



VÉLA

VÉLA RECOVERY BRIEFS · NO. 001

Preparing for a 2am Wake-Up

WAKE-UP	REPORT TIME	DEPARTURE
02:00	03:30	06:00

By crew, for crew.

2:00am.

Your alarm goes off.

Your body is convinced it's still the middle of the night.

You're wondering how you're supposed to smile at passengers in four hours.

By 6am you'll be doing exactly that.

The secret isn't surviving tomorrow. It's preparing today.

WHY THIS WORKS

An early report doesn't just shorten your sleep — it asks your body to perform while its circadian rhythm is still signalling "night." Every recommendation in this brief is designed to reduce that mismatch, so you arrive more *alert*, not just more *awake*.

24-Hour Timeline

- 12:00** • Last coffee
- 17:30** • Dinner
- 18:30** • Lights dim
- 19:00** • Magnesium, if you use it
- 19:30** • In bed
- 02:00** • Wake
- 02:10** • Bright light
- 02:20** • Protein breakfast
- 03:30** • Report for duty

24 Hours Before Report

- **No caffeine after 12:00.** It's still in your system at your target bedtime otherwise, quietly working against you.
- **Get daylight early, dim everything by early evening.** This is what actually convinces your body it's "night" a few hours earlier than usual — light is the strongest signal your body clock listens to.
- **Last full meal by early evening.** A heavy meal too close to bed disrupts the exact sleep quality you're relying on tonight.
- **Light movement is fine. Nothing intense within a few hours of bed** — you don't want your body still running hot when you're trying to wind it down.

Falling Asleep at an Hour Your Body Doesn't Believe In

A 2am wake-up means the real challenge isn't waking up — it's falling asleep unnaturally early, around 6–7pm, to get a full cycle in first.

- **Split sleep:** a normal-length sleep early evening (e.g. 7pm–1am) is often easier to fall into than forcing sleep at a strange hour cold.
- **Nap + early night:** a 20–30 min nap mid-afternoon, then bed by 7–8pm.
- **Blackout curtains or an eye mask — non-negotiable.** Your body clock will fight you on daylight hours no matter how tired you are, and this removes that fight entirely.
- Some crew find magnesium helpful before an unusually early bedtime — if you already use it, this can be a good time to take it. If you already use low-dose melatonin, an early bedtime like this is one situation where it may help anchor sleep onset; it isn't necessary for everyone.

→ CREW NOTE

If you couldn't get to sleep by 7pm, don't panic. One difficult early doesn't undo everything. Focus on light, hydration and a short recovery nap afterwards — you'll still be better off than if you'd done nothing.

Make Life Easy for 2am You

- **Lay your uniform out now.** At 2am, even tiny decisions feel harder than they should.
- **Pack your bag, shoes by the door.** One less thing for a half-asleep brain to manage.
- **Two alarms, phone across the room, plus a backup** (hotel wake-up call or a second device). If one fails, you need a second line of defence, not a second chance at luck.
- **Pre-make overnight oats or a protein shake.** Future you will not want to think about food at 2am — she'll just want it ready.
- **Fill your water bottle before bed.** You'll wake up slightly dehydrated, and removing one more decision matters more than it sounds like it should.

The 2am Wake-Up

- **Bright light immediately** — overhead light, not just your phone screen. Light is the fastest way to tell your brain it's time to be alert, even at 2am.
- **Cold water on your face, or a quick cool shower** — more effective for alertness right now than caffeine.
- **Protein-forward, not carbs alone** — eggs, yoghurt, a shake. This keeps blood sugar stable through report time and the first hours of the flight, instead of spiking and crashing mid-service.
- **Caffeine now, not before.** This is the right time for it.

On the Way In

- **Hydrate.** Overnight sleep plus an early start means you're often already mildly dehydrated before the day has even begun.
- **A short walk in daylight-mimicking light** (or actual dawn light, if it's up) helps lock in the alertness you just built.

During the Flight

- Expect a dip around hour 3–4 of the duty day — this is your circadian trough showing up on schedule, not a sign anything's wrong. A short caffeine top-up or a 5-minute galley walk works better than pushing through it.
- **Protein over carbs at your crew meal**, to avoid a second crash later in the sector.

After Landing

- If it's a turnaround, resist the urge to nap the second you're home. A short nap (20 min max) is fine — a long one will wreck tonight's sleep and restart the whole cycle. Aim to return to your normal bedtime if you can.

How Prepared Are You?

Before report, ask yourself:

☐ No caffeine after lunch

☐ Lights dimmed early

☐ Protein ready

☐ Bag packed

☐ Water ready

☐ Two alarms

☐ Early bedtime

6–7 ticks You're setting yourself up for your best possible early.

3–5 ticks You'll probably get through the duty, but recovery becomes more important afterwards.

0–2 ticks Don't worry — tomorrow won't be perfect, but these are the biggest opportunities to improve next time.

*Recovery doesn't start when you get tired.
It starts the day before.*

This is one report. Your roster has dozens.
That's where Véla comes in.

Inside Véla, your recovery plan updates
automatically every time your roster changes,
so you always know when to sleep, eat and
recover.

Sincerely,

A crew member who got tired of being tired



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