



Hotel Housekeeping

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About the Tutorial

Hotel Housekeeping is an activity of keeping the hotel clean, tidy, and up to the highest standard of conduct. This tutorial introduces you to various concerns of Hotel Housekeeping such as principles of housekeeping, types of cleanings, and standard operating procedures of cleaning. It also introduces you to housekeeping equipment and agents, guest supplies, types of hotel rooms, and laundry management.

This tutorial teaches basic terms and abbreviations used in hotel housekeeping. After going through this tutorial, you will find yourself at a moderate level of expertise of retail management basics from where you can take yourself to next levels.

Audience

This tutorial is prepared for the beginners to help them understand basics of Hotel Housekeeping. It will help all those readers who are keen on making a career in Hospitality and Tourism.

Prerequisites

We assume the reader has basic knowledge of hotel and tourism businesses. Creativity, passion for physical work, and communication skill are a plus.

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1. Housekeeping – Introduction

"I consider housekeeping to be the heart of hotels and it is only when something goes wrong that it is recognized – just like our hearts."

- Sheila Perera FIH Glenmor Manager, Gleneagles Hotel.

The housekeeping department, in any hotel business, contributes to major amount of profit though it is considered as an ancillary service. The simple reason being, a customer demands a clean, tidy, and pleasing ambience.

Housekeeping generates the first impression on a guest's mind. The housekeeping efforts clearly show how the hotel will take care of its guests.

What is Housekeeping?

Housekeeping means performing all the duties towards cleaning, maintaining orderliness, and running a house or a business property. In case of hotels, the housekeeping duties involve maintaining the hotel to the best possible state in terms of cleanliness, and keeping it at highly desirable ambience.

Objectives of Hotel Housekeeping

The main objectives of hotel housekeeping are:

- To maintain overall cleanliness of the entire hotel at all times.
- To perform cleanliness duties most efficiently and effectively.
- To use good quality, safe cleaning equipment and chemicals.
- To manage laundry and linen.
- To control pests.
- To keep up the hotel with classy interior decoration.
- To take care of the furniture, fittings, and fixtures of the entire hotel.

To understand the expanse or scope of housekeeping, it is better to understand the divisions of hotel a hotel, first.

Divisions of a Hotel

There are various divisions (or departments) of a hotel. They are given below.

Front Office

It is responsible for guest check-in and check-out, mail and information services, and concierge services such as tour booking, reserving theatre and restaurants, providing airport taxi service, etc.

Food and Beverage

Food and Beverage department is responsible for preparing menus, foods, and managing inventory of food and beverage items. It includes food and beverage preparation and service for restaurant, lounge, coffee shops, bars, parties, and room service.

Uniformed Service Department

It includes parking and door attendants, drivers, porters, and bell attendants.

Housekeeping

Housekeeping includes the duties of keeping the areas of the hotel clean, tidy, hygienic, and pleasant. It also performs the duties pertaining to decoration of hotel premises.

Sales and Marketing

All sales, services, advertising, promotions, and public relations are taken care of by this team.

Security

Security manager and security workers work to keep the property safe and secured from external hazards.

Accounts

It conducts all financial activities like producing bills and receiving payments, computing employees' compensations and delivering payments. They also carry out the activities such as compiling monthly and annual income statements, depositing and securing cash, and controlling and monitoring assets.

Maintenance

The Maintenance department is responsible for the maintenance of the property. It takes care of repairing furniture and fixtures, and painting the required area. When the hotel is small, these works are contracted from an outside agency.

Engineering and Technology

It is responsible for keeping all of its equipment operational. The duties include maintaining telephone, hotel management software, internet etc. It is also responsible for implementing any new changes required such as upgrading the software and hardware.

Human Resource Department

Human Resource department is responsible for interviewing and recruiting qualified staff to be placed at appropriate positions. They also conduct exit interviews for the employees who wish to quit the work. HRD works to set wages and salaries based on regional market rates and ensures that the hotel business meets safety and health administration standards.

In all these departments, the efforts of housekeeping department are overt. They are directly visible to the guests even before they try food or avail other amenities. Housekeeping creates the first impression about the hotel in the guests' minds. Hence this department can be said as the heart of the hotel business.

Housekeeping Department Layout in Hotel

The layout of the housekeeping department depends on the total number of Guestrooms, Outlets, and Required Staff. The following areas of the department are the most prominent ones:

- **Office of the Executive Housekeeper:** The administrative work of the department is carried out here.
- **Housekeeping Control Desk:** It is accessible and operational 24 hours a day. The housekeeping staff reports at the start and end of the shift here. There are notice boards, storage shelves, registers, lost and found cupboard, and key-hanger matrix.
- **Laundry Area:** Washing, ironing, dry cleaning, folding of linen and staff uniform takes place here.
- **Linen Room:** Here, the linen of the hotel such as bed-sheets, towels, pillow cases, etc., are stored, collected, and carried to the required places in the hotel.
- **Uniform Room:** The staff uniforms are collected, stored, and distributed from here.
- **Tailor Room:** Here, stitching and repairing of linen and uniforms takes place.
- **Housekeeping Stores:** It is a storage area where the cleaning equipment and items, and guest supplies are securely stored.
- **Flower Room:** It is an air-conditioned room with worktables, sink and water supply, cupboards to store vases and stones, and a counter.
- **Lost and found:** It stores all the items left by the guests. It directly communicates with the front office desk, as there the guests tend to first enquire about their lost articles.

Linen Store Room	Tailor Room	Uniform Room	Laundry Area	
Corridor				
Executive House Keeper Office	Housekeeping Desk	Lost and Found	Housekeeping Supplies Store	Flower Room

Housekeeping: Areas of Responsibility

The housekeeping department is responsible to keep the following areas clean and tidy.

- Guest Rooms
- Guest Bathrooms
- Public Areas such as Lobby and Lifts
- Banquets and Conference Halls
- Parking Area
- Sales and Admin Offices
- Garden

Apart from the cleaning task, the housekeeping is also responsible for handling keys of each floor. In addition, it manages the laundry, which is often at some places considered as a sub-department of housekeeping.

Terms Used in Hotel Housekeeping

Here are some commonly used terms in housekeeping:

Term	Meaning
Banquets	It is a multi-course meal or feast, usually given by the host on occasions like a charitable gathering, a ceremony, or a celebration, often precedes or succeeds by honoring speeches.
Bridal Suite	Room reserved for the newly married people.

Check-In	Counter where you announce your arrival or departure to the hotel.
Coffee Shop	Place in a hotel where coffee, light drinks and meals are served.
Desk	Place that provides information or service in a hotel.
Dining Room	Room where guests have their meals.
En Suite	Attached to the room.
Guest Room	Bedroom for a visitor.
Head Board	Upright panel designed or placed behind the head of a bed.
Lobby	A hall, foyer, or waiting room at or near the hotel entrance.
Lounge	Public area of hotel where people can just sit and relax.
Reception	The area/desk at which the guests are received.
Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS)	It is a detailed information prepared by the manufacturer or importer of a chemical that describes the physical and chemical properties, health hazards, routes of exposure, precautions for safe handling and use, and first-aid procedures in case any accident happens.

Abbreviations Used in Housekeeping

The following table lists a few common abbreviations used in housekeeping:

Abbreviation	Term	Meaning
ACCT	Accounting	A department of a hotel business that handles finance.
CI	Check-In	Depicts that the room is ready for check in.
CO	Check-Out	The room status when guest has vacated and the room still needs to be prepared for selling.
DL	Double Lock Room	A room with two locks, one by hotel and the other personal lock put by the guest.
DNCO	Did not Check Out	The guest settled the bill but did not check out formally at front office desk.
DND	Do Not Disturb	The DND tag or the privacy lamp depicts that the guest does not wish to be disturbed by housekeeping.
DO	Due Out	The room is expected to become vacant after the following day's checkout time.
FBP	Food and Beverage Product	A product used and sold by Food and Beverage service of the hotel business.
FBS	Food and Beverage Service	A service provided by the hotel business.

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FO	Front Office	The first contact point of Hotel staff and the guests.
GC	General Cleaning	A term used for routine cleaning.
GRA	Guest Room Attendant	The room attendant serving under supervisor.
GRS	Guest Refuse Service	The hotels reserve rights to refuse service because of the guest's behavior in the previous visit.
HK	Housekeeping	An important department of service industry.
HM	Honeymooner	Depicts that the room is for the newly-wed couple.
HRD	Human Resources Department	A department taking care of recruiting, induction, and training of new skilled employees.
IS	Inspected	Depicts the status of the guest room ready to sell.
L	Luggage	Luggage in room but bed unused.
NC	Not Cleared	A vacant room not cleared, not ready for selling.
O	Occupied	The status of the room as occupied by the guest or displays signs of being occupied by the guest.
OC	Occupied Clean	
OD	Occupied Dirty	
ONL	Occupied No Luggage	
OOO	Out of Order	
OS	Out Of Service	The area or equipment not in service.
REC	Recreation	Leisure activity.
RET	Returned Guest	The guest that gives a repeat business as a result of satisfaction.
SA	Special Attention	Depicts that the room requires special attention.
SB	Scantly Baggage	The baggage is put carelessly.
SEC	Security	A department catering for the security of the hotel premises and properties.

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SM	Sales and Marketing	A department taking care of sales and promotion of the hotel business.
SO	Sleep-Out	The room is occupied but the bed was not used.
SPA	Sanus Per Aquam	Health by or through the water.
UR	Under Repair	Currently under repair and not ready to sell.
V	Vacant	The status of the guest room when the guest has vacated the room.
VC	Vacant Clean	
VD	Vacant Dirty	
VCI	Vacant Clean Inspected	
VIP	Very Important Person	The status of the room that needs extra amenities.

The housekeeping also practices general abbreviations such as *As Soon As Possible (ASAP)*, *Not Yet (NY)*, *Follow Up (FU)*, and *For Your Information (FYI)*, which are also used commonly in the industry.

