

Screens & Sleep

Body & health

What screens actually do to sleep, separating the mechanisms.

Light

- Bright light suppresses melatonin
- Screens are far dimmer than daylight
- Night mode reduces blue, not brightness
- Effect is real but modest

Content and timing

- Engaging content delays going to bed at all
- Social and work content raises arousal
- Notifications interrupt after sleep onset
- Effect is larger than the light

THE DIFFERENCE THAT MATTERS

The main mechanism is displacement and arousal, not the light itself. Setting a stop time beats changing screen colour.

A phone in another room removes both mechanisms at once, and removes the middle-of-the-night check as well.