

# Manual on standards and procedures

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Tailored for guesthouses and hotels family businesses



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## Introduction

The MIK Project implemented by the Positive Development Partnership was financed through a grant provided by the Regional Cooperation Council's Tourism Development and Promotion Project. The RCC's project is funded by the European Union and implemented in an effort to contribute to the growth and competitiveness of the six Western Balkans economies by supporting development and promotion of joint regional cultural and adventure tourism offer. This publication is one of the MIK Project outputs.



# MIK Albania

*“ don't listen to what they say, go see ”*

### *About MIK Project*

The overall objective of this action is to contribute to development of local economies and creating the grounds for financial benefits and inclusion in the tourism value chain by using innovative ICT tools that promote content on cultural heritage and traditional customs. However, since this is a broad approach that covers many topics; the action is mainly focused in connecting national and international tourists with cultural heritage, archaeological locations and genuine traditional experiences through the development of a Mobile App and Web Platform.

MIK is a free virtual tourism guide. This web platform and mobile application helps the tourist to have an enhanced experience of the locations they visit, showing information and facts that are not always visible to travelers and having direct access to the local businesses in the area. The web platform and mobile application can help tourists find the main historical sites, cultural spots and tourism products/services in their surroundings, share updated information and various articles related to the sustainable development of the tourism and hospitality sector.

Webpage: <https://mikalbania.com/welcome>

## ***Guesthouses***

Guesthouses are a type of lodging and accommodation for tourists, both local and international in their various destinations. Good guesthouse management ensures the provision of clean, safe and comfortable accommodation that satisfies the needs of their guests. Good guesthouses and lodging are an important part of a tourist destination.

The guesthouse management packages should be used to help any current guesthouse managers and owners improve the management of their guesthouses. It focuses on key management principles to build on from what they already know from managing their guesthouses and helps them to learn more.

Through this manual you will be able to:

- Enhance and advance existing knowledge on guesthouse management;
- Strengthen critical competencies to analyze aspects of guesthouse management;
- Affirm the potential of enterprise development;
- Identify steps and actions to improve your guesthouse;
- Decide on actions for the future;

## ***How to use the manual***

This manual is designed to help all guesthouse managers and owners to improve their businesses. The manual contains several practical tools, formats and tips. You can use the formats directly as they are or adjust them according to the business needs.



# 1. GOOD MANAGEMENT AND SYSTEMS

## OBJECTIVES:

- Gives an overview of good management and systems in a guest house
- Includes several tools and checklists

What would happen in your guesthouse if you took time off work? Putting in place good management systems can help your guesthouse run smoothly and see what practices work best. Involving your staff in creating and using systems will encourage them to buy into the method and help them work more effectively. This section provides a template for you to brainstorm on systems in each area of your guesthouse. The rest of the good practice guide goes into further detail on systems for the functional areas of your guesthouse.

## 1.1 *Systems*

A management system is a step-by-step of processes and procedures for your business. It is used to help you run day-to-day activities smoothly and meet your business goals.

Benefits of using systems include:

- Using your resources more efficiently;
- Happier guests as you consistently have the same standards and quality;
- Staff understands clearly what they are expected to do;
- Staff need less supervision and improves their skills

## 1.2 *How-to Guide*

Use the management systems checklist to keep track of what systems you have, what systems you need and areas for improvement.

To fill in the checklist:

- List systems in each area of your guesthouse;
- Identify systems you either have or don't have or which need improvement.
- Identify who will work on the system and make sure they understand their role.
- Rank the systems you identified by importance.
- Set actions with deadlines to create or improve your systems.



Table 1.2 Systems checklist

<i>Guesthouse area</i>	<i>System</i>	<i>Yes/No/Needs improvement</i>	<i>Who is responsible</i>	<i>Action (date)</i>
Health and safety				
Housekeeping and maintenance				
Accounting and finance				
Problem-solving				
Improving service				
Staff relations				
Other areas (reservations, front office, food and beverage)				

### **1.3 Maintaining Appearances**

Maintaining and improving the appearance of your guesthouse creates a good first impression for your guests and contributes to their enjoyment during their stay. This section provides information on systems you can use to keep up the appearance of the exterior and interior of your guesthouse.

What systems? - Maintenance systems to keep your guesthouse in a good state of repair; housekeeping systems to ensure all areas outside and inside are cleaned regularly.

Standard consistency systems: - To give your guests a good first impression of your guesthouse, it is important that the outside and entrance are consistently well maintained. The guest rooms and common areas also need to be of a good standard so your guests feel comfortable and at home.

You can keep up a consistent level of quality, style and cleanliness by creating systems for your different maintenance and housekeeping activities. Involving staff in the development and use of your systems will encourage them to follow your plan and improve your standards.

