

CASTLE PREP PACKAGE

Sleep Banking Schedule & Mindfulness Meditation Routine

T-10	Begin Mindfulness Meditation (MM) morning routine: PMR (see description). Follow with 'Wake Up' breath work exercise in State app. Gradually move bedtime 15-20 mins earlier than normal Begin to minimize light exposure during the evening and maximize light exposure during daylight hours Use sleep journal or app to track hours of sleep and quality of sleep Prepare environment (bedroom) for sleep banking schedule e.g. black out curtains or sleep masks to decrease light exposure Begin MM evening routine: State app 'Fall Asleep' exercise followed by PMR.
T-9	Move bedtime 20-30 mins earlier than normal Continue light exposure schedule Continue MM morning & evening routine with PMR and State app.
T-8	Move bedtime 30 mins earlier than normal Continue light exposure schedule. Continue MM morning & evening routine w/ State. Begin incorporating mid-day MM practices, one just after lunch and another after arriving home from work, both lasting 5-7 minutes each using State 'Be Present' exercise followed by Object Focus exercise (see description).
T-7	<u>Begin Sleep Banking</u> Increase hours of sleep by 1 hour <u>Decrease Light</u> exposure 30 mins before bed Begin decreasing caffeine/ stimulant intake – limit usage to before 1200 Continue MM morning, mid-day, & evening routine w/ State and Object Focus exercise.
T-6	Increase hours of sleep by 2 hours <u>Decrease Light</u> exposure 40 mins before bed No caffeine/ stimulant use past 1200 Continue practicing MM morning, mid-day & evening routine. Increase mid-day MM practices to 10-15 minutes each. Object Focus exercise time should increase.
T-5	Increase hours of sleep by 2.5-3 hours <u>Decrease Light</u> exposure 45-60 mins before bed No caffeine/ stimulant use past 1200 Continue practicing MM morning, mid-day & evening routine.
T-4	Urgent need to prioritize sleep Increase hours of sleep by 2.5-3 hours <u>Decrease Light</u> exposure 60 mins before bed Discontinue caffeine/ stimulant intake Continue practicing MM morning, mid-day, & evening routine. Increase mid-day practices to 20 minutes each.
T-3	Increase hours of sleep by 3 hours <u>Decrease Light</u> exposure 60 mins before bed Discontinue caffeine/ stimulant intake Continue practicing MM morning, mid-day, & evening routine.
T-2	Increase hours of sleep by 3 hours <u>Decrease Light</u> exposure 60 mins before bed Allow yourself to wake up naturally without setting an alarm for sleep optimization Discontinue caffeine/ stimulant intake Continue practicing MM morning, mid-day, & evening routine. Increase mid-day practice to 30 minutes. Incorporate imagery/visualization of positive Castle Forge performance.
T-1	Increase hours of sleep by 3 hours Decrease Light exposure 60 mins before bed Allow yourself to wake up naturally without setting an alarm for sleep optimization Discontinue caffeine/ stimulant intake Continue practicing MM morning, mid-day, & evening routine.

Research **does not support the effectiveness of “*recovery sleep*” or making up sleep after long periods of sleep restriction. Sleep banking or **increasing sleep PRIOR** to sleep restriction is shown to improve cognitive performance during restriction period and improve recovery post restriction.**

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Imagery/Visualization

Utilizing imagery/visualization is a handy tool for any performer to use to prepare for a major event.

When practicing imagery, the brain fires the same neurons used when actually performing the action. This better prepares the soldier because the neuronal pathway is strengthened making it easier to execute and reducing the need to think about the action. Imagery also prepares for unfavorable conditions. The soldier can use this exercise to image likely situations s/he will be in and create possible solutions for those situations. The soldier can also predict how s/he'll feel emotionally and prepare for that mental wall that may be in their path.

To practice imagery/visualization you want to engage as many senses as possible. Try building it through the imagery framework of PETTLEP. Incorporating as many of the PETTLEP elements as you can helps to ensure an effective imagery/visualization practice.

Element	Definition	Example
Physical	Physical nature of imagery, including body position, clothing, and sport equipment specific to task/situation.	Occupy position to receive serve while wearing tennis clothes and holding his/her racquet.
Environment	Physical environment where imagery is performed.	Perform imagery on the tennis court where match will occur.
Task	Characteristics of the task and expertise level.	Preview shots typically made in response to serve.
Timing	Temporal nature of imagery.	Perform imagery in real-time.
Learning	Imagery content evolves with learning and refinement of behavior.	Makes technical correction to shots in response to feedback.
Emotion	Affective and emotional response to situation.	Feel positive, confident, and in control of the situation.
Perspective	Visual perspective adopted (1PP vs. 3PP).	View images through 3PP analyze body position then switch to 1PP to anticipate service reception.

Object Focus Mindfulness Meditation

This mindfulness exercise is very simple and highly effective for attention training. The purpose is to build awareness around your attention. With daily practice, you will be able to keep your attention on what matter for longer periods of time even with distractors in sight. To practice this simply pick an internal object, (your breathing, muscle tension, or an image), or an external object. Try alternating between internal and external with each practice. Keep your attention on the chosen object for a set amount of time, i.e., 1 minute, 3 minutes, 15 minutes, etc. As you practice this exercise, your attention will drift to other things you may be interested in or concerned about and that is OK. Once you notice your attention has drifted, bring your focus back to the chosen object.

Soon, your awareness will develop and it will only be a couple seconds before you notice your attention is not where it should be. This will come in handy during times of stress in Castle Forge when you're fatigued and plagued with sleep deprivation.

Apps to Download (*Required)

Way of Life – use this habit tracking app to keep up with your meditation routines.

State* – use this app to guide you through quick breathwork exercises during your meditation routines.