2. Housekeeping – Staff Duties

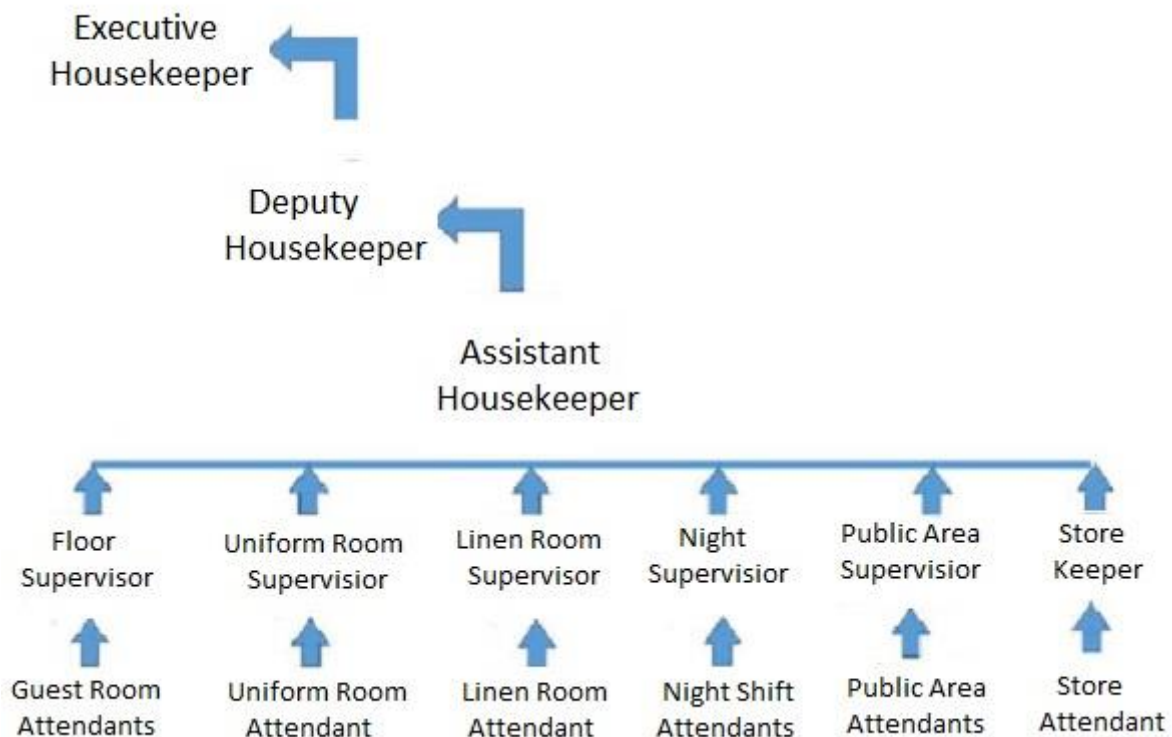
"A new broom sweeps clean; but an old broom knows the corners."

- An Irish Saying.

There is a huge workload on the hotel housekeeping staff. The housekeeping work is carried out at various levels such as managerial level, supervisory level, and operational level. Let us see more about the staff and qualities they should possess.

Structure of Housekeeping Staff

The general structure of housekeeping staff is as shown below:



Let us see the work and responsibilities at each level.

Executive Housekeeper / Manager of Housekeeping

The Executive Manager is the chief of housekeeping department. The Deputy Housekeeper and Assistant Manager of Housekeeping report to him. Their responsibilities include:

- Ensuring overall cleanliness and aesthetics of the hotel.

- Ensuring overall sanitation, comfort, and ambience of the hotel.
- Training the new joiners and motivate the existing employees.
- Modelling and establishing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for cleaning and decorating.
- Monitoring regular inventory of guest supplies and linen.
- Monitoring housekeeping equipment and hotel property.
- Evaluating employee performance, and handling their training, promotions, and transfers.
- Organize flower arrangements for events.
- Presenting the estimate of the required budget to the General Manager of the hotel.

Supervisors of Housekeeping

The supervisors report to the Assistant Housekeeper. Their positions and their respective responsibilities include:

Floor Supervisor

- Issuing keys to the room attendants.
- Coordinating floor operations and tray clearance with room attendants.
- Inspecting rooms for readiness and reporting to the front office for the same.
- Catering for VIP facilities and providing special supplies such as hot drinking water, baby-sitting provision.

Public Area Supervisor

- Ensuring that cleanliness is maintained at all times in public areas such as lobby, lifts, parking, swimming pool, coffee shop, conference hall, banquet hall, and restaurant.
- Ensuring banquet and conference halls are well kept and ready.
- Ensuring the concerned operating staff is available as per the schedule.

Night Supervisor

- Ensuring provision of guest supplies such as water, extra bed, fans, or towels.
- Ensuring the operating staff working at night is following all cleaning SOPs.

- Supervising hotel area at night and ensuring cleanliness in all areas of hotel.

Uniform Room Supervisor

- Providing clean, ironed, and fresh uniforms to the hotel staff.
- Suggesting procurement of any uniforms required.
- Checking repaired linen from tailor room.
- Keeping track of number and condition of uniforms.

Linen Room Supervisor

- Inspecting linen and sending it to the laundry.
- Checking linen from laundry and sending it for ironing.
- Maintaining linen influx and out flux register.
- Checking repaired linen from tailor room.
- Suggesting linen replacements if required.

Operating Staff / Attendants

The positions and responsibilities of the Operating Staff/Attendants are explained below.

Uniform Room Attendant

- Collecting uniforms of staff at the end of every shift and maintaining them to be used for the next time.
- Maintaining the shelves of uniforms and linens clearly.
- Giving and taking back the uniforms from the staff.

Linen Room Attendant

- Segregating the dirty linen according to its type and sending it to the laundry.
- Keeping the track of linen count before and after laundry.
- Stacking towels, bed sheets, pillowcases, table napkins separately into different sections of shelves.

Guest Room Attendant

- Reporting to the floor supervisor.
- Cleaning the guest rooms, guest bathrooms, and the corridors.
- Changing the linen of the guest room and guest bathrooms.
- Topping up the guest supplies.

- Making guest-room beds.
- Replenishing the hotel cleaner's trolley with supplies and linens for the next shift staff.

Storekeeper

- Reporting to the floor supervisor.
- Keeping the count of cleaning equipment and items such as cleaners and detergents.
- Generating requisition to purchase the required material.

Public Area Attendants

- Reporting to public area supervisor.
- Keeping the parking, lobbies, guest rooms, lifts, and corridors in best maintained status.
- Keeping these areas smelling fresh and clean.

Night Shift Attendants

- Reporting any hotel safety issues to the night supervisor.
- Performing housekeeping duties during night.

Qualities of Housekeeping Staff

There are certain professional qualities the housekeeping staff is required to possess:

Personal Hygiene and Appearance

The housekeeping staff on duty must:

- Be well-groomed with high degree of personal hygiene.
- Have trimmed nails and hair, and clean uniform.
- Have a clean and pleasant appearance.

Communications skills

The housekeeping staff must:

- Conduct themselves with a cooperative attitude.
- Speak in a friendly but sincere tone.
- Speak clearly in audible voice of moderate pitch.
- Maintain polite eye contact while interacting with the hotel guests.

Interpersonal skills

For serving the guest and working for cleanliness, the housekeeping staff must:

- Possess right attitude.
- Have good listening skills to avoid any miscommunication.
- Be a good team player.

Personal skills and Traits

The housekeeping staff must:

- Be able to retain and pursue the demand of the guest until it is fulfilled.
- Be sincere and physically fit.
- Respect each hotel guest they are dealing with. They must conduct themselves confidently and courteously.
- Have high integrity.

3. Housekeeping – Principles

"There are practical little things in housekeeping which no man really understands."

– Eleanor Roosevelt, American Politician, Diplomat, and Activist.

There are various principles followed by the housekeeping staff. They are cleaning and hygiene principles, safety and security principles, comfort and privacy principles, and finally, the decor. For understanding the housekeeping principles, first let us go through what advantages it offers to the hotel.

Advantages of Housekeeping

Here are some prominent advantages, the housekeeping department offers to its guests:

- Clean and hygienic atmosphere
- Comfortable and convenient stay
- Privacy
- Safety and security
- Provision of amenities
- Making guests Feel good

Having seen the advantages, let us see the principles of housekeeping towards providing these to the guests while working safely.

Purpose of Cleaning

Cleaning is conducted to remove harmful bacteria present in the dust deposited on the hotel property because of air pollution. This may cause unhealthy effects on the working staff as well as the guests. Cleanliness reduces the threat of any infections and offers comfortable stay to the guests in the hotel.

Cleaning and Hygiene Principles

The worker must follow the given principles while cleaning:

- Carry out the cleaning procedures in sequence. Say, sweeping-> Dusting -> Mopping/Suction Cleaning -> Disinfecting -> Air Freshening.
- Must take care while cleaning and polishing; not to damage various surfaces and hamper their appearance.

- Should start cleaning from extreme inner end continuing towards exit.
- Should park the chambermaid's trolley such that it leaves space for corridor traffic.
- Must take proper precautions while handling cleaning equipment, detergents, and guest luggage.
- Must remove hard water stains and spider webs as soon as they occur.
- Must never use guest room linen for cleaning or blocking room entry.



Safety and Security Principles

The workers must follow the safety rules mentioned below.

- Protect their body from harmful chemicals by wearing thick gloves.
- Protect their eyes by wearing masks or goggles if required.
- Must use caution sign to mark wet floors.
- Clean spilled liquids immediately to reduce chances of slipping.

- Handle cleaning chemicals carefully while transporting, disposing, or refilling the containers.
- Mix any chemicals required in the presence of proper ventilation.
- Must not open unlabeled chemical containers.
- Use swivel head mops to avoid inappropriate body posture while cleaning.
- Wear close toe-non slip footwear while working.
- Use appropriate body postures while working to avoid cramps.
- Request for peer assistance while moving heavy loads such as furniture.
- Report to the supervisor in case of any accident due to mishandling of flammable liquids or otherwise.
- Keep the guests safe with the help of security department.
- Keep the guests' documents, ornaments, or other articles safe.

