

# Guest Check-In Procedure

By Checklister

## Greet the Guest Professionally

Create a positive first impression and establish rapport with the arriving guest.

- Make immediate eye contact, smile genuinely, and maintain an open, welcoming posture.
- Use a warm, professional tone and acknowledge the guest within **\*\*10 seconds\*\*** of their arrival at the desk.
- If the front desk is busy, greet the guest immediately and provide a specific wait time estimate (e.g., "I'll be with you in two minutes").
- Use the guest's name if visible on the reservation or from a reservation email; this personalizes the interaction.
- Put away phones, paperwork, or other distractions to show the guest has your full attention.
- Avoid appearing rushed or distracted; guests notice and feel undervalued.

## Confirm Guest Arrival and Reservation Status

Verify that the guest has an active reservation in the system and gather initial booking confirmation.

- Ask for the guest's full name and spell it back to confirm accuracy (e.g., "That's J-O-H-N, correct?").
- Search the **\*\*Property Management System (PMS)\*\*** by guest name and date of arrival.
- Confirm the **\*\*check-in date, check-out date, and length of stay\*\*** match the guest's expectation.
- If no reservation is found, ask for a **\*\*booking confirmation number\*\*** or **\*\*email confirmation\*\*** as a backup.
- If still no match, follow the hotel's walk-in check-in procedure.
- Note any discrepancies (dates, spelling, room type) and resolve them before proceeding to payment verification.

## Request and Verify Guest Identification

Confirm guest identity using valid government-issued identification to prevent fraud and meet legal requirements.

- Request a **\*\*valid government-issued photo ID\*\*** such as a passport, driver's license, or national ID card.
- Examine the ID carefully: check the **\*\*name, ID number, expiration date\*\***, and photo match.
- Compare the **\*\*name on the ID exactly\*\*** with the name in the **\*\*PMS reservation record\*\***.
- If the ID name differs from the reservation (e.g., married name, nickname), ask clarifying questions and verify the guest is authorized to use the reservation.
- If the ID is **\*\*expired, damaged, or illegible\*\***, do **\*\*not accept it\*\***; ask for an alternative form of ID or escalate to a manager.
- Do **\*\*not proceed\*\*** with room assignment until identity is verified and confirmed.

## Collect and Verify Payment Method

Secure a valid payment method to authorize charges for the stay and protect the hotel against non-payment.

- Request a **\*\*primary payment method\*\*** (credit card, debit card, or corporate billing account).
- Insert the card into the **\*\*POS terminal\*\*** or manually enter the card details into the **\*\*PMS\*\*** depending on your system.
- Verify the **\*\*cardholder name\*\*** matches the guest name or reservation authorization.
- Check the **\*\*card expiration date\*\*** to ensure it is valid for the entire stay.
- If the guest mentioned a corporate rate or discount code during booking, confirm the **\*\*payment account\*\*** is set up correctly (e.g., corporate billing).
- If payment information is missing or invalid, collect it before room assignment; do **\*\*not assign a room\*\*** until payment method is verified.

## Review Reservation Details and Special Requests

Ensure all booking details are accurate and all guest preferences are understood and recorded.

- Review the **\*\*room type\*\*** (single bed, double bed, suite, accessible room) specified in the reservation.
- Confirm the **\*\*nightly rate, total cost, and applicable discounts\*\*** (early-bird, loyalty, corporate, group rate) match the guest's expectation.
- Read aloud any **\*\*special requests\*\*** from the reservation notes (high floor, late checkout, early checkout, mobility assistance, crib, pet, late arrival, anniversary, etc.).
- Ask the guest to confirm or add any **\*\*additional preferences\*\*** (do you need a crib? Do you prefer a specific floor? Smoking or non-smoking?).
- Check for **\*\*loyalty program membership\*\*** (frequent guest, rewards program) and verify benefits are applied in the PMS.
- Record any **\*\*new special requests\*\*** in the PMS notes field so housekeeping and other departments are informed.

## Verify Room Readiness and Availability

Confirm the assigned or preferred room is clean, prepared, and ready for guest occupancy before assignment.

- Check the **\*\*room status\*\*** in the PMS; look for housekeeping status marked as "ready" or "clean."
- If the room is **\*\*not ready\*\***, inform the guest immediately (e.g., "Your preferred room is currently being cleaned; it will be ready in about 30 minutes").
- Offer alternatives: **\*\*upgrade to an available premium room\*\*** at no extra charge, **\*\*early check-in to an alternative room\*\*** of the same type, or **\*\*luggage storage\*\*** with complimentary refresh or beverage.
- If the preferred room type is **\*\*not available at all\*\***, offer an upgrade or alternative room type; confirm the guest accepts the change before proceeding.
- Verify the room has all **\*\*listed amenities\*\*** that match the reservation (bed type, view, accessibility features, kitchenette, etc.).

## Process Payment Authorization

Authorize payment for the full stay plus security hold to prevent payment issues and chargebacks.

- Insert or tap the **payment method** (credit card or debit card) into the **secure POS terminal** or authorize it through the **PMS** (if integrated).
- Enter the **total charge** for the entire stay (nightly rate × number of nights) plus any **mandatory resort fees, parking fees, or other charges**.
- Request authorization for the **full stay amount plus a security hold** (typically \$100–\$300 USD or equivalent, depending on room rate and hotel policy).
- If payment is **declined**, inform the guest and ask for an **alternative payment method** (different card, cash, wire transfer, corporate billing).
- **Do not assign a room** until payment is authorized; declined payment must be resolved first.
- Retain the **authorization code** (e.g., "AUTH 12345") and include it in the folio for records.
- Inform the guest that the **security hold will be released** after checkout, typically within 3–5 business days.

