

GRAPPLESTRONG

THE SHRED — WELLBEING GUIDE

WINTER

PROTOCOL

A practical playbook for beating Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) — light, supplements, routine and mindset to keep energy up through the dark months.

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01 / LIGHT MANAGEMENT

LIGHT MANAGEMENT

Light is the cornerstone of SAD prevention. Get this right and everything else gets easier.

MORNING – WITHIN 30 MIN OF WAKING

- Use a 10,000 lux SAD lamp (e.g. Lumie Halo, Beurer TL 50, Circadian Optics). Sit 45–60cm away, facing indirectly, for 20–30 minutes while working, journaling or eating breakfast.
- Open blinds immediately on waking — even if it's dark or cloudy, natural light still helps anchor your circadian rhythm.
- If you can, get outside for 10–15 minutes before 10am, ideally walking.

EVENING

- Dim lights after 8pm.
- Avoid overhead lighting — switch to lamps, amber bulbs or candles.
- Optional: blue-light blocking glasses — not mandatory, just helpful if you're on screens.

WHY IT WORKS

Morning light exposure and an evening wind-down anchor your circadian rhythm — the single biggest lever for mood and energy through winter.

02 / SUPPLEMENT STACK

SUPPLEMENT STACK — UK WINTER

THE CORE STACK

SUPPLEMENT	DOSE & NOTES
Vitamin D3 + K2	4,000–5,000 IU daily, in the morning with fats. Most UK adults are deficient Nov–April.
Omega-3 (EPA dominant)	2–3g combined EPA/DHA daily.
Magnesium glycinate or threonate	200–400mg in the evening.
B Complex (B6, B12, folate)	1x daily in the morning — supports serotonin and energy metabolism.

OPTIONAL ADDITIONS

L-Tyrosine	500–1,000mg AM — for dopamine support.
Ashwagandha	500mg PM — if stress or anxiety rise.
Creatine	5g daily — shown to improve mood and energy, especially in low-light conditions.

03 / ROUTINE

BEHAVIOURAL & ROUTINE STRATEGIES

MOVE DAILY

Even 30–45 minutes of moderate training — weights, walks, grappling — keeps serotonin and dopamine elevated. Don't chase PRs if motivation dips; prioritise frequency over intensity.

KEEP SLEEP TIMING CONSISTENT

Bedtime and wake time within 30 minutes daily. Avoid sleeping in excessively on dark mornings — this worsens circadian misalignment.

WARM MORNINGS

Use a heated blanket, or a hot shower plus a caffeine ritual, to anchor motivation on dark days.

MAINTAIN SOCIAL CONNECTION

Winter isolation amplifies SAD. Book classes, open mats or small group sessions ahead of time.

SET YOUR ANCHORS

Build "non-negotiable" weekly anchors — e.g. Sunday breakfast, Thursday sparring, Friday sauna.

04 / ENVIRONMENT & MINDSET

ENVIRONMENT & MINDSET

ENVIRONMENT & HABIT TWEAKS

- Keep your living space bright — LED daylight bulbs in main rooms.
- Use hygge cues: warm lighting, clean spaces, plants, and scents like cinnamon, pine and citrus.
- Sauna or hot/cold contrast 2–3x per week if available — boosts dopamine, mood and circulation.
- Keep a "winter wins" journal — record small daily gratitudes or accomplishments.

MINDSET & REFLECTION

- Acknowledge that energy is cyclical — don't attach self-worth to productivity dips.
- Use winter for deep work, planning, reflection and building foundations — less external, more internal focus.
- Practise morning light exposure and evening wind-down rituals religiously. Consistency beats motivation.

AN IMPORTANT NOTE

This guide supports a healthy winter routine — it isn't medical advice. If low mood is persistent, severe or affecting daily life, please speak to your GP or a qualified professional.

THE BLUEPRINT

DAILY WINTER PROTOCOL

A model day that puts the whole protocol together — adjust the times to your own schedule.

6:30am	Wake, blinds open, SAD lamp on, caffeine.
7:00am	Walk or train — even a short one counts.
9:00am	Work in bright light.
12:00pm	Protein-heavy meal + 10 minutes of daylight.
3:00pm	Short movement break, hydration, daylight if possible.
6:00pm	Train, socialise or sauna.
8:30pm	Dim lights, magnesium, read.
10:00pm	Sleep.

THE RULE

Morning exposure and an evening wind-down, done religiously. Consistency > motivation.