

CHECKLIST

RESET YOUR
CIRCADIAN
RHYTHM



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This checklist provides actionable steps to optimize your internal body clock for better sleep, consistent energy, and improved health. Aligning your daily activities with your natural circadian rhythm creates a foundation for quality sleep and overall wellbeing.

Checklist

1. Morning Light Exposure

- ☐ **Get morning sunlight within one hour of waking**
This anchors your circadian rhythm by signaling to your brain that it's daytime, helping to regulate melatonin and cortisol production for the entire day.
- ☐ **Position yourself near a bright window during mid-morning**
Working near natural light ($\geq 1,000$ lux) reinforces your body's daytime alertness signals and maintains proper circadian alignment.
- ☐ **Take a brief outdoor break during lunch**
This "booster shot" of daylight helps maintain proper rhythm throughout the day and prevents afternoon energy dips.

2. Evening Light Management

- ☐ **Dim household lights 2-3 hours before bedtime**
Reducing lighting to approximately 50 lux helps signal to your brain that evening has arrived, supporting natural melatonin production.
- ☐ **Wear amber/blue-blocking glasses after 8 PM**
These glasses filter out blue wavelengths that most strongly suppress melatonin, allowing your brain to prepare for sleep even if you must use screens.
- ☐ **Use screen filters or activate night mode on devices**
Reducing blue light emission from screens helps prevent circadian disruption when evening device use is unavoidable.
- ☐ **Eliminate or cover persistent LEDs in the bedroom**
Even small light sources can disrupt melatonin production and fragment sleep quality.

3. Consistent Timing

- ☐ **Wake up at the same time every day (including weekends)**
A consistent wake time anchors your circadian rhythm more effectively than a fixed bedtime and prevents "social jet lag."
- ☐ **Establish a consistent eating window of 8-10 hours**
Time-restricted eating that aligns with daylight helps synchronize peripheral clocks in your digestive system with your master clock.

☐ **Eat your largest meal before 8 PM**

Consuming more than half your daily calories after 8 PM can delay your circadian rhythm by approximately 2 hours.

☐ **Track your natural energy patterns for 7 days**

Recording your natural alertness, hunger, and sleepiness helps identify your chronotype (early bird, night owl, or in-between) for better schedule alignment.

4. Strategic Physical Activity

☐ **Complete vigorous exercise at least 3 hours before bedtime**

High-intensity workouts raise core body temperature and stress hormones, which need time to return to baseline before sleep.

☐ **Schedule afternoon exercise between 3-7 PM when possible**

This timing helps build sleep pressure through adenosine accumulation while still allowing enough time for your body to cool down.

☐ **Incorporate gentle movement (like walking) after dinner**

Light activity aids digestion without raising core temperature significantly, supporting the natural evening wind-down process.

☐ **Practice relaxing stretches or gentle yoga before bed**

These activities trigger a "parasympathetic rebound," helping your nervous system shift into rest-and-digest mode for better sleep onset.

5. Environmental Support

- ❑ **Set bedroom temperature between 60-67°F (16-19°C)**
This temperature range supports the natural drop in core body temperature needed for deep sleep initiation and maintenance.
- ❑ **Maintain bedroom humidity between 40-60%**
Optimal humidity keeps airways comfortable and prevents both dryness and excess moisture that can disrupt breathing during sleep.
- ❑ **Create cross-ventilation or use an air purifier in the bedroom**
Good air quality prevents CO₂ buildup and removes allergens that might disturb sleep quality throughout the night.
- ❑ **Adjust your sleep environment seasonally**
As daylight hours change throughout the year, make corresponding adjustments to lighting, temperature, and activity timing to maintain circadian alignment.