Headspace – use this app as an additional resource for meditation. It is free for service members.

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During FTX

Short tactile naps when appropriate; less than **20 mins** as much as possible
If sleeping during daylight hours, use **dark eye pro** to decrease sunlight exposure to retina

Caffeine naps: **100mg caffeine + 20 min nap**

Table 11-2. Caffeine dose for optimal alertness

Type of sleep challenge	Dose
Sustained operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 200 mg at midnight• 200 mg again at 0400 and 0800 if needed• Use during daytime (1200 and 1600) only if needed
Night operations with daytime sleep	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 200 mg at start of night shift• 200 mg again 4 hours later• Late dose: at least 6 hours prior to start of daytime sleep
Restricted sleep (6 hours of sleep)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 200 mg upon awakening• 200 mg again 4 hours later• Last dose: at least 6 hours prior to sleep period

mg milligram

Mental Strength during FTX/ Special Events

STAY IN THE MOMENT, don't focus on things in the past or things you would have, could have done. Learn from it, stay in the moment, and push forward.

Your attitude and mentality impact how your brain interrupts pain and fatigue, studies show that psychological state influence perception of pain. A negative emotional state increases pain.

Hard work is a prison sentence only if it has no meaning.

Quitting is **NOT** an option.

Physiological Breathing Technique

2 consecutive inhalations through the nose to fill the lungs to max capacity, followed by slow exhalation through pursed lips. Purpose: Slowing heart rate & releasing excess CO₂

Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)

PMR is a stress-management mindfulness technique. PMR can help relieve the physical symptoms of stress and anxiety, such as tight, aching muscles, by systematically tensing and releasing certain muscle groups in your body. To begin PMR, sit or lie down in a comfortable position and breathe slowly. Start with your toes and feet, then squeeze the muscles tightly as you inhale. Count to 5, then relax your muscles as you exhale. Repeat 2 more times. Then do the same for all the other muscles in your body, progressing through your legs, stomach, arms, shoulders, and neck.

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Prep Week -2						Run Mileage
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	10 mi or less
	<i>Interval Runs</i>	<i>Lift (Lower Emphasis)</i>	<i>Ruck</i>	<i>Lift (Upper Emphasis)</i>	<i>LSD</i>	Ruck Mileage
Volume: Mileage/Total Reps	<4mi	Primary Working Sets <30 reps	<6mi	Primary Working Sets <30 reps	<6mi	6 mi or less
Ruck Load			35-45#			Total Mileage: 16 mi or less
Rate of Perceived Exertion (RPE)	7-8	6-7	6-7	6-7	3-4	Total Mileage: 16 mi or less
Prep Week -1						Run Mileage
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	8 mi or less
	<i>Interval Runs</i>	<i>Lift (Lower Emphasis)</i>	<i>Ruck</i>	<i>Lift (Upper Emphasis)</i>	<i>LSD</i>	Ruck Mileage
Volume: Mileage/Total Reps	<3mi	Primary Working Sets <25 reps	<4mi	Primary Working Sets <25 reps	<5mi	4 mi or less
Ruck Load			35#			Total Mileage: 12 mi or less
Rate of Perceived Exertion (RPE)	6-7	5-6	5-6	5-6	3-4	Total Mileage: 12 mi or less

Notes: Generally speaking, the week prior to a large training event or physical preparation should look similar to your consistent training routine. Avoid novelty/new exercise or adding excessive training volume in preparation for the event. These guidelines are meant to be general in nature, as each individual has varying degrees of weekly training. The recommendations provided should offer a 90% solution for most SMs participating in FTX or special events.

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Carb-Loading

A few days before the event eating more carbs than usual. This will help to make sure that throughout the competition you have enough glycogen (muscle storage of carbs) saved. Start eating like this on

10 Days Before Event

Daily Carb Goal: 2 – 3 grams/pound

Example

$$\begin{aligned}200\text{-pound person} \times 2.5 \text{ g/pound} \\500 \text{ g carbs per day}\end{aligned}$$

=

2–28-ounce Gatorades (around workouts)
3 Packets Quaker Instant Oats (Breakfast)
2 cups of rice (Lunch)
2 cups of Pasta (Dinner)
2 Bananas (Snacks)

Hydration

This is the amount of water I recommend you all drink daily, leading up to the event. This doesn't include water or any other fluids you are drinking during exercise.

Moderate Temps (55 – 75 F): 0.75 ounces/pound

High Temps (75 F +): 1.0 ounce/pound

Sweat Rate Calculator

The easy way to figure out how much you should be drinking every hour during the event is below. I know you won't always have ready access to water but try to hit this as close as possible.

Hourly Sweat Rate Formula

(Weight in Pounds / 30) x 4 = Ounces to drink every hour

Example

$$(200 \text{ pounds} / 30) \times 4 = 26 \text{ ounces per hour}$$

MRE's

If they give you MRE's to carry it's worthwhile to field strip them. Field stripping MRE's drops the weight from **1lb 14 oz → 1 lb**

Field Stripping Steps

1. Take out & throw away condiment packets
2. Bring a re-usable spoon or keep 1 spoon
3. Remove the main course from the cardboard & throw the cardboard away
4. Throw away the flameless ration heater
5. Decide what sides to keep/eat, trade with your partner/ throw away what you don't want
6. Throw away the dairy shakes (hurts most people stomachs)
7. Repack and seal with riggers tape or duct tape

Electrolytes

Electrolytes will be extremely useful during the event. Can help to prevent cramping, and it maximizes your muscle's ability to contract.

LMNT	Drip-Drop	Liquid IV	Army ORS
 1 every ~3 hours	 1 every ~3 hours	 2 every ~3 hours	 1 every ~6 hours