



# Shift Worker Tips

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# Objectives

At the end of this shift work discussion, you will be able to:

- Describe the different types of 12-hour shift schedules
- Demonstrate key elements of effective shift change
- List the advantages of shift work
- List the risk factors associated with shift work
- Explain the effects of Circadian Rhythm on shift worker
- Identify Do and Don't to ensure proper rest as shift worker
- Describe the key factors to stay alert at work
- List tips to maintain physical and emotional health as shift worker
- Recognize the key factors that help ensure success as a shift worker

# Shift Schedule

Most Operators/Process Technicians work a rotating day/night 12-hour shift schedule. The two most popular shift schedules in the Petrochemical Industry are:

1. DuPont schedule with 7-day long change every 28 days
2. Alternating 4 days on, 4 days off, 4 nights on, 4 days off schedule

# Shift Change

Most Petrochemical plant shift workers will make relief between 4-6 AM for day shift and 4-6 PM for night shift. The key elements of an effective 10-15-minute shift change are:

1. Be on time, dressed in Fire Retardant Clothing (FRCs) and ready for work
2. Conduct Face to face conversation with your relief emphasizing safety issues, equipment problems, procedures in progress and recent changes to the process
3. Discuss status of any LOTOs in progress and personnel on unit
4. Review electronic logs, written notes and unit instructions to ensure awareness of current situation

# Advantages of Shift Work

- \$4-5k additional annual base pay working 12-hour shift schedule
- \$1-2k annual shift differential extra pay for night shift
- Special camaraderie formed with shift team
- Running personal errands during non-peak time periods
- Taking trips or mini-vacations on long changes

# Risks Associated with Shift Work

- Stress
- Sleep deprivation
- Fatigue
- Weight gain
- Health issues
- Drinking problems
- Smoking
- Family issues

# Circadian Rhythm

Circadian Rhythm is the natural biological 24-hour clock our bodies have that regulate sleep, digestion, secretion of adrenaline and melatonin, blood pressure, and body temperature. To help manage your Circadian Rhythm you should:

- Stay in well lit areas when awake and dark areas when sleeping
- Maintain a consistent schedule on days off
- Maintain a consistent, healthy eating schedule and diet
- Stay active at work, especially during high risk “body sinking” times of 2-4 AM and 2-4 PM

# Proper Rest

Be as consistent as you can with your sleep schedules to prevent any fatigue or disruption to your circadian rhythm.

## DO

- Exercise regularly to help you sleep better
- Eat healthy foods high in carbohydrates (rice, beans, fruits and vegetables)
- Eat plenty of fiber to help digestion
- Block light from bedroom windows and utilize sound machine to enhance day-time sleeping
- Get consistent 7-8 hours sleep per day

## DON'T

- Eat heavy meals or fast food, especially on night shift
- Drink alcohol before bed
- Drink caffeinated beverages before bed
- Smoke or intake nicotine before bed
- Take sleeping pills

## Staying Alert at Work

- Take 30-45-minute nap before night shift
- Drink at least 2 liters of water per day
- Eat small, healthy meals and snacks
- Moderate caffeine
- Stay active at work during “body sinking” times

# Emotional Health

- Engage family to support shift work schedule and challenges
- Plan family and social activities around work schedule
- Stay involved in hobbies and community events
- Maintain positive attitude with mindset that you “get to go to work” rather than you “have to go to work”

# Conclusion

There are many challenges and risks involved in working shifts. Here are four key tips to help ensure you are successful as a shift worker:

1. Adopt a healthy lifestyle with consistent eating schedule and diet
2. Stay physically and emotionally fit
3. Commit to getting proper amount of rest
4. Engage family to help you balance your work and personal life
5. Maintain a positive, "can do" attitude towards your job, work team and organization