

Tips to avoid Jet Lag when traveling West

SFO → Asia/Pacific



1 Light exposure: Delay your internal clock (AASM principle: circadian phase delay)

Traveling west lengthens your day. The AASM recommends evening light exposure to shift the circadian clock later.



Seek bright light in the late afternoon/evening at the destination.



Avoid bright light early morning for the first 1–2 days.



This helps prevent early waking and aligns your clock to the later local time.

2 Shift your sleep/wake schedule before travel



Move bedtime and wake time 1–2 hours later per night for 2–3 days before departure.



This reduces the phase shift your circadian system must make after arrival.

3 Avoid long naps (AASM: limit daytime sleep during adjustment) If absolutely needed:



Take short naps < 30 minutes only



Avoid napping after 3–4 PM local time



Naps later in the day push the sleep rhythm in the wrong direction.

4 Melatonin is usually NOT required for westward travel



However, if you are crossing 8+ time zones, small doses 0.3–1 mg at local bedtime for 1–2 nights may help.

5 Use strong behavioral anchors



Eat lunch and dinner on the destination schedule



Engage in early evening activity/light exposure



Avoid heavy meals or alcohol close to bedtime



Food timing acts as a secondary circadian cue.

6 Hydration & alcohol avoidance



Drink water regularly on the flight



Avoid alcohol or keep it minimal



Avoid caffeine in the destination afternoon/evening

7 Protect sleep the first night - AASM behavioral strategies recommend:



Cool, dark environment



Eye mask + earplugs



Limit screens 1–2 hours before bed



Avoid going to bed “too early,” which worsens early awakening