

Checkout, Cleaning and Turnover





Check-Out, Cleaning and Turnover

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The Checkout Process

Despite being of lesser importance from the guest's point of view, checkout remains a critical step in the hosting process for hosts.

Set a checkout time that provides maximum flexibility and convenience to your guest but with minimal impact and inconvenience to you.

This means knowing...



Airbnb notice requirements



Check-in time of future guests



Notice time to schedule cleaner



Time required to clean your place

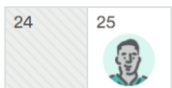
If no check-out time was specified on your Airbnb listing, checkout is **12:00 PM local time**.

You also have the ability to set a **preparation time** between guest stays.

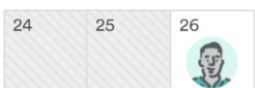
Your options are...



No preparation time



1 night before and after each reservation blocked



2 nights before and after each reservation blocked

To add a preparation time: Login to Airbnb > In **Hosting** mode, select **Listings** from the top menu > Click on your listing > Click on **Availability** from your listing's menu > Click the **Edit** button for the **Reservation preferences** section > Select **Block 1 night before and after each reservation** or **Block 2 nights before and after each reservation** under **Preparation time** > Click **Save**

The Checkout Process

BEING THERE IN PERSON AND CHECKING FOR DAMAGES

Just like with check-in, being there in person at checkout is always advisable whenever practical.

Being there in person re-activates the “human element” of the hosting process and allows you to confirm that your guests have had a positive experience or address anything that may have been an issue throughout their stay. Both of these outcomes will be important in ensuring you receive the best possible reviews very shortly.

On a practical note, it also allows you to check for damage to your property and possessions.

If you need to make a claim under the Airbnb Host Guarantee or your security deposit, you only have 14 days from your guest’s checkout date or before the next guest checks-in to do so – whichever is earlier. Many hosts have booked out calendars with back-to-back bookings. Being physically present at check-out may represent one of the few (if not only) opportunities a host has to check for damage before the next booking comes through the door (which may be as early as that same day!)

If you intend on being present at checkout, let your guests know this upon their arrival during check-in. A guest that believes you will be present at check-out is more likely to avoid causing damage to your property knowing that you will personally be there to inspect the place upon their exit. They will also be in a weaker position to deny any wrongdoing for damage that you identify they have caused.

As the final part of their stay at your place, it’s also your last opportunity to positively influence their impressions. Remember that within 24 hours of checkout, the guest will be prompted to review their experience. Ensure that you use this final opportunity to leave the best possible taste in their mouth.

The Checkout Process

WHAT TO DO WITH KEYS

If you can't be there in person, it's important you arrange with your guests how they're able to return keys or leave the place locked and secured.

For homes that utilize traditional lock and keys, a common solution is to ask guests to deadlock all doors, leave the keys inside and then simply close the door on exit. You're then able to return to your place with your own set of keys, and collect the set that were left by the guest.

Alternatively, if you use a lockbox, you may ask guests to place the keys back in the lockbox where they were originally taken. Similarly, you're able to ask guests to return keys to neighbors, key exchange shopfronts or cafes close by (where they may have similarly picked up the keys initially upon their arrival).



Cleaning Fees and How Much to Charge

Providing a clean and tidy space will make your guests feel comfortable in your home from the moment they arrive. A clean place demonstrates your commitment to providing a high standard of hospitality and will make your guests feel welcome and at ease. Some hosts choose to cover the cost of a professional cleaner by including a **cleaning fee**.

Cleaning fees help hosts account for any extra expense they incur in getting their place clean and tidy for incoming guests.

The fee is charged once per trip – not as a nightly fee. For example, if a listing has a cleaning fee of \$100, guests do not pay \$100 per night – they pay \$100 only once, regardless of how many nights the reservation is for.

Consider carefully how much you charge for your cleaning fee – a big fee can make a one or two night stay very expensive.

Getting your cleaning fee right means not losing money by charging less than it costs to have your place cleaned and turned over. Getting your cleaning fee wrong risks losing potential reservation requests because your prices are perceived as too high.

Because the cleaning fee is included in the total guest payment and host payout, Airbnb's service fees apply on this too. For hosts, this is 3%. Cleaning fees are not automatically included when making a Special Offer, which should be an all-inclusive price. Keep this in mind if offering a prospective guest a Special Offer for your place.

To add a cleaning fee: Login to Airbnb > In **Hosting** mode, select **Listings** from the top menu > Click on your listing > Click on **Pricing** from your listing's menu > Click the **Edit** button for the **Extra charges** section > Enter your cleaning fee into the **Cleaning fee** input box > Click **Save**

Extra charges

Cleaning fee
This fee will apply to every reservation.

