHIFT • 7 DAYS • FOR TRIPS LIKE NYC → LONDON

DAY	BEDTIME	LIGHT PROTOCOL	MELATONIN	CAFFEINE
T-7	11:00 PM	Bright AM 7–8am, dim PM 8pm+	—	Cut by 2pm
T-6	10:30 PM	Bright AM 6:30–7:30am, dim PM 7:30pm+	0.5mg @ 9pm	Cut by 1:30pm
T-5	10:00 PM	Bright AM 6–7am, dim PM 7pm+	0.5mg @ 8:30pm	Cut by 1pm
T-4	9:30 PM	Bright AM 5:30–6:30am, dim PM 6:30pm+	0.5mg @ 8pm	Cut by 12:30pm
T-3	9:00 PM	Bright AM 5–6am, dim PM 6pm+	0.5mg @ 7:30pm	Cut by 12pm
T-2	8:30 PM	Bright AM 4:30–5:30am, dim PM 5:30pm+	0.5mg @ 7pm	Cut by 11:30am
T-1	8:00 PM	Bright AM 4–5am, dim PM 5pm+	0.5mg @ 6:30pm	Cut by 11am

WESTWARD SHIFT • 3 DAYS • FOR TRIPS LIKE LONDON → NYC OR LA

DAY	BEDTIME	LIGHT PROTOCOL	MELATONIN	CAFFEINE
T-3	12:00 AM	Bright PM 8–10pm, dim AM until 9am	—	Normal
T-2	1:00 AM	Bright PM 9–11pm, dim AM until 10am	—	Normal
T-1	2:00 AM	Bright PM 10–midnight, dim AM until 11am	—	Normal

The 3 levers, ranked by effect size:(1) Bright light at the destination's morning hour — the master clock. (2) Melatonin 0.3–0.5 mg, taken 5–7h before destination bedtime — shifts the clock without sedation. (3) Meal timing aligned to destination — eat breakfast on destination time the day you board the plane.

Don't: Take more than 0.5mg melatonin for shift purposes (sedation ≠ phase shift). Don't use sleep aids on the plane unless you've tested at home — a bad reaction at 35,000 ft is awful. Don't drink

alcohol on flight — it disrupts deep sleep regardless of timezone.