#### **TIPS**

Keep a maintenance request logbook that includes:

- Details of the maintenance request
- Date the request was made
- Date maintenance was completed

Improvement systems: - To help your guesthouse grow and attract new customers, it is important to continually improve your quality and service standards;

Look at the quality and services offered by your competitors and listen your guests' feedback to target areas for improvement;

Maintain a list of possible improvements you could make the demand when you would like to make them;

Owner or staff walk around the guesthouse once a week and check if anything needs to be repaired or could be improved;

Owner or staff, check guest rooms when guests check-out to see if anything is broken or damaged;

Decide what needs immediate action, consideration, or no action;

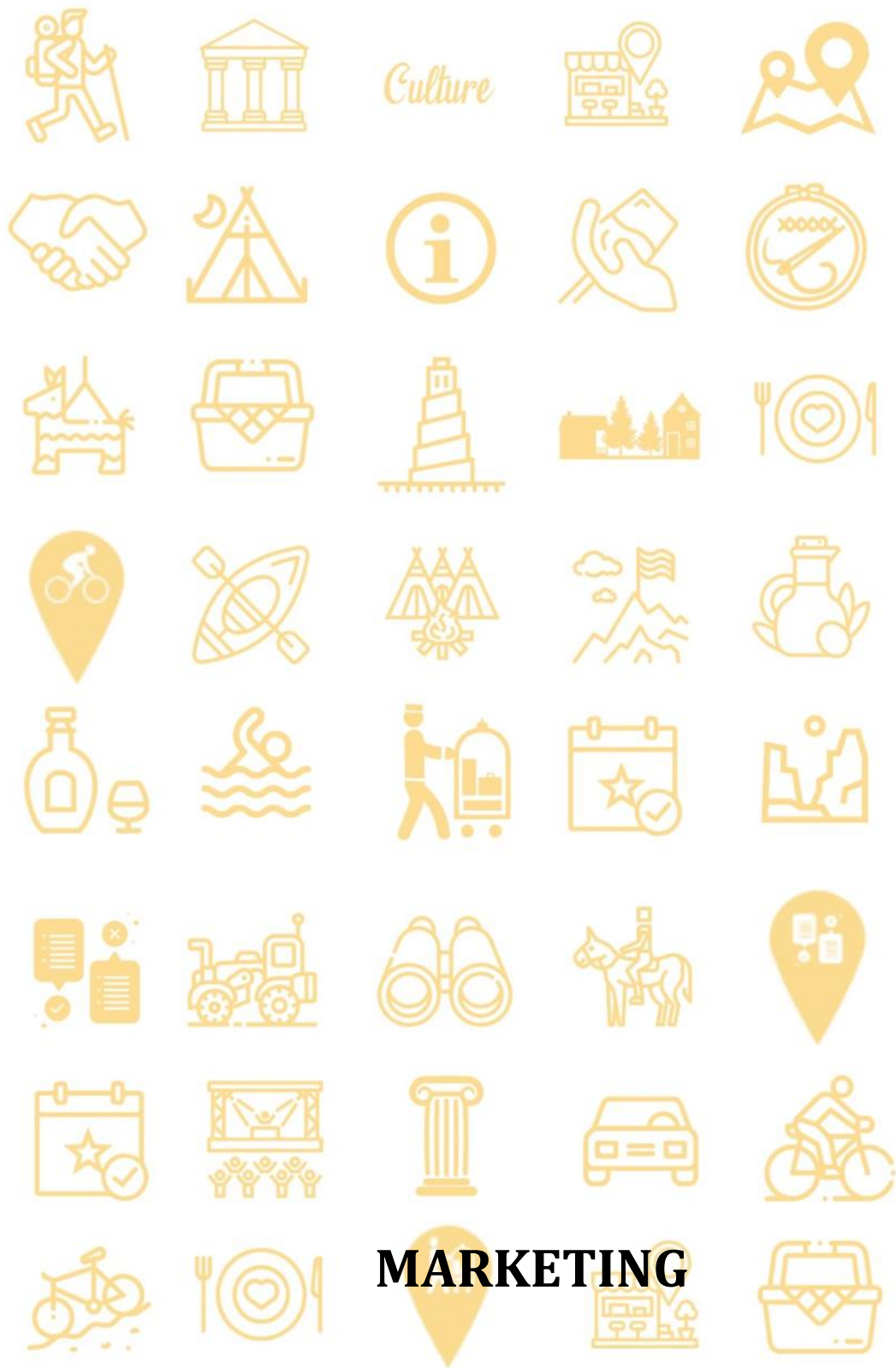
Make a list of items to check regularly (use the following and your findings as a starting point;

*Table 1.3.1 Maintenance and housekeeping checklist*

Maintenance and housekeeping checklist	
Front garden: plants tidy and watered	check
Front stairs clean and swept	
Light bulbs entrance and hallway all work	
Check napkins and tablecloths clean	

*Table 1.3.2 Improvement ideas checklist*

Improvement ideas checklist	
Add safe deposit boxes in rooms	check
Add hair dryers to rooms	
Mirrors in bathrooms	
Lay bathrobes on beds	
Provide soap in rooms	



## 2 MARKETING

### OBJECTIVES:

- Give an overview of how to set prices
- Includes several survey tools and checklist

Charging the right price will allow you to attract guests, and your guesthouse to make a profit. Therefore, pricing is an essential part of marketing. To set your prices you need to know your costs and know how much guests are willing to pay. Budgeting goes hand-in-hand with this process and will be covered in the next section.

