

The Check-In Process





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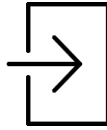


Hosts have three options for check-in times:



Specifying a check-in “window”

For example, check-in between 3–6pm



Specifying only one end of the “window”

For example, check-in any time after 3pm



24 hour check-in

Guests can arrive whenever they choose

If no check-in time is specified, check-in will be set as 3:00 PM local time.

Guests will not see your check-in and checkout times until they visit your listing page from the search results.

These times are unlikely to be the decisive ‘make-or-break’ factor for most guests, however check-in and check-out times that are too restrictive or narrow may prove to be a disincentive for guests that require flexibility in the timing of their arrival and departure (e.g. business travelers).

You should therefore be as open and flexible as possible when determining your check-in (and check-out) times.

Policies

House Rules

- No smoking
- Not suitable for pets
- No parties or events
- Check-in is anytime after 2PM
- Check out by 11AM
- Self check-in with lockbox

To set your check-in (and checkout) times: Login to Airbnb > In **Hosting** mode, select **Listings** from the top menu > Click on your listing > Click on **Booking settings** from your listing’s menu > Click the **Edit** button for the **Policies** section > Enter your desired **Check-in start time**, **Check-in end time** and **Checkout time** > Click **Save**



Aside from your personal availability or willingness to meet and greet guests at different times of the day, the time required to clean and turnover your space should be the other key determinant in setting check-in and check-out times. Ensure that the times you set provide you with enough time to clean and turnover your place between guests.

You should think twice about providing an early check-in to your home if this means providing guest access before a time that you've had your place cleaned and turned over after the previous guests have left.

All guests will inevitably form first impressions upon arriving anywhere new. Your home is no exception. Your attempts to do an act of goodwill may inadvertently backfire from guests that pre-judge your home on their immediate arrival.



Provide early check-in's only when it has minimal impact to you and does not affect your ability to have your place cleaned and turned over entirely before arrival.

If an early check-in is requested and this is not possible, attempt to provide a practical alternative. For example, suggest going to a local coffee shop (where you may also wish to negotiate a special deal in return for sending them a continual influx of new customers). Opportunities like these can then be shared in pre-trip communications with prospective guests and even promoted as a value-add for your Airbnb listing.

Providing Access to Your Home

Through your pre-trip communications, you will have used the Airbnb messaging system to...

- Coordinate check-in and checkout times
- Explain how to get to your home
- Overview home amenities and other important information
- Answer any other questions your guest may have had

Despite this, there is no formal online check-in process.

Hosts have a number of options for providing access to their place:



Being
there in
person



Having
someone
else meet
your guests



Utilizing key
exchange
services



Installing
keyless door
locks



Leaving
keys in a
lockbox

Remember that **check-in** is one of the six review criteria you're assessed against. Furthermore, if you get check-in right, you're off with a head-start on everything else. Get check-in wrong and you've left a bad taste in your guests' mouth from the get-go of their trip.



Providing Access to Your Home



Being there in person

PRO: Personalization and guest appreciation

CON: Personal time commitment

It is not an Airbnb requirement for you to physically meet your guests in person. Nonetheless, being there to meet and greet your guests face-to-face still remains the 'first prize' for guest check-in's.

Some of the benefits include:



Adding a 'human' element with opportunity to share local knowledge, insider tips and recommendations from a real human who's there in person



Alleviating guest anxieties around being in a new place and providing an opportunity to gain answers to questions they may otherwise not have asked



Increasing the likelihood that guests will **respect and take care of your space and property**



Providing a more **effective and efficient opportunity to explain your space** that saves you from receiving and responding to calls and messages down the track



Giving you **early indicators of 'red flags'** that signal potential problematic guests you're able to monitor or strategize ways to avoid problems with