Comfort and Privacy Principles

The housekeeping staff must follow the given principles with regard to comfort and privacy of the guest.

- Always remember comfort and privacy of the guests always comes first.
- Clean the premises or rooms in the least destructive and disturbing manner.
- Enter the guest rooms by following appropriate procedure.
- Work towards the guests' satisfaction.

Knowing and Handling Small Fire Hazards

The housekeeping staff needs to know various types of fires and fire extinguishers. The staff must be trained to handle small fires.

Fire is classified into the following types:

- **Class A:** Class A fire consists of ordinary combustibles such as wood, paper, trash or anything else that leaves ash behind. It needs water under high pressure to extinguish this fire.
- **Class B:** This fire occurs in inflammable liquids such as oil and grease, and needs blankets or sand to extinguish.
- **Class C:** This fire occurs in electrical equipment. Use of non-conductive agent is required for extinguishing this fire.

- **Class K:** Class K Fires are fires that involve cooking oils, grease or animal fat and can be extinguished using Purple K, a typical agent found in kitchen or galley extinguishers.

Fire Extinguishers

Soda Acid extinguisher is used to put out class A fire. It sprays the compound with gaseous pressure. Only good for small intensity fires. For large intensity and widely spread fire, water must be sprayed directly on the affected area with high pressure through the hoses.

For putting out class B fires, Carbon Di-Oxide extinguishers are used. Carbon Di-Oxide fog extinguishers are well-places in case of small class C fires.

The housekeeping staff must place appropriate extinguishers near the fire prone areas and must know to operate them under challenging conditions.

Importance of Décor in Housekeeping

The housekeeping staff is responsible for creating pleasant ambience in the hotel. This needs aesthetic sense and an eye for detail. A guest is keen to visit the hotel if he finds classy and catchy ambience with fresh air.

Housekeeping staff must intelligently use artificial waterfalls, large vases with neat and eye-catching flower arrangements, paintings, wall pieces, murals, lighting with appropriate luminance, candles, electric lamps or any rare antic pieces.

The housekeeping staff is required to know various materials such as wood, organic and artificial fibers, stone, sand, glass, plastic, and pigments to maintain the expensive hotel property.

Hotel decors can be conducted thematically depending on the local/international prominent festivals and cultures. Décor is yet another important task that elevates guests' experience with the hotel.

Rules for Housekeepers

The housekeepers represent the hotel staff and create an image of the hotel by working towards keeping the hotel at high standards plus conducting themselves well while on job. There are certain rules the housekeepers need to follow.

The housekeepers must:

- Enter the floor with clean and tidy uniform, in a properly groomed manner.
- Only use the service lifts.
- Speak to the other working staff only when necessary.
- Not walk by stamping the feet, run, or jump in the hotel premises.
- Eat only in meal hours, not while cleaning.

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- Stand outside the guest room while speaking to the guest to respect their privacy.
- Always keep the room doors open while cleaning.
- Greet the guests with smile according to the time of the day.
- Never answer the guest room phone.
- Never use guest room phone or floor desk phones for making private calls.
- Never use guest bathrooms.
- Familiarize themselves with the faces of guests. This is especially important for the security purpose.
- Never use a guest room for unauthorized person.
- Not accept any gift from the guests and politely deny them. If the guest insists to take and feels offended on denial, then mention the gift to the floor supervisor who can permit the attendant to take the gift out of the hotel.

4. Housekeeping – Types of Hotels and Rooms

"Chilling out on the bed in your hotel room watching television while wearing your own pajamas, is sometimes the best part of your vacation."

- Laura Marano, an American Actress.

Housekeeping is the primary task the hotels need to cater for while providing service to its guests. The hotel management and especially executive of housekeeping department must ensure that the housekeeping functions are performed well in the hotel irrespective of the target guest type, size of hotel, and its location.

The guest rooms are the primary source of hotel revenue. There are higher chances of retaining the guests if the guest rooms are absolutely clean.

Types of Hotels

The hotels can be categorized depending upon their size, location, target market, and ownership.

Hotel Types by Size

Hotels are categorized by the number of rooms to which service is provided. For example:

- Below 200 rooms – Very Small
- Up to 200 rooms – Small
- 200 to 399 rooms – Medium
- 400 to 700 rooms – Large
- More than 700 rooms – Mega

This category is useful if the management needs to compare different hotels within the same size.

Hotel Types by Location

They are categorized by considering their location with respect to city.

- **Airport Hotels:** They are located near airport. The guests in transit use them for short stay.
- **Boatels:** They are on the houseboats such as **Shikara** in Kashmir.
- **City Center:** Located in the heart of the city near commercial area.
- **Motel:** They are small hotels usually located on highways. Transit guests use them.

- **Suburb Hotels:** They are located near urban area. Budget guests use them.
- **Floating Hotels:** They are on the cruise ships, large lakes, or rivers.
- **Resorts:** They are on the beaches, mountains, islands, or on the river banks.
- **Rotels:** They are hotels on wheels such as *Deccan Odyssey* train.
- **Self-Catering Hotels:** They are located at the same premises where the owner stays.

Hotel Types by Target Market

Here, the hotels are categorized depending upon the target market they serve.

- **Airport Hotels:** They target the business clientele, airline passengers, or any guests with cancelled or delayed flights.
- **Business Hotels:** They primarily cater for the guests who are on business travel.
- **Bed and Breakfast (B&B):** They are small hotels who target guests in transit or on leisure tour. The owner of B&B usually stays in the same premises and is responsible for serving breakfast to the guests.
- **Casino Hotels:** They target the guests interested in gambling. Their functions of housekeeping is primary but food and beverage functions are just supportive.
- **Resorts:** They target high-income busy professionals who wish to spend time away from city, noise, and crowd. They offer facilities such as spa, tennis court, fitness and center, sailing, snorkeling, and swimming.
- **Self-Catering Hotels:** They target long stayers who prefer to cook themselves. They offer a small kitchen and kitchen amenities with the guest room.
- **Service Apartments:** They are located in residential colonies. They provide long-term accommodation for guests. They need to execute an agreement with the guests for the stay of at least one month. All basic amenities such as kitchen, washing machine, dish washer, and beds are provided with once a week housekeeping service.
- **Suite Hotels:** These hotels offer a living room and an en suite bedroom. The professionals who need to interact with their clients/customers find these hotels a good choice because they can interact with their guests in small meetings without any interruption and sacrificing privacy.

Hotel Types by Ownership

B&B and Self Catering hotels are generally family owned hotels and are not governed or run by corporate policies and procedures.

A chain of hotels or group of hotels such as Taj, Ramada, can have management affiliation with their other properties in the same group. They strictly are governed by predetermined policies.

Hotel Types by Star Rating

The star rating system is a guideline for a customer that denotes what to expect from the hotel service at the time of booking. However, there is no clear distinguishing method to divide hotels into various star rating categories till today; but a guest can assume that more the number of stars, more is the luxury provided by the hotel.

- **One Star:** A guest can expect a small hotel operated and managed by the owner and family. The ambience as more personal and the guest rooms with basic amenities. The restaurant would be at a walking distance. There would be a small commercial area and a nearby public transportation hub.
- **Two-Star:** These hotels are mostly part of a chain of hotels that offer consistent quality but limited amenities. They are either small or medium size hotels with a phone and TV. They lack the convenience of room service, but provide a small on-site restaurant at a walking distance within the hotel premises.
- **Three-Star:** These hotels are usually located near a major business center, express way, and/or shopping area. The rooms are clean and spacious rooms, and decorative lobbies. An on-site restaurant offers all meals such as breakfast, lunch, and dinner. The facilities such as valet and room service, fitness center, and a swimming pool are also available.
- **Four-Star:** This hotel would be large, often standing as a part of a cluster of similar hotels with a formal appearance and very good services. The hotel would be located in the prime area of the city around shopping, dining, and entertainment joints. The guest can expect furnished and clean rooms, restaurants, room service, valet parking, and a fitness center within the hotel premises.
- **Five-Star:** This hotel would be large and luxurious, which offers the highest degree of room and personal service. It is built with beautiful architecture, and is managed keeping elegance and style in mind. The guest rooms are equipped with high quality linens, TV, bathtubs, and special outside view from the room. The hotel provides multiple eating joints in its premises such as coffee shops, restaurants, poolside snack joint, and bar. They also provide 24X7 room service, valet service, and personal protection service.

Types of Hotel Rooms

The condition of guest rooms maintained by housekeeping is the most vital factor as far as the customer satisfaction in the hotel business is concerned.

- **Single Room:** A room with the facility of single bed. It is meant for single occupancy. It has an attached bathroom, a small dressing table, a small bedside table, and a small writing table. Sometimes it has a single chair too.
- **Double Room:** A room with the facility of double bed. There are two variants in this type depending upon the size of the bed:
 - King Double Room (with king size double bed)
 - Queen Double Room (with queen size double bed)It is equipped with adequate furniture such as dressing table and a writing table, a TV, and a small fridge.
- **Deluxe Room:** They are available in Single Deluxe and Double Deluxe variants. Deluxe room is well furnished. Some amenities are attached bathroom, a dressing table, a bedside table, a small writing table, a TV, and a small fridge. The floor is covered with carpet and most suitable for small families.
- **Double-Double (Twin Double) Room:** This room provides two double beds with separate headboards. It is ideal for a family with two children below 12 years.
- **Twin Room:** This room provides two single beds with separate headboards. It is meant for two independent people. It also has a single bedside table shared between the two beds.
- **Hollywood Twin Room:** This room provides two single beds with a common headboard. If a need arises, the two beds can be brought together to form a double bed.
- **Duplex Room:** This type is composed of two rooms located on two different floors, connected with internal stairs.
- **Cabana:** This type of room faces water body, beach, or a swimming pool. It generally has a large balcony.
- **Studio:** They are twin adjacent rooms: A living room with sofa, coffee table and chairs, and a bedroom. It is also equipped with fan/air conditioner, a small kitchen corner, and a dining area. The furniture is often compact.
- **Lanai:** This room faces a landscape, a waterfall, or a garden.
- **Suite:** It is composed of one or more bedrooms, a living room, and a dining area. It is excellent for the guests who prefer more space, wish to entertain their guests without interruption and giving up privacy. There are various types of suites:
 - **Regular Suite:** Best for business travelers.