This section provides some good practice tools on how to set room prices.

### 2.1 Establishing Price

Table 2.1 How to set your price Tool 1

1 – Know your room cost		
Type of cost	Example	Action
Direct	Cleaning, maintenance, supplies, labor	Calculate total direct cost each month
Overhead/ fixed	Rent, utilities, sales and marketing, insurance, debt repayment	Calculate total overhead cost each month Allocate a % of overhead costs to rooms in proportion to the size of your room income compared to food and beverages and other services
Total	Direct plus overhead costs	Work out total costs for each room (divide total costs per month/day by number of rooms) Work out total costs per month/day (divide costs by number of months/day)

<b>2 – Know how much guests will pay</b>	
Ask your guests	Ask guests what they are willing to pay
	Quote a price to potential guests, if they are price resistant find an acceptable price
Check the competition	Call competitors to find out about their room rates (without causing problems with them) Check competitors' advertisements and online postings

<b>3 – Make your prices attractive: Use a price management strategy to attract more guests</b>	
Offer the same price in all your sales channels	Give special offers e.g. buy two nights get a third free
Offer lower prices in offseason	Offer package rates e.g. bed and breakfast
Offer group discounts	Offer add-ons e.g. upgrades, discounts on bike rentals

## 2.2 Market Survey

Table 2.2 Market survey results Tool 2

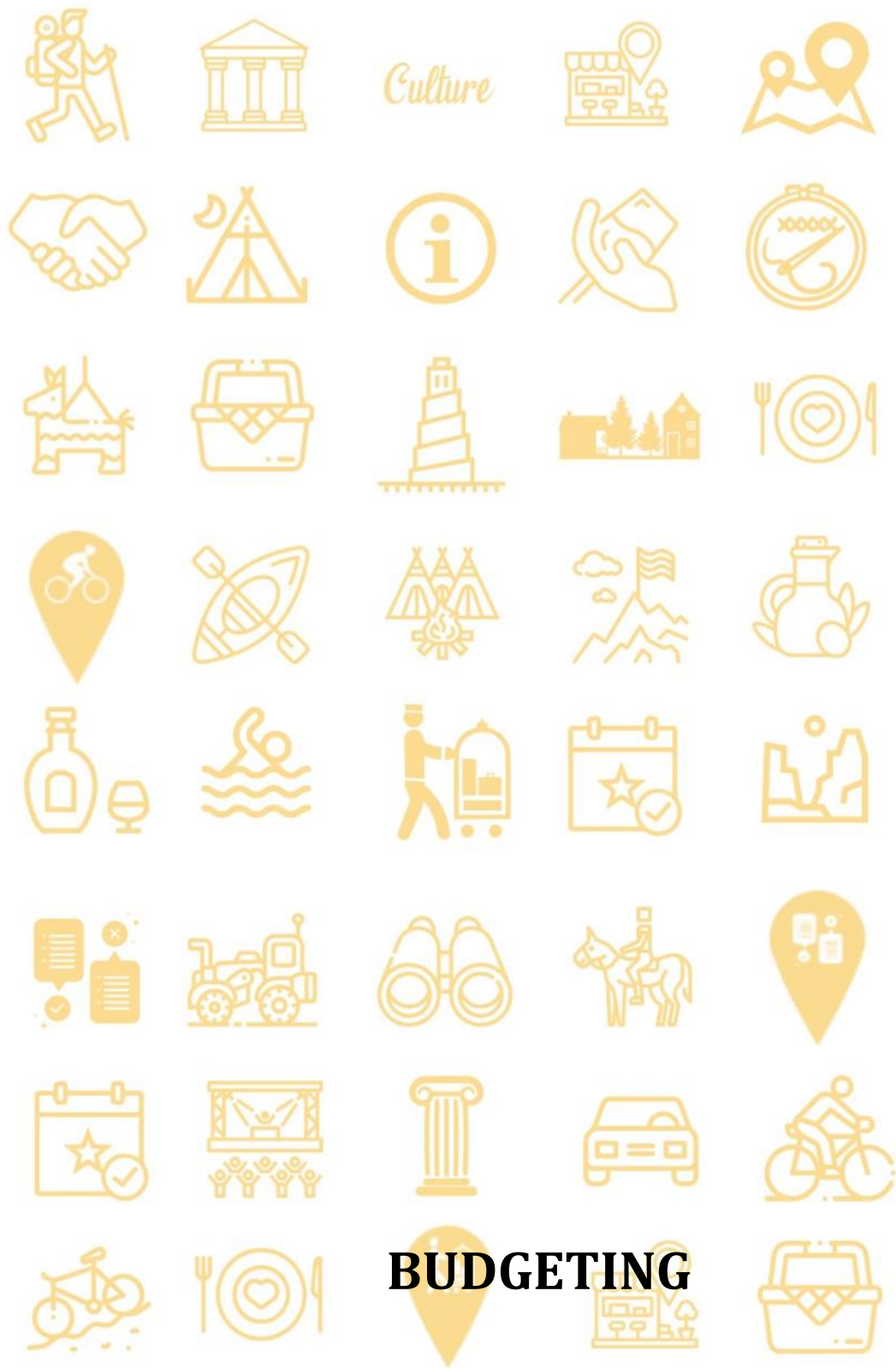
Similar accommodation <1km from your business  
 Similar accommodation <5km from your business  
 Similar accommodation close to rail/bus/airports  
 Smaller accommodation <5km from your business  
 Average price from customer survey

