

How to Sleep on Public Transport While Traveling

It can be hard to get a good night's rest when you're traveling. Jet lag, loud hotels, and a new environment are all things that can keep you up at night in a new location. Sometimes the best place to get some shuteye is on the train or...

Part 1 of 4:

Choosing a Spot

1.



Look for a quiet location. When you get on the train, bus, or plane, take a look around. Look for a place to sit where there's not a lot of people around. If you're taking a train, walk through the different compartments until you find one that's empty or has relatively few people inside. If you're flying, look for a spot at the back of the plane where it's usually less crowded. Choosing a private spot to rest will minimize your chances of being woken up by noise coming from other passengers.^[1]

2.



Choose a window seat. A window seat will give you somewhere to rest your head and you won't be an inconvenience to other passengers while you nap.^[2]

1. If there are no window seats available, ask someone if they'd mind switching seats with you. Tell them you're planning on sleeping during the trip and you don't want to be in their way if they need to get off or use the restroom. Be respectful if they decline your request.

3.



Avoid spots with heavy foot traffic. Don't sit near a bathroom or an entrance and exit. People boarding or waiting in line to use the restroom may be loud and prevent you from falling asleep. Find a spot to sit that is away from busy areas where you won't be disturbed.

Getting Comfortable

1.



Support your neck and head to prevent soreness. Buy a travel pillow for the best support; they go all the way around your neck so your neck and head are always supported. Roll up a sweater or jacket and wrap it around your neck for support if you don't want to carry a bulky travel pillow on your trip.^[3]

1. If you don't have access to a travel pillow or any clothes to make your own, use your bag as a pillow. Place it in between your shoulder and the window and rest your head on it, or put it in between your head and the headrest for extra support.

2.



Wear comfortable clothes. If you know in advance you want to sleep on public transport, dress accordingly. Wear comfortable pants, avoiding uncomfortable materials like denim. Wear a loose fitting shirt and comfortable shoes. If it's warm where you are, wear flip flops or sandals so your feet don't feel constricted.^[4]

1. Women can wear leggings or yoga pants with a comfortable t-shirt or sweater.
2. Men can wear sweatpants or loose-fitting trousers with a comfortable top.

3.



Stow your luggage so it doesn't take up space. Make more room for yourself to sleep by placing your luggage in the overhead bin or pushing it under your seat. If there's an empty seat in your row, set your bag on it.

1. Always keep your luggage close by when you're sleeping on public transport. Make sure it's secure in an overhead bin or under your seat where no one can steal it. If you're holding your bag or setting it in the seat next to you, hook your arm through one of the straps so it's securely attached to you.
2. Keep your valuables on you. Wear any expensive jewelry you have instead of leaving it in your luggage. Keep your phone in your pocket and if you're traveling with other expensive electronics, bring a smaller bag to keep them in that you can wear while you're sleeping.^[5]

4.



Set an alarm before you doze off. Make sure it's set for at least 15 minutes before you're scheduled to arrive at your destination, in case you arrive early. You'll feel more comfortable knowing you won't accidentally miss your stop. If you're setting an alarm on your cell phone, make sure it's turned up all the way so you hear it going off.

Part 3 of 4:

Eliminating Noise



Wear earplugs. You can purchase high-quality earplugs online or in your local drug store. Look for wax or silicone ear plugs that say they are 'moldable' on the packaging. They'll form to the shape of your ear and work the best to keep noise out.^[6]

1. If you're counting on an alarm to get you up in time for your stop, earplugs may prevent you from hearing it go off.
2. Use headphones if you don't have earplugs. They won't be as effective, but they'll still block out some surrounding noise.

2.



Listen to white noise on your phone. White noise is any sound that is soothing and continuous, like the sound of an air conditioner. Listening to white noise while you sleep will prevent other noises -- another passenger yelling, someone's luggage falling on the ground, a baby crying -- from waking you up. Download white noise sounds onto your cell phone and listen to them using headphones while you sleep.
[7]

3.



Listen to music or audiobooks with headphones in. Download them to your phone before your trip and listen to them while you try to fall asleep. Music or an audiobook will help you tune out your surroundings so you can focus on drifting off.
[8]

Part 4 of 4:

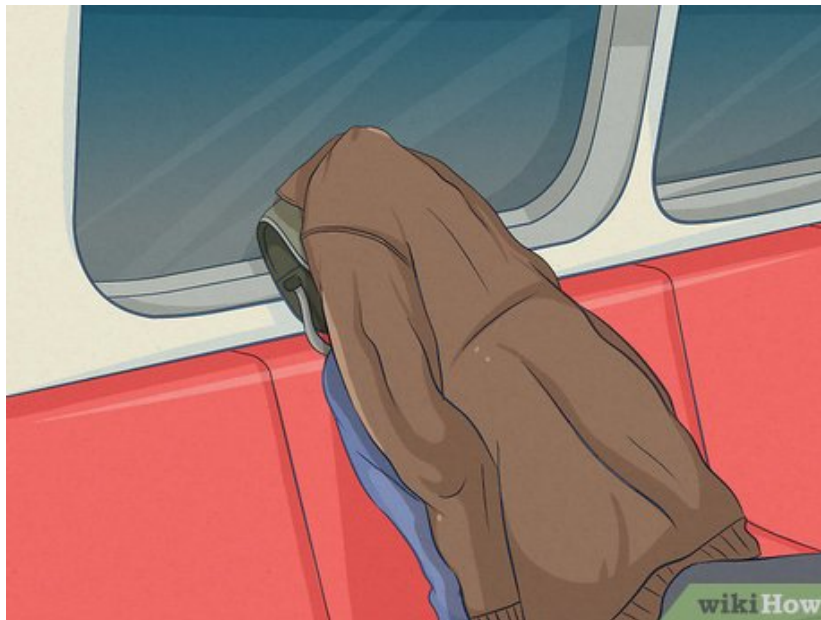
Blocking out Light

1.



Wear a sleep mask. When you're shopping for a sleep mask, look for one that's made of a material that will be comfortable to wear, like silk. Try to find one with built in features to help you sleep during your ride, like aromatherapy scents or ear covers.^[9] Put it on right as you're trying to fall asleep. A sleep mask will block out sunlight and any artificial light so you can fall asleep easier. If you don't have access to a sleep mask, use sunglasses instead.^[10]

2.



Cover your eyes with a jacket or blanket. Position it strategically so it's blocking the sun from shining into your eyes. If you're riding public transportation at night and there are lights on inside, pull your jacket or blanket up over your face so your eyes are covered.

1. If you don't have a jacket or blanket, take off an extra layer of clothing, like a sweater or scarf, and use it to cover your eyes. You can also pull the shirt you're wearing up over your face.

2. If you have a hat on, pull the front down over your face until it's shielding your eyes from the light.



Hang something over the seat window. If you're sitting next to someone, ask them if they'd mind if you covered the window. If the window opens, open it slightly and stick the edge of a shirt or blanket through the crack. Close the window and let the shirt or blanket hang down and block out the light. If the window doesn't open, look for any hooks or cracks that you could wedge something into so it hangs over the window.

1. Many airplane windows have a slide-down window covering to keep out light, so if you're flying check your window before attempting to hang something over it.

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