- **Penthouse Suite:** Luxurious than the regular suite. It is provided with the access to terrace space above the suite. It is aloof from crowd and provides a bird's eye view of the city. It has all the amenities and structure similar to a regular suite.
- **Presidential Suite:** The best possible suite in the hotel.
- **Sico:** This is a kind of multipurpose room, which can be used as a meeting room during the day and as a bedroom during the night. These rooms have special beds called **Murphy Bed** that can be folded entirely against a wall. This bed may or may not have headboard. The lower face of the bed which becomes visible after folding or placing upright, has a decorative wall paper, mirror, or a painting. After folding the bed, the room can accommodate sitting for five to ten people.

VIP Amenities in Hotel

VIP amenities are always something like the cherry on the cake. The VIPs are treated with extra attention, pamper, and care. Hotels provide the following amenities to the VIPs depending upon their policies:

- Executive Front Desk or Executive Housekeeper escorting the guest up to the room.
- A welcome document kit containing note from a General Manager (GM) of the hotel, spa card, and a hotel map.
- Complete housekeeping service with daily linen change.
- A snack kit often containing packed snacks, assorted nuts, fruits, cheese, or cookies, and beverages.
- A vanity kit containing cotton balls, makeup removers, lip balm, and au-de-cologne.
- A bathroom kit with soap dispenser, upgraded robe, tissue box, face mist, after-shower gel, cotton slippers, toilet mat, and a terry mat.
- In special cases, a romance kit containing a bottle of wine or Champaign, paired with chocolate dipped strawberries or bite size chocolates.
- Small bag packs for the kids below 12 years.
- A number of servings of award winning dessert.

5. Housekeeping – Cleanings

"Spring cleaning doesn't have to be a dreaded list of chores. It can be a rewarding experience that helps provide some structure and organization in your life."

- Peter Walsh, Professional Organizer, Writer, and Media Personality.

Cleaning is one of the major tasks the housekeeping force performs. It carries out cleanings when the guests are about to occupy their room, while they are staying in the hotel, and immediately after the guests vacate the room. The housekeeping also cleans the public area, which is often shared by a large number of guests.

Cleaning the Check-In Room

The Check in rooms are cleaned when the guest is about to occupy the room. A checklist of room readiness is shared between the guest room supervisor and the guest room attendants. The supervisor inspects the readiness of the room for occupancy.

The guest room attendant performs the following cleanings:

- Checking power switches, air conditioner, TV, and other electronic appliances for healthy condition.
- Making bed with the fresh linen, pillow cases, and bedside mat.
- Cleaning ashtrays and dustbins, replacing if required; and putting fresh paper stripes.
- Checking stationery and vanity supplies. Replacing/refilling if required.
- Cleaning the bathroom: floor, walls, toilet, shower area, and tub.
- Checking bathroom supplies. Replacing the used supplies with the new ones.
- Checking the room curtains and drapes for stains, replacing if needed, and closing.
- Discarding the used supplies in the guest room.
- Spraying the room freshener.

Cleaning an Occupied Room

The room is cleaned when the guest is occupying the room. It includes cleaning and keeping all occupied rooms twice per day on guests' requests and convenience.

- Entering the guest room by following the set procedure.
- Clearing the dustbins.
- Collecting the used linen and putting it in the linen bag.
- Making the bed.
- Carrying out the guest room dusting.
- Vacuuming of carpet and bedside mats.
- Cleaning the bathroom and replenishing the bathroom supplies.
- Checking the functionality of light bulbs, television, electric kettle, and intercom device.

Cleaning the Check-Out Room

This cleaning is performed when the guest vacates the guest room and proceeds for hotel check-out formalities. The cleaning involves:

- Assembling bed, chairs, settees, and other furniture and placing it appropriately.
- Wiping guest room floor with wet mop.
- Cleaning the writing tables, assembling and placing stationery appropriately.
- Checking under the beds and chairs, and in the locker for any articles the guest left behind.
- All personal stuff, documents, articles left in the room (if any) are removed and deposited to Lost and Found desk.
- Cleaning all walls of bathroom with wet wipe.
- Cleaning all electric appliances such as microwave, fan, refrigerator and others.
- Keeping heaters/air conditioners at lowest power consuming option.
- Switching off the room light and television.
- Locking the guest room door and cleaning area outside it.
- Depositing the keys at front office desk.

Periodic Cleaning in Hotel

The task of cleaning is very exhausting. It is divided among a number of housekeeping staff depending upon expertise. Some cleaning such as occupied guest room cleaning requires to be carried out twice on daily basis. The check-in and check-out cleanings are little less frequent.

Further, the cleaning of air-conditioner and refrigerator is less frequent. Thus, depending upon frequency of use of a particular area or device, the frequency of cleaning varies.

Spring Cleaning

This type of cleaning is practiced in the hotels located in cold as well as warm regions. The name depicts cleaning the house in the first few warm days of spring when there is adequate sunlight to reach the corners and the floors of the room. The areas, which are not much accessed, are also cleaned during the Spring Cleaning.

Spring cleaning is generally performed once a year by moving furniture and cleaning the guest rooms entirely for dust, stains, broken furniture, and garbage. It is also called as Deep Cleaning as it is ensured that no portion of the area is left uncleaned.

Cleaning and Keeping Public Areas of Hotel

The public areas are shared commonly among guests. They include:

Keeping Front office, Lobby, and Corridors

Front Office and Lobby is highly frequented. It must be clean at all hours of the day. The housekeeping staff needs to clean desks, fans, ceiling, chairs, and computers. The staff also cleans and disinfects the telephone devices, keyboards, flooring, corridors, and glass doors at the entrance of the lobby.

Keeping the Dining Area

The dining area is the next most frequently visited area. The housekeeping staff puts in good efforts for lighting, chandeliers, and cleaning the ceiling, furniture, and décor items. It also includes spreading the clean dining linen on the dining tables and keeping the floor clean. It is generally done when the area is not busy.

Cleaning the Lifts

The house keeping staff cleans lifts preferably early morning to avoid rush for use. They stop it at the ground floor, its doors are kept open, and it is then cleaned starting from top and working towards bottom.

Cleaning the Swimming Pools

Cleaning of the swimming pools is highly required during summer. It can be conducted by the hotel if it has an in-house expertise, or it can be contracted with an agency. Cleaning of swimming pool involves catching any leaves, purifying the pool water, and cleaning the areas surrounding the pool; including shower and changing rooms.

Cleaning and Keeping the Hotel Garden

These days, the hotels keep their private team of gardeners. Watering and trimming the trees and shrubs, fertilizing the plants, raking the fall leaves, and Arbosculture (an art of shaping trees into wonderful shapes), is taken care by this team.

Cleaning the Parking Area

It mostly involves hard sweeping the parking space, removing the cobwebs under the parking shades, and putting up appropriate guiding signs.

6. Housekeeping – Cleaning Equipment

"My father was a general manager with Hyatt, so we lived in the hotel so he would be close by if there were any problems. My mum was always adamant about us not abusing it. So I still had to clean my room. Housekeeping would never come and do it."

-Dianna Agron, American Actress, Singer, and Dancer.

The housekeeping staff needs to clean various guest rooms, guest bathrooms, and a number of public areas in the hotel. The staff needs to take the help of various cleaning equipment while trying to keep the hotel premises to the highest standard of appearance.

Today, there is a wide range of cleaning products available in the market.

Advantages of Cleaning Equipment

The cleaning equipment are advantageous in multiple ways:

- Equally effective for general as well as tougher cleaning tasks.
- High cleaning capability.
- Reduce work fatigue and increase **productivity**.
- Save the **time** of hotel housekeeping staff.
- High **maneuverability**. They can reach any corner or height of the room, which is otherwise difficult to reach.
- Eco-friendly, widely available, and easy to operate
- They give protection from injuries occurring while cleaning when they are handled by using proper instructions.

Classification of Cleaning Equipment

There are broadly categorized as follows:

Manual Cleaning Equipment

As the name suggests, they are used manually to keep the surfaces clean. Some commonly used manual equipment are:

- **Abrasives:** They are the sharpening stones or grit papers used to polish metal or wooden surfaces. There are various abrasives depending upon the size of grit and adhesion of grit particles on the paper.

- **Brushes:** They are handheld flat brushes with bristles to dust the plain surfaces as well as the corners. They come with non-slip handles and stiff scratch-free bristles. They help removing stubborn dust.
- **Chambermaid's Trolley/Housekeeping Trolley:** This trolley is large enough to keep all the guest room and guest bathroom supplies in an organized manner. It makes the housekeeping staff to move it around and carry large number of items in one go while keeping and cleaning the guest rooms.
- **Dustbins:** They are used to collect daily garbage produced in the hotel.
- **Dusting Cloths:** They are soft cloths used for wiping the surface dust.
- **Dustpans:** They are used to collect dust and garbage from the floor and putting it into the dustbin.
- **Janitor's trolley:** It is a trolley that stores cleaning supplies such as detergents, spray bottles, dustbin, mop, and dusting cloths, all in a compact manner. It can be moved around easily. It fulfills the challenge of modern day housekeeping in hotels.
- **Mops:** There are various types of mops such as string mops, flat mops, dust mops, and synthetic mops. Mops are generally made of flat cotton strings or heavy-duty sponges fixed on the metal frames. The cotton mops have high absorbing ability but need more care unlike the synthetic mops that offer almost zero absorbing ability and very less maintenance.
- **Mop Wringer trolley:** A mop bucket cart (or mop trolley) is a wheeled bucket that allows its user to wring out a wet mop without getting the hands dirty. The mops are squeezed between two surfaces to remove dirty water from it.
- **Scarifying machine:** It is used for keeping gardens, golf courts, and lawn in the hotel premises. It cuts through the turf, and removes moss and dead grass. It helps grow spongy lawn. Scarifiers have fixed knife blades attached to the rotary cylinder. They cut through the grass by which the offshoots are separated into lots of individual plants. This helps to thicken up the turf and improve its health.
- **Spray Bottles:** They are used to spray water or chemical solutions on the surface that needs cleaning. They are also used to spray water on the delicate flowers or leaves of flower arrangement.