<b>Price</b>		
<b>Single room</b>	<b>Twin room</b>	<b>Extra bed</b>

## 2.3 Pricing

Table 2.3 Pricing chart Tool 3

Description	Single room	Twin room	Extra bed
Low season			
Rate range			
Public rates			
Walk-ins			
Own website			
Advance purchase			
Long staying guests			
Package 1			
Package 2			
Package 3			
Confidential rates			
Online travel agents			
Travel agents			
Tour operators' groups			
Regular customers special discounts			
Peak season and special holiday supplement			



### 3 BUDGETING

#### OBJECTIVES:

- Give an overview of how to keep record of guesthouse expenses and income
- Includes several tools and checklist

#### DEFINITIONS

**Variable costs:** Variable costs change with the amount of goods/services produced and usually fall under the raw materials or labor column.

**Direct costs:** A price that can be completely attributed to the production of specific goods or services. Direct costs refer to materials, labor, and expenses related to the production of a product. Other costs, such as depreciation or administrative expenses, are more difficult to assign to a specific product and are therefore considered indirect costs.

**Fixed costs:** Fixed costs are the same regardless of the amount of goods and services produced. For some fixed costs, you also need to think about the life span of items in order to work out the monthly cost. You need to calculate the price of furniture items such as beds, sinks, showers, and determine how long they will last. They will need to be replaced at some point. If they are estimated to last 5 years, then divide the value by the number of months to get the value to be inserted in the table.

**Raw materials:** These are the basic materials used to make the final product or service. For hairdressing, it is the shampoo or conditioner needed to wash hair. This is a variable cost because it changes based on the amount of goods/services produced.

**Labor costs:** These costs are the amount of wages you pay your employees, as well as the amount of money you earn from your business. These are variable costs because the amount of money you pay your employees and you change with the amount of goods / services produced.

Pricing and budgeting involve:

1. Determining your operating costs; fixed costs, variable costs, and sales & marketing
2. Setting your room rates
3. Monitoring your revenue from your different guesthouse services (rooms, food and beverage, other)
4. Comparing your income and expenses. Are you making enough profit?
5. Reduce costs and increase revenue.



Table 3.1 Budget Sheet Tool 1

Description	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3
Sales - Occupancy (%)			
Room nights (number of nights for roomsrented)			
Average room rate			
1. Total room revenue			
2. Food and beverage revenue			
3. Other revenue			
<b>A. Total income</b>			
Expenses			
1. Variable costs			
2. Direct room costs			
3. Direct food and beverage costs			
4. Fixed costs			
5. Other expenses			
<b>B. Total Expenses</b>			
<b>(A-B) Profit/(loss)</b>			



## 4 PROBLEM SOLVING AND DEVELOPING LOYAL EMPLOYEES

### OBJECTIVES

- Solve problems better by including employees
- Retain valuable staff talent and skills by developing loyal employees through a positive work environment

### 4.1 Problem Solving

All businesses have problems. Developing and using a problem-solving system can help you tackle and solve problems quickly and efficiently, helping your guesthouse to run smoothly. If you have employees in your guest house, it is important to involve them in problem-solving so they can increase their skills, independence and decrease the need for supervision.

- Identify guesthouse and hotel problems through brainstorming
- Encourage everyone to contribute suggestions for solving the problem
- Seek as many ideas as possible, even unusual ones
- Make everyone feel safe and comfortable contributing ideas

Use the space below to list the problems

*Table 4.1.1 Problem Solving Tool 1*

#### Problem solving Step 1

Practice jointly solving a work-related problem with staff members

Invite them to brainstorm solutions

Table 4.1.2 Problem Solving Tool 2

Problem Solving Step 2			
My Role:			
Problem:			
Background:			
Ideas from brainstorming:			
Generated solutions	Pros	Cons	What will it take? (ie. cost, time, materials, etc.)
Option 1			
Option 2			
Option 3			
Selected solution:			
Action plan and timeline			

Table 4.1.3 Problem Solving Tool 3

Problem solving Step 3	
Problem identified by	
Role	
Description of the problem	

## 4.2 Developing Loyal Employees

Having loyal employees is one of the keys to your success. Many guesthouses suffer from a high staff turnover. Developing loyal employees means they will stay with you longer, be better at their jobs and help your guesthouse succeed. One way to develop loyal employees is to make sure you have a positive working environment. The rest of this section looks at ways to create a positive work environment and develop loyal employees.