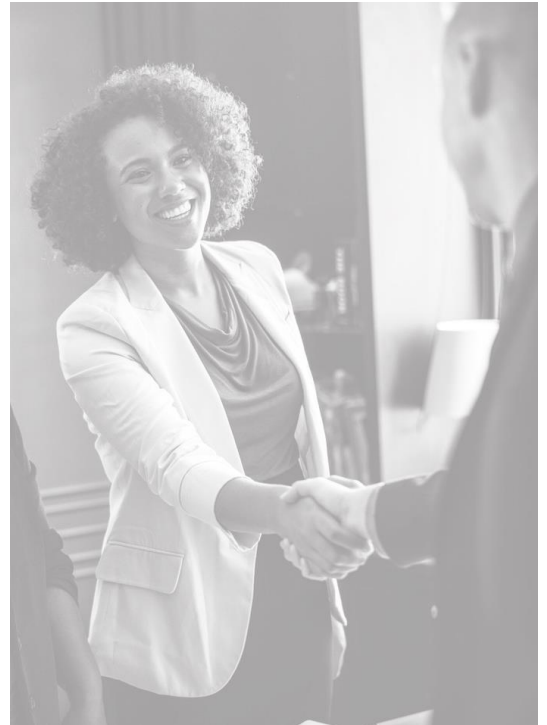
Better understanding your target guests by seeing firsthand who they are, how they found you and what they plan on doing

All of this adds up to better reviews and greater profitability.

Providing Access to Your Home

An important caveat is that you should always gauge just how much or little the guest wishes for you to provide assistance or engage in having a chat.

Use your common sense and social awareness to provide the appropriate interaction. Even if you feel you're able to give them so much more, your willingness to be there in person in and of itself should count for a lot in the eyes of your guests.



The principal challenge when meeting your guests in person is simply the time investment for doing so. Work and social commitments, travel times and early/late check-in's are all potential impediments to wanting or being able to actually meet your guests in person. Many hosts also wish to 'scale' their Airbnb efforts in a way that drives efficiency and minimizes their personal time commitment.

New hosts nonetheless often choose this approach when starting off on Airbnb since guest numbers are traditionally lower and these 'hands-on' personal interactions assist in learning the ropes and understanding their guests.

Hosts are also more likely to receive positive reviews, and being there in person serves as a great vantage point for deciding whether any of the other options for providing access to their home may be more appropriate.

Providing Access to Your Home



Having someone else meet your guests

PRO: Personalization and guest appreciation

CON: Reliability of helper

For many hosts, meeting their guests in person is simply not practical due to personal schedules, time constraints or other pre-existing commitments. For other hosts, meeting guests in person represents a bigger commitment to Airbnb than they signed up for.

Whatever the reason, hosts wishing to have someone meet their guests in person may still consider having a friend, family member, neighbor or other co-host come meet guests on their behalf. Almost all of the benefits of personally meeting guests yourself remain, but with a few small caveats.

These people are your ambassadors. They therefore need to be equally likeable, equally knowledgeable and equally capable of providing the assistance a 'live' host is expected to provide for your place. They should also be equally capable of spotting 'red flags' and able to relay any concerns or issues back to you.



Providing Access to Your Home

Having someone else meet and greet your guests will inevitably result in personally forfeiting a lot of the learnings that otherwise come from the personal interaction of welcoming guests yourself. These include hearing the questions of incoming guests, learning how guests came to find you and understanding what guests plan on doing throughout their trip.

In the absence of these learnings, you will be somewhat constrained in your ability to continually improve your understanding of your target guests, learn how you're able to win more bookings and understand how you're able to better please your guests.

Depending on your circumstances, having someone else meet your guests may be best kept as an option relied upon for rare occasions or emergencies. Alternatively, you may wish to formalize their involvement by making them an official Airbnb co-host.



Inevitably, asking favors while you profit may cause a misalignment in expectations between yourself and whomever you ask to help out. If having someone else meet your guests becomes your standard means of providing access to your home, you may wish to consider remunerating or providing meaningful gifts to whomever helps you out.

Providing Access to Your Home



Utilizing key exchange services

PRO: Host and guest convenience

CON: Limited to hours of store / office operation

Key exchange services utilize a network of local shops and offices that act as key handover points for your guests. Larger key exchange services have multiple locations around town, which often represents an opportunity to find a key handover spot close to your home.



Hosts pay a monthly fee plus an additional fee for each time a key is picked up. Some of the more sophisticated services allow you to track the location of your keys from a smartphone app. Some also offer 24-hour pickups from select locations in the event of a late arrival (or when the more numerous local key exchange shops or offices are already shut for the day).