## Assign Room and Confirm Room Location

Assign an appropriate room based on preference, availability, and special requests, then communicate the location clearly.

- Select a room that matches the guest's preference and special requests (floor, view, accessibility needs).
- Ensure the room is in **good working order** and ready for occupancy.
- Inform the guest of the **exact room number and floor** (e.g., "You're in room 312, third floor").
- Provide **clear directions** to the room (e.g., "Take the elevator to the third floor, turn left down the hallway, and the room is on your right near the window").
- Mention the location of **key amenities** nearby (elevator, ice machine, vending machine, stairs) to help the guest navigate.
- Confirm the guest understands the directions; offer to call **bell desk or luggage assistance** if needed.

## Issue and Test Room Key Card

Provide the guest with a functional room key card programmed with the correct room and checkout date.

- Place a **blank key card** into the **key card encoder machine**.
- Enter the **room number, guest name, and checkout date** into the encoder software.
- Program the key card so it will **expire automatically** at checkout time (default is typically 11 AM or as per hotel policy).
- Test the key card by inserting it into a **test reader** or trying it on a nearby door to ensure it functions.
- Hand the programmed key card to the guest with the **room number clearly visible** on the card holder or envelope.
- Inform the guest how to **use the key card** (slide or tap depending on your lock system) and explain that it expires at checkout.
- Offer a **second key card** if traveling with a companion or if the guest requests one; program it the same way.

## Communicate Checkout Time and Key Card Policy

Ensure the guest understands checkout procedures and key card policies to prevent late checkouts and lost key charges.

- State the **standard checkout time** clearly (e.g., "Checkout is at 11 AM").
- Explain the **late checkout policy** if applicable (e.g., "Late checkout until 2 PM is available for \$25, subject to availability").
- Inform the guest of any **automatic charges** for late checkout if not requested in advance.
- Explain what happens if the **key card is lost or not returned** (e.g., "There is a \$50 replacement fee for lost key cards").
- Mention that the **key card expires** at checkout time and will not work after that time.
- Provide clear instructions on **how to check out** (e.g., "You can check out online, call the front desk, or stop by the desk when you leave").

## Review House Rules and Safety Information

Brief the guest on essential hotel policies and safety procedures to ensure compliance and safety during the stay.

- Confirm the guest understands the **checkout time** and late checkout procedures and any associated fees.
- Point out the location of **fire escape routes and emergency exits** if required by safety regulations; indicate the nearest exit to the guest's room.
- Explain **quiet hours policy** (typically 10 PM–8 AM); note that noise complaints may result in warnings or room changes.
- Provide information on **parking** (location, access code, payment method) if applicable.
- Mention **24-hour front desk availability** and how to contact the desk from the room (dial 0, extension 0, or press the front desk button).
- Highlight any **facility rules** (no smoking in guest rooms, pool hours, gym access, breakfast times) relevant to the guest's stay.

## Document Special Requests and Guest Notes in PMS

Record all special requests and relevant guest information in the PMS to ensure all departments are informed and the guest experience is seamless.

- Enter all **special requests** mentioned by the guest into the **PMS notes field** (e.g., "High floor requested," "Late checkout needed Tuesday," "Accessibility assistance," "Anniversary celebration").
- Flag any **VIP status, loyalty membership level, or prior guest stay history** so staff are aware (e.g., "Platinum member," "Returning guest (3rd visit)").
- Note any **unique circumstances or preferences** (business traveler, family with children, pet in room, medical equipment, dietary restrictions if restaurant interaction expected).
- Ensure notes are **specific and actionable** so housekeeping, room service, and front desk understand what the guest needs.
- Use **clear, professional language** without jargon; avoid abbreviations that other staff may not understand.
- Confirm the notes are saved in the **PMS system** before moving to the next step.

## Provide Welcome Materials and Contact Information

Hand the guest welcome materials and ensure they know how to access hotel services and assistance during their stay.

- Place the **room key card** in a **key envelope** labeled with the room number; include any **key card policy information**.
- Provide a **welcome packet or hotel information folder** (if available), which typically includes breakfast times, Wi-Fi password, local attractions, emergency numbers, and hotel contact information.
- Explain the **Wi-Fi network name and password** or direct the guest to where they can find it in the room.
- Point to the location of the **elevator** or **stairs** and restate directions to the room if helpful.
- Offer **luggage assistance** or bell desk services if available; provide a phone number or extension to call if needed.
- Confirm the guest knows how to **contact the front desk** from the room (dial 0, extension, or button) for requests, emergencies, or questions.

## Confirm Guest Satisfaction and Complete Check-In

Finalize the check-in transaction and ensure the guest feels welcomed and ready to proceed to their room.

- Ask the guest, "Do you have any questions before you head to your room?" or "Is there anything else I can help you with?"
- Invite them to reach out if they need anything during their stay; provide a **friendly, open demeanor** that encourages future contact.
- Thank them for choosing the hotel and wish them a **pleasant stay** (e.g., "Thank you for staying with us; I hope you have a wonderful visit!").
- Mark the guest as **"Checked In"** in the PMS system.
- Ensure the **folio (guest bill)** is updated with the room rate, security hold, taxes, and any pre-authorized charges.
- Provide the guest with a **checkout reminder card** or **digital confirmation** if available (email receipt or digital key card receipt).
- Complete the transaction and prepare the guest to depart for their room; make a final check that they have their key card and any welcome materials.