Communication is central to achieving a good work environment. Everybody has different communication styles, meaning it is easy to misunderstand each other. Before moving to the self-evaluation, think about your general work environment:

- Does my staff enjoy coming to work?
- Is there friction between my staff and me?
- Is there friction among staff members?
- Do I feel frustrated because employees are not loyal?
- Is negativity affecting the success of my business?

Conduct this self-evaluation by asking yourself these questions. Put an X in the Yes or No column.

*Table 4.2 A successful guesthouse is a happy guesthouse*

Questions (Self Evaluation)	Yes	No
Do all my staff members clearly understand what expect them to do?		
If they do not understand, do I explain it to them in a friendly way?		
Do I complement each of them every day?		
Do I get angry with them if they make a mistake?		
Do I turn mistakes into opportunities for learning in a positive way?		
Do I treat everyone fairly?		
Do I treat everyone with respect?		
Do I invite their ideas and suggestions and really listen to them?		
Do we take enough time to relax and enjoy each other's company?		
Is there any reason one of them is unhappy?		
If so, can I do something to help?		
Am I ever cruel or un fair to them?		
Do I yell at them or make fun of them?		
Do I know, understand, and respect national labor standards, including?		
Employee working hour limitations.		
Minimum wage requirements?		
Is my guesthouse (or hotel) a clean, safe, and pleasant place to work?		

Do I arrange fun, informal events so my employees can socialize?		
Do we have breakfast or lunch together?		
Do we celebrate employee birthdays or holidays together?		
Any other questions?		



## 5 IMPROVING SERVICE

### OBJECTIVE:

- Help you to serve the needs of your guests better
- Give you tools to ensure consistent service standards

### 5.1 *Continual Improvement*

The quality of service in your guest house will contribute to your guests' enjoyment and satisfaction during their stay. You have two key recourses in improving your service. One is the people who work in your guesthouse: yourself and your employees. The second is your guests. This section provides an overview to help you make the most of your resources to improve the service in your guesthouse.

Remember: having guests recommend your guesthouse to others is the best way to find new customers.

How can you find out what your guests like and dislike?

- Ask your staff
- Ask your guests

Learning from your staff:

Your employees may have more direct contact with your guests than you. Guests will talk to employees and at the same time, employees may see guests' pleasure or frustration. You can gain access to this valuable information by holding weekly or daily meetings with your staff. Meetings will help your guesthouse in several ways:

- You will get more information about guests' opinions
- You will be able to continually improve your service
- You will increase good feelings and positive atmosphere among your workers
- Your employees' self-confidence will increase
- Your employees will have a space to share information; they might not feel comfortable sharing otherwise. Always thank your staff for being honest and telling you not only what your guests like, but also what they dislike.

Learning from your guests:

- Encouraging your guests to give their opinion on what they do and don't like about your guesthouse can be very helpful for your business. In the tourism industry, a complaint is a gift. When a guest complains:
  - You can apologize.
- Show you care by explaining how you will fix the problem for future guests
- Help your guests leave with a positive feeling, meaning they are more likely to repeat their stay and refer their friends.



*TIPS* - Guidelines for holding daily or weekly staff meetings:

- Meet when people can relax and focus (for example in the afternoon when it is quiet)
- Keep the meetings short (about 10-15 minutes). These can be more productive
- Keep the meetings fun and informal
- Set a friendly, positive tone
- Agree that this is a way for everyone to suggest ways to improve
- Agree to show respect for each other's ideas and opinions
- Make it safe for employees to offer their ideas, opinions, and suggestions
- Encourage everyone to contribute to the discussion

Complete the table below and answer the questions:

*Table 5.1.1 Successful staff meetings*

Staff meetings
Do you think it is a good idea to hold daily or weekly staff meetings (why or why not)?
How could staff meetings help you improve your service?
How could staff meetings help you improve your service?

Table 5.1.2 Successful staff meeting checklist

Review	
Action points from last meeting	Discuss progress on action points from your last staff meeting.
Successes	What has gone well?
Challenges	Were there any problems?
Areas for improvements	What could have been done better? How?
Staff successes	<p>Has any of your staff done something special since the last meeting? E.g. special assistance for a guest, been mentioned in a guest feedback form or online review?</p> <p>Thank and praise the employee at the meeting.</p>
Plan	
Action points for moving forward	Discuss what you want to do by the next meeting
Improvements	Discuss and invite ideas for improvements
Challenges	Discuss any questions or concerns
Special notices	Are any unusual or special events coming up? (e.g. a big holiday, maintenance project or price changes/new promotion)
Any other business	Ask if anyone has anything else to discuss, such as health and safety issues?
	Invite employees to remain behind if they need to speak privately

*TIPS* – Encouraging guest feedback:

- Remind employees to ask guests about their experience
- Encourage employees to accept complaints calmly and cheerfully
- Provide guests with comment cards to fill in before they leave
- Send a follow-up email thanking guests for their stay and including a comment card

Guest Comment Forms - Many businesses use guest comment forms, which invite guests to tell you what they like and to give suggestions for improvements. If you choose to use them, leave one form in the guestroom each time you have guests.

**Sample:**

[Insert name] Guesthouse

We value your opinion!