Similarly, other services provide a 24/7 'front desk' where guests are able to pick up keys at any time on any day of the week, or will even drop keys off to guests arriving at your property for a fee.

Providing Access to Your Home



Installing keyless door locks

PRO: Host and guest convenience

CON: Lack of personalization

Keyless door locks are a great option for hosts that are unable to be present at the time of a guest's arrival.



They eliminate the need for guests to inconvenience themselves with key exchange services, and eliminate your need to re-key locks and replace keys when they get lost. They also assist big groups by allowing everyone within their party to come and go as they please without needing to coordinate the sharing of a limited number of sets of keys.

Keyless door locks enable the guest to gain access to the home using a code which is provided to them prior to their arrival. They provide the ability to issue new codes and replace old codes, thus ensuring that the guest's ability to access your home is limited exclusively to the duration of their stay (like a security key card at a hotel).

Many digital door locks enable you to create new codes or delete old codes remotely from your computer or smartphone. Some also enable you to receive email and/or text message notifications and alerts to let you know who and when someone has entered your property.

Digital keyless door locks do not work on all doors however. Where this is the case, small modifications to the door are often able to be made to make them compatible.

Providing Access to Your Home

Hosts that live in apartment buildings may have the unique challenge of having a front door to their building (on the ground floor) that is locked in addition to their apartment door. Even if a digital door lock were installed on the host's apartment door, guests may still need keys to gain access to the building first.



If this is the case, digital keyless door locks represent a limited remedy in providing guests access to your place.



Leaving keys in a lockbox

PRO: Host and guest convenience

CON: Lack of personalization

Lockboxes are small key safes that are attached to secure places on your property such as a wall, door, gate or inside an unlocked mailbox. The lockbox contains physical keys to open your property and is itself only openable with a code.

Similar to keyless door locks, you provide the code to your incoming guests prior to their arrival and they simply enter the code, open the lockbox, get the key and then gain access your home.

It is a convenient solution for hosts that are unable to be physically present to meet and greet their guests, or are unable or unwilling to have someone else open the home on their behalf.

Providing Access to Your Home

Despite the convenience, this option is not without its risks. Lockboxes represent a safer option than leaving the key under a rug or hidden in a pot plant, but are still not impenetrable by a thief or someone wishing to open it. They also 'shine a spotlight' on the fact that within the lockbox are likely to be a set of keys that open the door to a home in the area close by to it.



Prudent hosts should change the code frequently, otherwise they risk previous guests maintaining continued access to their place. Changing codes frequently may not always be practical for hosts that have a high turnover of guests or do not wish to return back to their property after every stay at their place.



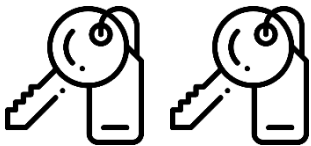
Keys and Locks

If you've decided you are going to provide access to your home using traditional lock and keys, then you'll need to provide your guests with a set of those keys. A common question is...

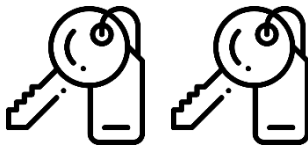
How many sets of keys should be made up?

The answer is no less than five...

**2 sets for
your guests**



**2 sets for
yourself**



**1 set for a
neighbor or friend**



Guests appreciate having more than just a single set of keys to share

Your principle set + a spare set you keep for guests in the event they lose one

They should live close by or be able to help in the event you're not available

Ensure that your locks work without issue.

It is not uncommon for older homes to have locks that require some jiggling and fiddling, or require keys to be inserted in a particular way. These may just be little known quirks to you, but are overwhelmingly frustrating or challenging to guests.

It is a reasonable expectation that the keys and locks simply work without complication. Anything less may result in middle-of-the-night phone calls, call-outs to open up for locked-out guests, plus a likely negative review.





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

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- Safety, Security & Protecting Your Property
- Listing Your Place on Airbnb
- Pricing
- Booking Settings
- Getting Found
- Communications
- Providing a Phenomenal Guest Experience
- Check-Out, Cleaning & Turnover
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