Security deposit
If you submit a damage claim within 14 days of checkout, guests will be responsible for damages up to this amount.

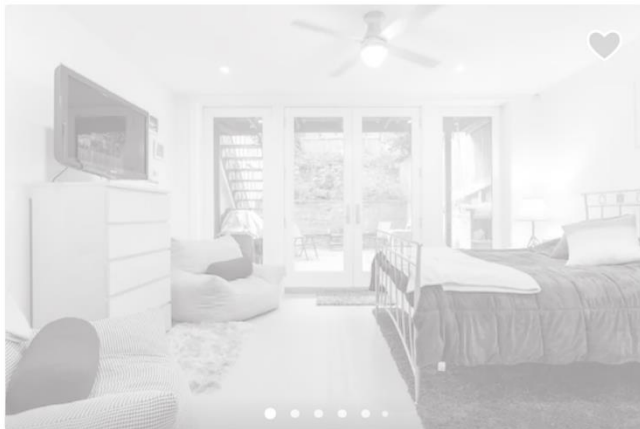
Extra guests
After more than 1 guest, charge \$0 per person, per night.

For each guest after

Cleaning Fees and How Much to Charge

THE GUEST'S PERSPECTIVE

Below is a sample listing from a search for a place in New York for one night. It quotes a price per night of **\$100**. When a prospective guest visits the listing page, they see a line item breakdown of the total cost:



ENTIRE APARTMENT · 1 BED
FAB STUDIO WITH PRIVATE GARDEN NEAR CENTRAL PARK!

\$100 per night · Free cancellation

★★★★★ 118 · Superhost

\$200 total
 ★★★★★ 118

Dates
 01-01-2019 → 02-01-2019

Guests
 1 guest

\$100 x 1 night	\$100
Cleaning fee ?	\$70
Service fee ?	\$30
Total	\$200

Book

You won't be charged yet

Suddenly, their \$100 a night bargain has become a \$200 burden. If we compare the total cost for a 1-night vs. 2-night vs. 3-night reservation, we can see that the cleaning fee represents a larger share of the total cost for shorter stays:

Nights	Calculation				Cleaning fee as % of total cost
	Nightly price	Cleaning fee	Service fee	Total	
1	\$100		\$30	\$200	35%
2	\$200	\$70	\$55	\$325	22%
3	\$300		\$75	\$445	16%

Cleaning Fees and How Much to Charge

The key takeaway here is that you should not over-charge with your cleaning fees. Doing so may scare off potential guests that would otherwise be interested in your place at a reasonable price.

Whilst the length of a guest's stay is outside of your control, the cleaning fee is not – it is determined entirely by you.

Therefore be aware of the dangers of inflating your cleaning fee as a means of making a quick buck. Even though you may get away with charging more than the cleaning actually ends up costing you, the additional income you'll receive needs to be weighed up against the risk of losing prospective guests that perceive your place as too expensive and never end up booking.



Additionally, guest perceptions that they're being taken for a ride through an exploitation of the cleaning fee may be enough to scare them off consideration of your place when deciding where they want to book.

In addition to keeping things honest, rarely will a small inflated cleaning fee justify the lost income of additional bookings that would otherwise have come through, but never eventuate.

Cleaning Fees and How Much to Charge

HOW MUCH TO CHARGE

So how much should you actually charge? It's important to remember that whether you pay for a cleaner or do the cleaning yourself, there is a cost (either financial or your personal time) associated with each.

Cleaning fees have become a common feature across most listings on Airbnb. Hosts that do not add a cleaning fee typically compensate with a higher nightly price. Therefore so long as you keep your cleaning fee honest and reasonable, the mere fact of simply having a cleaning fee should have minimal impact on the likelihood of getting booked.

Try keep the cleaning fee as close as possible to the actual cost of getting your place cleaned.

If you're doing the cleaning yourself, another method for determining your cleaning fee is to do a search on Airbnb for comparable listings (same home type, room and bathroom numbers) in your same neighborhood/city, and seeing how much they're charging for their cleaning fee. Try not to venture too far north of whatever these cleaning fees are. You will want to make sure however that the reasonable value of your personal time factors into the final amount you arrive at.

An emerging service that's becoming increasingly popular for Airbnb hosts are cleaning companies that provide their services specifically for short-term rental properties such as those listed on Airbnb.

As an 'on-demand' service you're able to call upon only at the times you have bookings and need your place cleaned, they are a useful and handy service to keep up your sleeve. The downside however is the lack of familiarity with your cleaning and turnover preferences that inevitably results from ad-hoc visits by different cleaners each time.

What Needs to be Cleaned With Each Turnover?