Please take a little of your time to share your comments and help us improve the [insert name] Guesthouse.

<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Room number:</b>	<b>Arrival date:</b>
<b>Front desk and guest services</b>	<b>Breakfast service</b>
What works well:	What works well:
What needs improvement:	What needs improvement:
<b>Housekeeping</b>	<b>Are there any staff members you would like to praise?</b>
What works well:	Name:
What needs improvement:	Reason:

## ***5.2 System: Good Reception Service***

Using a good reception system will help you keep your guesthouse friendly and well organized. This section explains how to use a 10-step system for running a good reception service in your guesthouse.

Ten steps for running a good reception service:

1. Be friendly and confident when speaking with guests
2. Smile when you talk
3. Speak loudly enough for guests to hear you comfortably
4. Look at the guest when you speak
5. Stand up straight with shoulders back in a confident position
6. Be clean and neat
7. Receptionists spend more time with guests, so they always need to be clean and neat
8. Pay close attention to hair, fingernails, clothes and shoes
9. See Section 6, Tool 2: Personal hygiene checklist
10. Keep your front desk and reception clean and well organized. This is the first thing guests see when they arrive, and you should make a good impression. Keep important supplies and telephone numbers at hand. See Running your reception tools 1, 2 and 3

**Answer the phone politely;** Being polite, clear and efficient on the telephone will give your guests confidence in your guesthouse.

Some tips for good telephone etiquette:

- i. Answer the phone within 3-5 rings.
- ii. Don't leave guests on hold for more than 30 seconds. If necessary take their number to call them back.
- iii. Keep a pen and paper by the phone to take messages
- iv. Start the call politely: "Hello, this is the \_\_\_ Guesthouse, how can I help you?"
- v. End the call politely: "Thank you for your call, we're looking forward to your stay with us". If you don't understand the caller say: "I'm sorry, could you please speak more slowly?"

See Running your reception tool 4.

**Make advance reservations by telephone;**

- i. Collect basic information (arrival and departure dates, number of rooms and people, type of bed)
- ii. Check room availability
- iii. If rooms are available and the rate is accepted, continue the booking
- iv. Collect further information (full name, contact details, arrival time)
- v. Update room availability calendar
- vi. Send an email to guests to confirm booking

See Running your reception tool 6

**Make advance reservations by email;** Taking reservations by email or by SMS is increasingly popular. Use the sample email reply and the sample booking confirmation included to help you create your own customized email responses.

See Running your reception tools 5, 6, 7

**Take walk-in reservations;** Be friendly and confident when tourists walk into asks about a room.

Describe the guesthouse features e.g.:

- i. Room facilities
- ii. Meal service
  - Included meals
  - Included beverages
  - Location of dining area
  - Mealtimes
- iii. Other services and activities, e.g.,
  - Snacks, bottled water
  - Laundry service
  - Bicycle rentals
  - Cultural activities
  - Cooking demonstrations
  - Fishing
  - Guided hiking or trekking
  - Transportation

**Help guests with problems;** If a problem occurs, guests will probably want to discuss it with the Receptionist.

If so, stay calm and follow these steps:

- iv. Listen to the guest's problem without interrupting
- v. Apologize
- vi. Discuss a possible solution
- vii. Tell the guest exactly what you will do
- viii. Don't promise the impossible, but try to make the guest happy
- ix. Ask your manager if you need help
- x. Follow up with guests to make sure they were satisfied

*Note:* In tourism, we say that a complaint is a gift because it gives you a chance to show your guests that you care enough to solve problems for them. If you solve a problem, guests are usually even happier about staying at your guesthouse.

**Give good customer service;** Giving good customer service is the key to running a successful guesthouse. The Receptionist should give information in a friendly way. Here are things your Receptionist should be able to explain well:

- i. Details of meal services i.e. breakfast times
- ii. Snacks and beverages (tea, water, etc.)
- iii. Other places to dine in the area
- iv. Internet/Wi-Fi in use
- v. Location of nearest ATM
- vi. Lost and found items
- vii. Maintenance problems
- viii. Additional services and activities

- ix. Local transport (buses, etc.)
- x. Regional and local tourist attractions

**Check guests in and out;** Use a daily arrivals and departure list to help you manage check-ins and check-outs smoothly and professionally.

- i. Have guests pay for their room and tax when they check-in and issue a receipt
- ii. Have them pay for additional services and activities at check-out
- iii. Give guests a room key, if applicable
- iv. At check-in the Receptionist should explain the following:
  - Meal service
  - Housekeeping service (for guests staying more than one night)
  - Other services and activities
  - The Receptionist should walk with guests to their room as a sign of good customer service. While walking, invite guests to ask questions.

**Check-out;** Have someone check the room to see if anything is damaged or missing. If so, add the charge for repair or replacement to the guest's bill.

- i. Take payment for any outstanding charges (laundry, activities, etc.).
- ii. Collect the guest's room key.
- iii. Assist with guest's transportation and luggage (if applicable).