Electric Cleaning Equipment

As the name depicts, this equipment requires electrical power to operate. They are operated either on AC power or on the battery. Some important electric equipment are:

- **Box Sweeper:** It is electric sweeper that consists of a friction brush. The brush often is fit to revolve vertically or horizontally, when the equipment moves on the

surface. It can clean floors as well as carpets. The wider the better is the box sweeper brush.

- **Vacuum Cleaner:** It is again a majorly used equipment in hotel housekeeping. It comes with a suction motor fit in a case, a hose, and various attachment for delicate as well as tough cleaning requirements.
- **Polishing Machine:** They are used to add a shine to the floors of most frequented areas of the hotel.
- **Scrubber:** It is a floor care accessory that comes with handheld electrically operated scrubber. It is used where only mopping doesn't suffice. It can scrub stubborn and sticky stains on the floors of cafeterias, restaurants, lobbies, and fitness areas where people can take food and beverages.
- **Vapor Cleaning Machine:** They are used where the chemical odors are not desired. They are equipped for continuous operation. They heat up quickly and work with low amount of moisture. They kill the beg bugs and their eggs, the yielding a completely clean environment.

Cleaning Agents or Chemicals

Apart from water and regular detergents, the housekeeping staff also uses cleaning chemicals, which are often available in the form of liquids, blocks, and powders.

- **Water:** It is the most commonly used medium for cleaning and rinsing. The housekeeping staff needs to use only soft water because hard water cannot dilute detergents properly. Non-oily and non-greasy stains such as ink stains can be removed using water.
- **Vinegar:** It is used in removing light stains in the bath.
- **Bathroom Cleaners:** They come in liquid form for easy cleaning. They clean, descale, and disinfect the bathroom walls, bathtubs, bathroom flooring, sinks, and showers. They often contain phosphoric acid.
- **Clean Air Sprays:** They are best for freshening the hotel corridors, washrooms, bathrooms, and reception areas. These sprays remove the pungent smell of tobacco, smoke, and organic wastes.
- **Degreaser:** This is mainly used in bars to remove the marks of grease and lipstick that cannot be removed by traditional washing of glasses and cups. Degreaser restores the surface shine and transparency of the glasses and bowls.
- **Floor Cleaners and Sealers:** One of the important tasks of hotel housekeeping is cleaning the floor periodically and keeping it sealed with the help of sealer of the right consistency for optimum maintenance. Some areas in the hotel are busy and bear heavy traffic such as lobby, corridors, parking areas, restaurants, and dining

halls. Their floorings lose smoothness and shine. In such a case, the floor cleaners and sealers are used for restoring their look and shine.

- **Laundry Cleaners:** They are liquid concentrates with variable amount of peroxide that removes tough stains, bleaches the linen, and enhances its whiteness. A number of chemicals are used in dry-cleaning. They are camphor oil, turpentine spirits, benzene, kerosene and white gasoline, petroleum solvents such as naphtha blends, chloroform, carbon tetrachloride, and liquid carbon dioxide. They remove the stains from silk tapestry without damaging the fibers.
- **Surface Sanitizers:** They often come in the form of liquid concentrate. They are water-based and sanitize the surfaces without damaging their appearance. The sanitizers reduce the presence of bacteria to a great extent. They come with different concentrations and fragrances.
- **Toilet Blocks:** They deodorize the toilets and leave them with a fresh smell. They come with two variants: continuous action and instant action. They contain oxidizing agents such as ozone, hydrogen peroxide, or chlorine that removes unpleasant organic odor from the surface of a material.
- **Toilet Cleaners:** They are available in liquid form containing strong hydrochloric acid. They remove stains and plumbing scales easily, and restore the shine of their surface.
- **Carpet Cleaning Agents:** Cleaning and maintaining the carpets are important tasks of hotel housekeeping. As suggested by the Carpet and Rug Institute (CRI), carpet cleaning is complete when the following issues are tackled:
 - Soil containment
 - Vacuuming
 - Spotting
 - Interim cleaning
 - Restorative cleaningCarpet cleaning chemicals are often low-moisture, fast-drying cleaners that take care of the above said issues effectively.
- **Swimming Pool Cleaners:** They are used for cleaning the swimming pool water. Some of them are TCCA-90 granules or tablets, SDIC, hydrochloric acid (HCL), liquid chlorine, and alum. The pool cleaning chemicals kill the bacterial and algae growth in the water.

The chemicals like Sodium Dichloroisocyanurate (SDIC) has 60% of chlorine content and is used worldwide for disinfecting water. The pool cleaning chemicals dissolve fast in water and provide quick cleaning results. The housekeeping staff needs to take extra care while cleaning baby pools using these cleaners.

7. Housekeeping – Guest Supplies

"People will forget what you said. People will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel..."

- Maya Angelou, American Author, Poet, and Civil Rights Activist.

It is the most important duty of the housekeeping staff to prepare the guest room and the other places in the hotel so that the guest is most comfortable. Due to this, the housekeeping staff places some necessary supplies in the guest rooms and guest bathrooms. The idea behind is, the guest need not pack and carry each and every essential article while travelling.

As per the hotel policy, and the standard of the room, the lists of these supplies may change. The housekeeping staff needs to ensure that those supplies are kept in appropriate numbers and condition while preparing room for guest check-in.

Let us see more on the guest supplies.

List of Supplies for Guest Room

The guest room supplies are considered as guest essentials. The housekeeping staff places the following standard supplies in the guest room:

- **Furniture:** It includes bed, bedside table, chairs, wardrobe with locker facility, writing table, dressing table, center table, and a magazine holder.
- **Bedding:** It includes mattress, bed sheet, bed cover, quilt, quilt cover, pillows, and pillow cases.
- **Bedside Supplies:** They include non-slip mats on the either sides of the bed.
- **Bedside Table Supplies:** They involve a telephone device, and a printed compiled list of important intercom numbers such as reception, restaurant, and laundry of the hotel. The housekeeping staff also provides a copy of Bible, Geeta, or Koran, depending upon the prior knowledge of the guest's religious orientation.
- **Center Table Supplies:** It includes room service, laundry service, and spa and health club rate cards. It also has an ash tray and a small decorative center piece.
- **Clothing and Clothing Care:** It involves bathrobe, coffee table cover, rocking chair cover, and hangers for clothes and ties.
- **Hospitality Tray:** It is a small tray with compartments that holds sachets of coffee, tea, cocoa powder, creamer, and sugar. Some hotels also offer the sachets of condiments like black and white pepper powder, and salt. They also keep an electric

kettle, a couple of cups, saucers, spoons, and water bottle so that the guest can make the beverage of his choice once in a day.

- **Mini Bar Supplies:** It includes a small personal refrigerator filled with a couple of soft drinks, alcoholic drinks, soda, and ice cubes. It also involves a couple of personal servings of salted peanuts, cashew nuts, or chips.
- **Writing Desk Supplies:** A writing pad, a pencil, an eraser, promotional brochures, La carte menu, and the short list of places of historical and commercial importance in the city for guest's reference.

List of Supplies for Guest Bathroom

They are also considered as guest essentials. The guests are expected to use these supplies or take them away on departure. Depending upon the type of room, the list of supplies for guest bathroom are:

- **Bathroom Attachments:** Bath area with shower and handheld shower attachments, a bath tub with hot-cold water mixer and handheld shower attachment, soap dispenser, toilet paper attachment, towel holder, and a basin with hot-cold water mixer attachment.
- **Towels:** The couple of pairs of a large and a small towels each for the guests to be used according to their requirement.
- **Dustbin:** A small dustbin with lid, which can be often, opened by the foot and lined with a plastic bag from inside.
- **Non-slip Foot-mat:** It is often, kept near the bathtub.
- **Slippers:** Flat non-slip slippers for the guest.
- **Mirror:** A large mirror is often, fit on the wall above the basin.
- **Hair Dryer:** A wall mounted fixed hair dryer for the guest is kept in the bathrooms.
- **Vanity Tray:** It contains small bottles of shower gel, shampoo, and conditioner. Some hotels also provide moisturizer, shower cap, hand and foot cream, ear buds, and a small manicure kit. It may also contain a couple of empty glasses, disposable toothbrushes, and a small bottle of mouthwash.

Items Provided on Request

The items provided on request are given to the guests when they ask for them. These are the supplies apart from regular supplies required by some guests. These are often provided as the guest expendables. Some of them are:

- Alarm clock

- Comb
- Crib or Cradle
- Disposable Diapers
- Disposable razor
- Electric blanket
- Electric fan
- Extra blankets
- First aid medical kit
- Handheld shower attachment
- Hearing equipment
- Hot water bag
- Iron
- Ironing board
- Pillow
- Potty Ring for toilet
- Raised toilet seat
- Sanitary napkins
- Sewing kit
- Stationery items
- Tampons
- Wipes

8. Housekeeping – Standard Procedures

"It all comes back to the basics. Serve customers the best-tasting food at a good value in a clean, comfortable restaurant, and they'll keep coming back."

– Dave Thomas, CEO of Windy's, a fast-food restaurant chain.

