

Pre-Sleep Routine Checklist

A science-backed evening wind-down protocol for deeper, faster sleep

2-3 Hours Before Bed

- Stop eating**
-- digestion raises core body temp, delaying sleep onset
 - Dim all overhead lights**
-- bright light suppresses melatonin via ipRGC photoreceptors
 - Set thermostat to 65-68F / 18-20C**
-- core temperature drop triggers drowsiness
 - Stop intense exercise**
-- raises core temp and cortisol for 2+ hours post-workout
 - Limit fluids**
-- reduces middle-of-night waking from bladder pressure
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1 Hour Before Bed

- Switch screens to night mode or use blue-light glasses**
-- 480nm blue light is most melatonin-suppressive
 - No new stressful tasks, news, or email**
-- cortisol from cognitive stress delays sleep onset by 45-90 min
 - Take magnesium glycinate (200-400mg)**
-- GABA agonist effect; reduces sleep-onset latency in RCTs
 - Write tomorrow's top 3 priorities**
-- reduces pre-sleep cognitive arousal (Baylor University, 2018)
 - Begin progressive muscle relaxation or light stretching**
-- activates parasympathetic nervous system
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30 Minutes Before Bed

- Phone in another room or Do Not Disturb enabled**
-- removes notification-triggered vigilance
- Read fiction (paper or e-ink), journal, or meditate**
-- lowers arousal; fictional narrative reduces rumination
- Take a warm bath or shower (optional)**
-- post-bath skin cooling accelerates core temp drop