ALL ROOMS



Empty garbage, recycling and wastebaskets

Wipe down mirrors, windows and glass fixtures – removing all streaks

Vacuum carpets and rugs

Disinfect, spray and dust surfaces and surface tops

Clean floor surfaces

KITCHEN AND DINING ROOM



Remove old foods from the fridge and pantry

Clean insides and exteriors of microwaves, fridges, ovens and stoves

Wash and put away dirty dishes

Empty and clean the sink

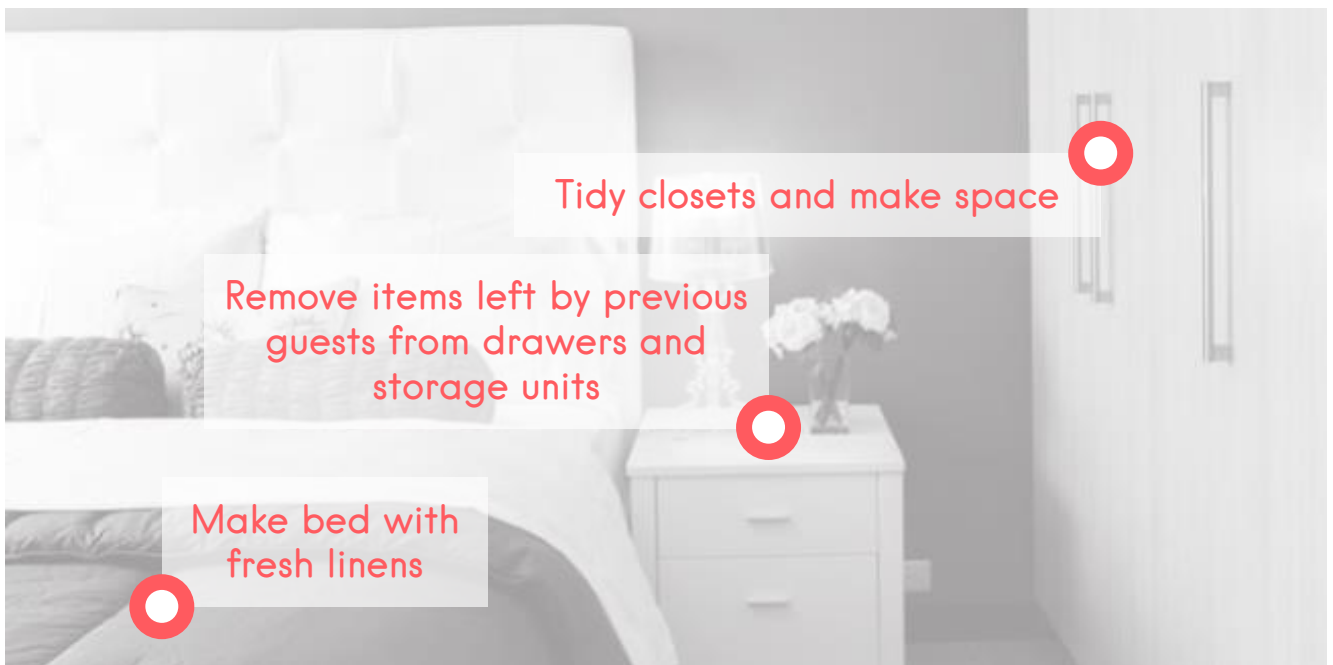
Wipe down tables and arrange chairs

What Needs to be Cleaned With Each Turnover?

BATHROOMS



BEDROOMS



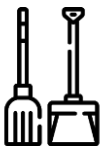
What Needs to be Cleaned With Each Turnover?

When it comes to keeping your place clean, one little trick is to provide your guests with the ability to tidy up after themselves.

Be sure to leave cleaning supplies so they can take care of spills and accidental messes. You'd be surprised at how often guests take it upon themselves to leave their host's place in a better condition than their very own homes!



Keep the following cleaning products handy and accessible to guests...



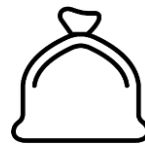
Broom and
dustpan



Dishwashing
soap



Disinfectant
wipes



Garbage
bags



Mop and
bucket



Multi-purpose
surface spray



Paper
towels



Scrub
sponges



Toilet brush



Vacuum
cleaner



Your one-stop-shop for getting found more often,
selling your space and making more money on Airbnb

Other Airbnb Cheat Sheets in this series:

- Deciding to List your Place on Airbnb
- Safety, Security & Protecting Your Property
- Listing Your Place on Airbnb
- Pricing
- Booking Settings
- Getting Found
- Communications
- The Check-In Process
- Providing a Phenomenal Guest Experience
- Payment & Taxes
- Reviews & Credibility
- Continuous Improvement

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