### Reception Tools:

*Table 5.2.1 Clean front desk and reception Tool 1*

Clean front desk and reception	Check
Tidy front desk	
Paper work and files tidy and organized	
Computer, faxes, printers clean	
Walls and ceiling clean	
Fans clean	
All common areas clean	
Paintings and art work clean	
Fabrics and rugs clean with no rips	
Windows and sills clean	
Floor clear with no obstacles	
Furniture dusted and clean	
Plants watered and trimmed	
Lamps and lighting clean and all bulbs work	
Trash bins clean and empty	
Other	

*Table 5.2.2 Front desk and reception supply list Tool 2*

Items that need to be stocked so you don't run out	Date checked	Need to replace stock?	Date re-stocked
Check in-and check-out forms			
Credit card forms (if needed)			
First aid kit			
Guest comment forms			
Logbook			
Paper for printer (if needed)			
Paper for messages			
Pens and pencils			
Receipt books			
Tourist information for guests (flyers, maps)			
Other			

*Table 5.2.3 Front desk and reception must have telephone numbers Tool 3*

Clean front desk and reception		Check
Police	129	
Fire department	128	
Doctors		
Ambulance	127	
Hospital		
Pharmacy		
Electricity company		
Gas supplier		
Water company		
Internet supplier		
Rental cars		
Taxi's		
Tour companies		

Manager	
Other	

*Table 5.2.4 Telephone message form Tool 4*

Receptionist (or other staff) should use this form when taking phone messages	
Date:	Time:
Who message is for (name):	
Caller's name:	
Caller's telephone number:	
Caller's email address:	
Message:	

**TIPS:**

- Repeat the message to the caller to clarify
- Deliver the message as quickly as possible

**NOTE:** The reception tools below (tools 5, 6, 8, and 9) should be available in the local language and the languages of countries with the highest number of guests, or at least in English, French and German.

*Email Response to booking request Tool 5*

Dear Mr. and Mrs.

Thank you for your interest in staying with us.

As you requested we have [insert number and type of rooms] available from [insert dates requested].

The rooms are priced at [insert rate] a night and include [add package conditions e.g. breakfast].



All our rooms are equipped with [insert air conditioning, fans, television, internet, transport services].

You can see picture of all our rooms on our website [insert web address]. Please note that our room prices are/are not inclusive of tax. Shall I reserve the rooms for you?

Sincerely,

Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_

[Insert job title] \_\_\_\_\_

Guesthouse

EMAIL/

Telephone:

Website:

#### *Booking Confirmation Email Tool 6*

Dear Mr. and Mrs.

Thank you for choosing to stay with the \_\_\_\_\_ Guesthouse. The details of your reservation is confirmed as follows:

Reservation date: [ insert date reservation was made]

Guest name

- Check-in date:
- Check out date:

Total number of nights

- Number of rooms:
- Number of guests:
- Room type:
- Total amount due:
- Payment method:

Total amount due

- Estimated arrival time:
- Estimated departure time:
- Check in from 2 pm and check –out is 12 pm

Special instructions (if any):

We are looking forward to welcoming you to the \_\_\_\_\_ Guesthouse.  
For further information or to make any changes to your booking please do not hesitate to contact us.  
Please refer to our website for details on our booking and cancellation policy.

Sincerely,

Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_  
[Insert job title] \_\_\_\_\_  
Guesthouse  
EMAIL:  
Telephone:  
Website:

*Table 5.2.5 Daily arrivals and departures list Tool 7*

Date:						
Room	Departures (name)	Departure time	Notes	Arrivals (name)	Arrival time	Notes
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						

### ***5.3 Good Housekeeping***

Having a clean and tidy guesthouse has many advantages:

- More walk-in business
- You can charge higher room prices
- Guests take better care of your property
- Guests stay longer, relax and buy more items
- More guests return
- More guests recommend your guesthouse
- Staff have a strong sense of pride
- Fewer health and safety issues (pests, accidents, mould, etc.)

**Seven steps for good housekeeping;** using a good housekeeping system will help you keep your guest house clean and tidy. This section explains how to use a 7- step system to ensure good housekeeping service for all your guests.

*Step1: Entering a guest room;* Use a standard system each time you enter a guest room. This will help you:

- Increase guests' comfort.
- Increase your efficiency.

See Good housekeeping tool 1

*Step2: Using good cleaning procedures;* Use a standard cleaning system to save time. To do this you should:

- Have all the cleaning products with you before you start cleaning.
- Follow safety guidelines when using cleaning products.

See Good housekeeping tools 2 and 3

*Step3: Cleaning guest rooms;* Always clean guestrooms from top (ceiling, lights, walls, windows) to bottom (furniture, floor, trash cans). Using this cleaning system will help you:

Work quickly

- Avoid missing something
- Avoid having to clean something twice

See Good housekeeping tool 4

*Step4: Cleaning public areas;* Again, use the system and clean from top (ceiling, lights, walls, windows) to bottom (furniture, floor, trash cans). When cleaning in public areas:

- Do not allow guests to walk on wet floors (use a sign and/or chairs to block off wet areas).
- Greet guests in a friendly way. Smile and say, "Good morning/ afternoon/ evening Madame/Sir!"