The efforts of housekeeping speak for themselves. The result of sincere as well as faux housekeeping efforts are noticeable. The housekeeping staff needs to execute cleaning and maintenance tasks at various places inside the hotel. The most important task is cleaning and maintaining guest rooms and guest bathrooms. The guests assess the cleanliness in this area critically.

By following the best cleaning and maintenance practices, the housekeeping staff can contribute to retain the satisfied guests as well as to generate new guests willing to repeat their visit to the hotel. This brings in more revenue to the hotel business. To perform towards guest satisfaction and work productivity together, the housekeeping staff needs to structure the cleaning and maintenance procedures and follow them appropriately.

Setting Chambermaid's Trolley

The chambermaid's trolley can be viewed as a large tool box on wheels to aid the hotel housekeeping staff. It has a number of compartments and shelves of various sizes. This trolley is filled with the supplies from the housekeeping supplies store at the end of each shift so that the next shift staff can access it immediately.

The staff considers the following points while loading chambermaid's trolley.

- Loading the trolley with adequate supplies depending upon the number and types of the rooms on the floor.
- Avoiding to overload the trolley that may lead to any accidents.
- Avoiding to underload the trolley that may lead to make unnecessary trips to supplies store.

SOP for Setting the Chambermaid's Trolley

The SOP is given as follows:

- Empty the trolley.
- Check rapidly for any broken parts.
- Clean it by dusting and wiping any stains.

- Place the items according to their weight: heaviest items at the bottom and lighter items at the top section of the trolley.
- Place the linen for different purpose separately.
- Close the lids of cleaner bottles and liquid cans tightly.
- Record the numbers and types of the items loaded in the trolley for the rooms.
- Collect the room keys.
- Take the trolley to the assigned duty floor.
- Park it outside the room such that the linen side faces outside and the room entrance is blocked.

SOP for Entering the Guest Room

The housekeeping staff should follow the SOP given below for entering the guest room.

- Leave the DND (Do not Disturb) rooms undisturbed.
- Knock the door with knuckles and announce in pleasant voice, "Housekeeping...".
- Wait for five seconds to hear the guest's response.
- In case of no response, announce the same again.
- In there is no answer second time too, open the door with the key.
- Enter the room.
- If the guest is found sleeping, withdraw from the room quietly.
- In case the guest answers, ask politely when would he like to service the room.
- In case the guest wants it later, acknowledge his reply and withdraw from the room.
- If the housekeeping work is in progress and the guest returns from outside, greet him and ask if the guest would like to return in some time.

SOPs for Cleaning the Guest Room

The SOP for cleaning the guest room is given below. Once the staff enters the room and starts the housekeeping work, he must:

- Not use guest room linen as a door stopper or for cleaning and dusting the room.
- Keep the guest room door open while working.
- Open the curtains and patio door.
- Assemble the furniture and place appropriately.
- Keep the vacuum cleaner and other cleaning apparatus in the room.

- Check the type of bed.
- Take the bed linen of appropriate size and place it on the nearest chair.
- Remove previous bedspread and place on the chair.
- Inspect the bed and pillows for their condition as well as for any lost-and-found.
- In case of checkout room, deposit the left guest items to the floor supervisor. If the room is still occupied by the guest, place the item such that it is safe as well as visible to the guest.
- Put soiled sheets and pillow covers in the soiled linen cart of the trolley.
- Empty ashtrays and rubbish from the guest room and bathroom dustbins into the trash cart of the trolley.
- Pick up used glasses, mugs, ashtray, trays, and place them on bathroom platform.
- Spray the bathtub, basin, glasses, mugs, and trays with cleaning liquid. Let them soak the chemicals from the liquid.
- Make the bed.
- Start dusting from an extreme inside corner of the room and work outwards.
- Clean wipe TV.
- Straighten the guest items.
- Sweep the room and patio floor.
- Mop the room and patio floor.
- Clean the glasses, mugs, and tray.
- Sanitize glasses, mugs, telephone device, and TV remote.
- Inspect the condition of bathroom slippers and bathrobe. Replace if soiled.
- Close the patio door.
- Close all the curtains
- Clean the entrance door.
- Close and lock the room door.
- Report any damage spotted to the supervisor.

SOPs for Cleaning the Guest Bath Room

The SOP for cleaning the guest bathroom is given below.

- Open bathroom ventilation.
- Sweep the bathroom floor.
- Scrub and finish the platform, bathtub, and basin.
- Scrub and finish the toilet bowl, rim, ring, and hinge.
- Wipe the mirror.
- Clean bathroom walls using wet mop or sponge.
- Replace amenities such as toilet roll, toilet block, shampoo, conditioners, and moisturizers.
- Replace bathroom mat.
- Wipe down shower curtain working from top to bottom with a dry cloth.
- Replace bath towels and hand towels.
- Replace the dustbin liner.
- Close the bathroom ventilation.
- Clean the bathroom door.
- Keep the bathroom door open after cleaning.
- Check bathroom doormat. Replace if required.

- Report any damage spotted to the supervisor.

SOPs for Cleaning Balcony / Patio

The balcony or the patio are the extensions of the guest room. The SOPs for cleaning them are given below.

- Enter the balcony.
- Spray walls, railings,
- Scrub and clean the bird droppings
- Wipe down rocking or sitting chairs and table
- Clean the door tracks appeared on the floor.
- Sweep the floor.
- Mop the floor.

SOPs for Do-Not-Disturb (DND) Rooms

Every room has to be entered at least once a day by any housekeeping staff. The guests who do not want to get disturbed by any housekeeping service tag their rooms with a Do-Not-Disturb (DND) sign.

The SOP for these rooms is as given below.

- Do not disturb by placing a call until 2:00 o'clock in the noon.
- After 2:00 p.m., the Supervisor calls the room to know the guest's needs.
- The housekeeping staff contacts the supervisor to make sure whether to service the room.
- If the call was not answered by the guest after two calling attempts, the room is serviced.
- To his best judgement, the housekeeping staff enters the room and continues with the usual housekeeping work.

Public Area Cleaning SOP

There are various public areas frequented by the hotel guests. The areas and their respective SOPs for housekeeping are as given:

SOPs for Cleaning the Lifts

- Carry out the lift cleaning task early morning when the least number of guests are expected to use it.
- Call the elevator on the ground floor.
- Open its door.

- Put appropriate signboard near it.
- Clean the lift using the appropriate cleaning liquid according to the wall material of the lift cabin.
- Wipe the lift doors.
- Work from top to bottom while cleaning a lift cabin.
- Keep the lift door open till the floor and walls are dried completely.
- Spray clean air freshener.

SOPs for Cleaning the Front Office and Lobby

The lobby is active 24 hours. The furniture, carpets, flooring, and ceiling; everything needs to be kept extremely clean at any given time. The SOPs are as follows:

- Clear all ashtrays into the trash ensuring no cigarettes are burning.
- Clean and restore them to proper places.
- Clear the dustbins near front office desk.
- Replace their lining and keep them as they were.
- Dust and wipe the telephone device, fax machine, Computers, and kiosks. Sanitize the telephone device, computer key board, and touchpad of the kiosk.
- Remove spider webs from ceiling.
- Remove the dust deposited on walls, windows, furniture, and floor.
- Remove stains on the carpet and furniture.
- Clean all artifacts using damp and soft cloth carefully.
- Sweep and mop the flooring of lobby and front office desk area.
- Dust and polish any vases, paintings, and art pieces.
- Spray the air clean spray with signature aroma.
- Play a very light and soothing instrumental music.

SOPs for Cleaning Parking Area

The parking area takes the load of pollution created by hotel owned vehicles and guests' private vehicles. It is heavily polluted with dirt and dust. The parking area needs cleanliness with respect to the following terms:

- Control the ventilation.
- Control pollutant discharges occurring from broken drainage or water systems of the hotel.
- Remove fine-grained sediment particles on parking floor.
- Clean the area near lift.
- Hard-sweep the parking floor using street sweeping equipment.
- Collect and dispose the debris appropriately.
- Bringing presence of any unusual debris to the notice of public area supervisor.

SOPs for Keeping the Garden

The gardener or the team of gardeners work to keep the garden looking beautiful. They must:

- Water the plants regularly according to the season and requirement of the plants; generally early morning.
- Remove the weed and fall leaves daily.
- Implement the art of **Arbosculpture** to enhance the beauty of the trees and bushes.
- Keep the gardening tools clean and safe.
- Report any damage or requirement of tools or plants to the public area supervisor.
- Keep the lawn grass in healthy condition by periodic cutting with the help of scarifying machine.
- Keep any artificial waterfalls or artificial water body clean.
- Fertilizing and manuring the plants as per the schedule.
- Recycle the food wastage in the hotel to prepare organic fertilizer.

SOPs for Cleaning the Dining Area

The dining areas need daily cleaning before their working hours start as well as when the restaurant staff requests cleaning. The SOP is given below.

- Collect all the cleaning equipment and dining area keys.
- Switch on all the electric lamps.-
- Open all the drapes and blinds for letting in the natural light.
- Observer the entire area to plan the work.
- Align all the chairs away from the table to make room for cleaning.
- Clean the carpet area, using vacuum cleaner.
- Remove any food stains from the carpet using appropriate cleaner.
- If there is no carpet on the floor, sweep and mop it.
- Dust all the furniture in the dining area.
- Polish the furniture if required.
- Using a feather duster, dust all the pictures, paintings, artworks, and corners.
- Clean and disinfect the telephone devices.
- Polish metal, glass, and wood items if required.
- Clean the mirrors and windows by wiping them with wet sponge.
- If requirement of maintenance is spotted, consult engineering department.
- If any guest items are found, then deposit it with housekeeping control desk.

- Collect all dirty table linens and replace with the fresh ones.
- Return the keys to the security department.
- Record in the housekeeping register.

SOPs for Cleaning the Swimming Pool

The swimming pool cleaning activity can be conducted in-house by training and employing housekeeping staff; as there could be separate swimming pools such as indoor and outdoor as well as for adults and for children. The following steps are taken to clean and maintain the swimming pool:

- Check water quality more than once a week.
- Check any broken tiles/pipes inside the swimming pool.
- Clean the water as soon as possible when required.
- Check the pool water for contamination daily. Remove leaves using leaf catchers.
- Check for slippery floor area and the pool bottom. Apply and maintain the anti-slip mats near the pool. Scrub and clean the bottom of the pool.
- Keep the life-saving and floating apparatus ready all time.
- Keep poolside area and basking chairs clean.
- Keep an appropriate and noticeable signage showing the depth of the swimming pool.
- Check and keep changing rooms up to good quality.
- Keep the changing room door open when it is not occupied.
- Employee lifeguards to provide general safety check for swimming pool once a day during the operating hours.
- Add adequate amount of chlorine in the pool water.

SOPs for Spring Cleaning

Since Spring-cleaning is a time taking process, it is conducted during low occupancy period. The standard procedures are:

- Request a spring-cleaning date the front office desk. (The housekeeping department needs to honor whatever date they give, as it is the matter of revenue generation.)
- Tag the room as "Not for Sale".
- Remove the guest amenities, curtains, and art pieces from the room.
- Send the curtains to the laundry for dry cleaning.
- Empty the mini bar and send the beverage items to Food and Beverage store.
- Roll the curtains and cover them with dustsheet.
- Inspect the furniture and send to the furniture yard for repair or upholstery.

- Inspect the locks, knobs, latches, leaking pipes, and bathroom.
- Hand over the room to maintenance department for any painting, sealing, and repairing work required.
- Once the maintenance work is complete, remove any residual smell of paint and varnish by airing the room.
- Polish and clean the permanent fixtures.
- Open, lay, and shampoo the carpet.
- Check the bathroom sealing and clean the bathroom.
- Make the bed using fresh bed linen.
- Restore the art pieces, furniture, and guest supplies.
- Call room service for restoring mini bar, glasses, and trays.
- Show the room to the floor supervisor.
- Release it to the front office desk for selling.

SOPs for Closing Down the Shifts

The floor supervisor closes the shift formally by ensuring the following points from the attendants:

- Empty garbage bags of the chambermaid's trolley into the garbage receptacle.
- Ensure they the soiled linen collected into chambermaid's trolley bags are sent to laundry.
- Remove the chambermaid's trolley and check it for ant damage and dirt accumulation.
- Empty the vacuum cleaner bags and replace them with new ones.
- Tidy the housekeeping department area by stacking the items at their appropriate places.
- Clean the toilet brushes with hot water for ten minutes every week.
- Rinse mops in light detergents and hang for drying.
- Close the doors and handover the keys to the housekeeping control desk.
- Sign off the shift.

9. Housekeeping – Linen Maintenance

"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."

- Mahatma Gandhi, Late Indian Freedom Fighter.

In the range of small to large hotels, the guest room linen, guest bathroom linen, staff uniforms, all continue to accumulate in large amount. It is essential for the housekeeping staff to launder the linen and make it readily available at all times so that the staff can receive their well-laundered uniforms before work, and the guests are provided with good quality linen.

It is definitely required to purchase good quality linen; but the life, appearance, and the quality of linen largely depends upon the treatment it receives at the laundry by the laundry staff. Small hotels can contract with the commercial laundry services located outside the hotel. Large hotel establishments prefer to install their private on-premises laundry. Let us understand on-premises laundry operated by housekeeping:

Advantages of On-Premise Laundry

The following advantages are seen if housekeeping staff works at on-premise laundry:

- On-premise laundry provides more use in comparatively less investment.
- The time, energy, and effort to take the clothes outside at a commercial laundry service is eliminated hence the staff can work better.
- The housekeeping staff can easily access the On-premise laundry.
- Pilferage is reduced.
- The staff can have complete control over the wash cycles, and wear and tear of the linen. Thus, life of the fabric can be prolonged by using specific washing for the linen depending upon degree of their soiling.

On-Premise Laundry Equipment

On-premise laundry is the game of conservation of water and electricity and generation of high throughput. This equipment speeds up the housekeeping work. The laundry equipment mainly includes:

Washer/Extractors

They are automatic machines which are used to wash the linen in large amount. They provide high laundry room productivity by using less water and electricity.

Dryers

They dry the linen in less time than conventional drying methods. They deliver fast drying without consuming much electrical energy.

Flatwork Ironers

They save energy, cost, and efforts to press the large number of linen by delivering them ironed and pressed. They are easy and safe to operate.

Commercial Folders and Stackers

They are yet another automatic laundry devices that can deliver a perfectly folded and finished linen. They can also help to stack the folded linen neatly.

The housekeeping staff that handles laundry section is expected to know each device and its operation.

Working at On-Premise Hotel Laundry

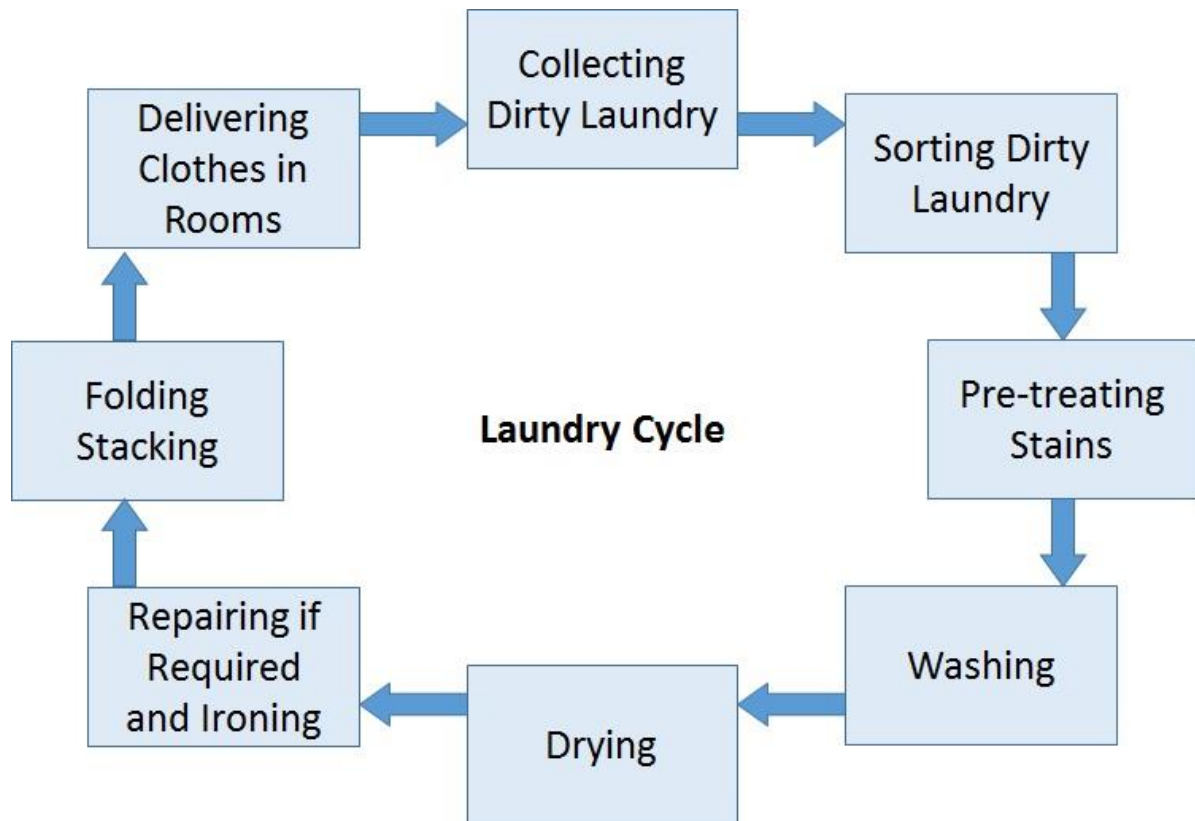
The laundry consists of bath and bed linen, dining are linen, staff uniforms, cleaning cloths, curtains, drapes, blankets, and rugs. The guest laundry is handled by the most experienced staff. The staff in the laundry room is expected to be aware of the chemicals, detergents, dry cleaning agents, and the stages of laundry cycle.

No sooner than the soiled laundry arrives, the laundering work starts quickly. The reason behind it are:

- The soiled linen must be cleaned as early as possible.
- The stains may get permanent.
- The stains may get transferred to other linen.
- The soiled linen should not provide a breeding ground for bacteria.
- To avoid the chances of linen misplacing or loss.

Laundry Cycle

The laundry goes through the following stages:



This cycle depicts the typical operating procedures.

SOPs for Laundry Management

The laundry management is carried out on daily basis. Here are some standard procedures given:

- **Collect Dirty Linen:** Collect the dirty linen from various sections in the hotel such as guest rooms, guest bathrooms, and dining area. Put the soiled linen separately. The principle is, whatever linen it is, it must not hang over the edge of the collection basket. Transfer the collected linen to the laundry department.
- **Sort the Linen:** Segregate the linen carefully according to type of fabric, domain of item use, degree of soiling, and type of soiling. Keep the staff uniforms, guest room and bathroom linen, dining area linen, butchery aprons, and guests' personal clothes all separately. Always handle the linen using gloves.
- **Pre-treat the Stains:** Before the putting the linen into the washer, inspect it for stains such as grease or oil. Remove the stains using stain cleaning chemicals. If instructed before, use detergents and cleaning chemicals at the time of washing only, to save the time and efforts.
- **Wash/Extract the Linen:** Put the linen into washers. Weigh the linen before washing process to ensure the washers are not overloaded. The housekeeping staff need to handle many washers and dryers depending on the size of hotel and occupancy of rooms. Set the automatic washers to different wash

cycles depending upon the type of linen. For example, embroidered pillow covers need soft wash cycle and the curtains need harder wash cycles. The following wash cycle is most effective:

Soak -> Flush -> Suds -> Bleach -> Rinse -> Extract -> Starch

Remove as much as possible water content from the linen by using extractors. The linen is then starched to make it little stiff and shiny.

- **Dry the Linen:** Put the linen into dryers for removing any moisture still left. Be careful while transferring the linen from washers to dryers because the weight of the linen increases after washing. Use automatic dryer that provides drying by hot air blows. The lint comes off from the linen surface in the process of drying yielding a finished surface. These dryers operate on less electricity and yield fresh and completely dry linen.
- **Iron/Repair the Linen:** At this stage, check the linen for any wear and tear. Separate the worn out linen to be given to the tailor. Some linen such as towels, bed linen, and dining area linen require Ironing. Pass these linen through the ironer. Hand-iron a few linen such as uniforms.
- **Fold and Stack the Linen:** Automatic folding and stacking machines come to the aid of housekeeping staff to save them from the large effort of folding and stacking the linen accurately. Some sort of linen such as staff uniforms and guest personal clothes still need manual efforts for folding. Operate the folding/stacking machines that ascertains finished appearance and makes the linen easy for storage and handling.
- **Deliver the Linen:** Transport the ready laundered linen to the uniform room and linen room. Send the linen that need repair to the tailor room. Then subsequently deliver the linen at the time of keeping and cleaning the various premises such as guest rooms, dining area, and banquet halls.

Give away the guests' personal clothes according to the rooms they are staying in.

10. Housekeeping – Coordination and Work Records

"Success is not created by one person but by a team that comes together as one."

- Jillan Farrar, American Singer-Songwriter, Author, Publisher, and Film Producer.

If various departments are seen as organs of the body, then the housekeeping department can be seen as a mesh of the nerves that keeps coordination with various organs to achieve its objectives.

No work in the industry is complete without coordination and documentation. The housekeeping department is not an exception either. It needs to coordinate within the department itself and with the other departments in the hotel business for while working on daily basis and completing documentation formalities while working.

Let us see more on housekeeping communication.

Importance of Housekeeping Control Desk

The housekeeping control desk is the hub or a single point of contact for all hotel housekeeping staff. At the control desk, the new information is fetched and it is distributed among the relevant staff.



As the housekeeping work is mainly oriented towards providing the best service to the guests, this department needs to work towards sharing information without any communication gaps. This desk also needs to ensure that the coordination among the housekeeping staff and with all other departments of the hotel goes smooth.

Functions of Housekeeping Control Desk

The hotel housekeeping performs the following functions:

- Collecting all requests made by the guests.
- Briefing the staff about the routine or special event preparation before the staff turns up their sleeves.
- Assigning routine duties / changed duties to the housekeeping staff.
- Collecting work reports from staff.
- Collecting check-out room number and updating it to the floor supervisor.
- Handling key cabinet that contains the keys of all floors' master keys and housekeeping store keys.
- Maintaining various records of forms and registers.

Coordination of Housekeeping with Other Departments

While working, the housekeeping department needs to coordinate with the following departments:

Housekeeping-Front Office Coordination

- Sharing occupancy information that helps to estimate future occupancy, budget, and required number of staff.
- Cleaning public areas of hotel premises.
- Special attention requirements like VIP guests, corporate or large family groups, or airline crews as occupants.
- Collection of soiled uniforms from and provision of ready uniforms to the front-office staff daily.

Housekeeping-Food and Beverage Coordination

- Forthcoming banquet events and parties.
- Pest control in kitchen.

Hotel Housekeeping

- Collection of soiled linen and uniforms from the F&B department and provision of ready linen and uniforms to the F&B staff daily.
- Clearance of trays from guest corridors.
- Placement of special guest amenities in guest rooms such as VIP amenities or welcome drink.

Housekeeping-Sales and Marketing Department Coordination

- Supply of promotional brochures, rate cards, or other items such as pen stand in the guest rooms.
- Collection of soiled uniforms from the S&M department and provision of ready uniforms to the S&M staff daily.

Housekeeping-Human Resource Department Coordination

- Acquisition of new staff for the housekeeping department.
- Compensation of housekeeping staff members such as salary, over time, medical treatment, etc.
- Motivation for staff performance by appraisal or reward, induction and training program for new staff.
- Collection of soiled uniforms from the HRD and provision of ready uniforms to the HRD staff daily.

Housekeeping-Security Department Coordination

- Safety of hotel property, and keys.
- Prevention of fire and thefts in the hotel.
- Prevention of any anti-social activities such as any suspicious activities, gambling, or smuggling performed by guests in the guest rooms or hotel premises.
- Collection of soiled uniforms from the HRD and provision of ready uniforms to the HRD staff daily.

Housekeeping-Uniformed Service Department Coordination

- Collection of soiled uniforms from the porters, doormen, drivers, and provision of ready uniforms to them daily.

Housekeeping-Accounts Department Coordination

It takes place regarding:

- The issues related to payments of housekeeping staff.
- Collection of soiled uniforms from the Accounts department and provision of ready uniforms to the accounts staff daily.

Housekeeping-Engineering Department Coordination

- The issues related to erroneous functioning of cleaning and gardening equipment, faulty electric power points, leaning pipes, air-conditioning maintenance, or any other such work.
- Collection of soiled uniforms from the Engineering and Technology staff and provision of ready uniforms to them daily.

Housekeeping-Maintenance Department Coordination

- The repairing and maintenance of broken furniture and fixtures.
- The painting of the required area in the hotel.
- Repairing pipes and electric points in the guest rooms.
- Collection of soiled uniforms from the Maintenance staff and provision of ready uniforms to them daily.

Important Registers Maintained by Housekeeping

The registers are used to record important information. They are very helpful when the shifts and staff on duty changes, and while working too. The registers serve the purpose of keeping clear and timely records thereby fostering good communication. Here are some important registers maintained by housekeeping control desk:

Departure Register

It is kept to track the changes of guest room status such as V, VD, or VC after the guest has checked out. It also tracks the amount of Mini bar beverages consumption in the CO guest rooms.

Expected Arrival Register

It keeps the track of pre-registered guests and their profile as Regular/VIP/Other, Marital status, expected check-in time, and any special request to be fulfilled.

Room Status Register

This register records the list of all rooms and their current status such as V, VC, OOO, OOS, etc.

Guest Call Register

It records the instructions or notes relevant to the guest rooms and adjacent area. It is very useful in keeping the track of activities and their durations.

GUEST CALL REGISTER								
Sr No	Date	Room No.	Guest Name	Call/ Request	Time to Deliver	Forwarded To	FU By	Status

Guest Loan Register

This register is maintained to record the delivery and recovery of the loan items given to the guests. The general format of this register is as follows:

GUEST LOAN REGISTER									
Sr No	Date	Room No.	Guest Name	Req	Time to Deliver	Time to Recover	Delivered By	Recovered By	Status

Missing Article Register

If any article owned by the hotel (other than consumable items) is found missing in a Check-Out room, then it is recorded in this Register.

Guest Supplies Control Register

This register is maintained to record guest supplies. The general format is as shown below:

GUEST SUPPLIES							
Sr No	Floor/Item	Pens/ Pencils	Beverage/ Sugar/ Creamer Sachets	Shower Caps	...	Vanity Sets	Description

Damage/Breakage Register

If any hotel property placed in the guest room is found damaged or broken, it is recorded in this Register. Here is a sample register:

DAMAGE/BREAKAGE REGISTER					
Sr No	Date	Damaged Item	Room No.	Found By	Description

Lost/Found Register

If a housekeeping guest room attendant finds any guest-owned article left in the Check-Out room, then it is recorded into the Lost/Found Register and sent to the same cell of the housekeeping department. It also records any personal article found in the hotel premises.

LOST AND FOUND REGISTER									
Sr No	Date	Item	Description	Found By	Found At	Picked up By	Addr	Contact Number	Sign

Key Register

It is a register for noting down the issued keys of the guest rooms, master keys of the rooms and important safes, and floor keys.

KEY REGISTER						
Sr No	Date	Key ID	Floor No.	Room No.	Time of Issue	Status at End of Shift (Returned/Missing)

Linen Control Register

It records the movement of linen between the laundry and the guest rooms or dining area. It makes the housekeeping staff easy to keep the track of clean and soiled laundry.

Checklists and Reports in Housekeeping

There are various housekeeping checklists and reports automatically generated by the hotel management software.

Checklists

Checklists help to ensure all work is done appropriately without anything left to be completed. There are various checklists referred and filled by the housekeeping staff. Some important ones are:

- Guest Supplies Checklist
- Guest Room Cleaning Checklist
- Guest Bathroom Cleaning Checklist
- Beach Area Cleaning Checklist
- Swimming Pool Cleaning Checklist
- Garden Keeping Checklist
- Housekeeping Standard Checklist for SPA
- Housekeeping Standard Checklist for Fitness Center

Reports

The reports are useful to study past records of occupancy, cleaning schedules, and predict the future status of the rooms. Let us see the reports generated for housekeeping department:

Housekeeping Report

This can be generated at the end of each shift to report the housekeeping status of each room.

Housekeeping Report						
Room No.	Room Type	Ccheck-Out Date	Turnover	Room Occupancy	H/K Status	Housekeeper

Housekeeping Assignment Report

It is required for scheduling the room attendants and recording the room inspections.

Assignment Report											
Rm No.	Rm Type	Guest Name	Adult	Child	Check -in	No. of Nights	Check -out	Turn over Date	Room Occupancy	H/K Status	House Keeper

Housekeeping Occupancy Report

This report shows the list of guests who have checked-in the hotel with details such as number of adults and children, number of nights, and housekeeping status. This report is generated for the occupied rooms, rooms expected to be occupied, checked-out rooms, and vacant or blocked rooms. This report is generated for scheduling rooms for cleaning.

Occupancy Report							
Room No.	Room Type	Guest Name	Adult	Child	No. of Nights	Turnover Date	H/K Status