*Step5: Cleaning bathrooms;* Remember: Guests can be very sensitive about bathroom cleanliness. Some common complaints include:

- Dirty mirrors
- Dirty toilets
- Hair in the bathroom (bathtub, floor, shower, sink)
- Not enough toilet paper (always leave two rolls in the bathroom)

See Good housekeeping tool 5

*Step6: Cleaning stay-over rooms;* A stay-over room is a guest room where a guest stay for more than one night. It is important that these rooms look fresh and clean each day, but you do not have to change the linens and towels each day; for long-term guests, offer to change the linens and towels every third or fourth day.

See Good housekeeping tool 6

*Step7: How to manage room keys;* House keepers are responsible for the keys they need to clean guestrooms as well as the guests' belongings in their rooms. It is important to use a system to safeguard those keys.

## Housekeeping Tools

Table 5.3.1 Entering a guestroom Tool 1

Entering a guestroom
<p>1. Knock firmly on the door.</p> <p>Say “Housekeeping” loudly (in English) so people inside can hear you</p> <p>If there is no answer, enter the room.</p> <p>Leave the door open while cleaning.</p>
<p><b>When guests are in the room</b></p> <p>Knock firmly on the door.</p> <p>Say “Housekeeping” loudly (in English) so people inside can hear you.</p> <p>If a guest is in the room and answers, say (loudly) “Sorry, I will come back later.”</p> <p>Clean other areas or do other tasks.</p> <p>Come back later, knock on the door and say “Housekeeping.”</p> <p>If there is no answer, enter the room.</p> <p>Leave the door open while cleaning.</p>
<p><b>When there is a “do not disturb” sign on the door</b></p> <p>Do not knock on the door</p> <p>Come back later when the sign is removed</p> <p>Follow the steps for entering a guestroom</p>
<p><b>When there is a “please clean room” sign on the door</b></p> <p>Do not enter the room without knocking</p> <p>Follow the steps to entering a guestroom</p>

Table 5.3.2 Cleaning products checklist Tool 2

Cleaning products checklist
<p>Container to carry cleaning products:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bleach</li> <li>• All purpose cleaner</li> <li>• Glass cleaner</li> <li>• Toilet cleaner</li> </ul>

- Facemask and gloves

Bucket

Broom and dustpan

Clean cloths

Insect spray

Bag or container for dirty laundry

Bag or container of supplies:

- Bottled water
- Soap
- Toilet paper

Large trash bag to remove trash

Mop

Scrubbing brush

Toilet brush

Bag or container of clean linens and towels

*Table 5.3.3 Do's and Don'ts of using cleaning products Tool 3*

Cleaning Products	
DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow manufacturers' instructions</li> <li>• Open windows</li> <li>• Wear a face mask and gloves</li> <li>• Dilute according to manufacturer's instructions</li> <li>• Put caps on tightly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put cleaning products in unmarked bottles</li> <li>• Mix chemicals</li> <li>• Store near food</li> <li>• Smoke, eat or drink while using the products</li> </ul>

*Table 5.3.4 Guest room cleaning checklist Tool 4*

#### Guest room cleaning checklist

**Top to bottom cleaning.** Do each action in this order, systematically cleaning from top to bottom, and each time consistently.

- Dust and clean the ceiling (spider webs, mold, dirt)
- Dust and clean walls and woodwork (spider webs, mold, dust, and dirt)
- Clean the windows and windowsills
- Dust and wet wipe other items (TV, furniture, decorations, doorknobs, fans)
- Sweep and mop the floor
- Empty and clean the trash bins
- Change or remake the beds
- Tidy and arrange everything nicely
- Clean the bathroom

**When finished cleaning:**

- Close the windows, if appropriate
- Turn off the fans/air conditioning
- Turn off the lights
- Close and lock the door

*Table 5.3.5 Bathroom cleaning checklist Tool 5*

Bathroom cleaning checklist
1. Wear a facemask and gloves
2. Clean the ceiling
3. Clean the walls (use bleach and a scrubbing brush to remove mold)
4. Clean the shower curtain or door with a scrubbing brush
5. Clean the toilet
6. Clean the mirror using glass cleaner and a dry cloth
7. Clean all shelves and other fixtures using a wet cloth
8. Rinse and wipe the sink
9. Restock bathroom supplies (toilet paper, soap)
10. Clean the floor (sweep, then mop)

11. Make sure there is no hair anywhere (sink, shower, toilet, wall, floor)
12. Empty and clean the trash bin

*Table 5.3.6 Stay-over room cleaning checklist Tool 6*

Stay-over room cleaning checklist
1. Clean guestroom as usual
2. If bedding is still fresh, just remake the bed – if not, change the linen
3. Move guest's items only to clean under them
4. Empty and clean the trash bins
5. Clean and restock bathroom as usual

## **5.4 Meal Service**

Three steps for running a good meal service: Using a meal service system will help you keep your dining area clean and attractive. It will also help you serve meals in a friendly, efficient way.

### *Step1: Preparing the dining area*

- Prepare the dining area before your guests arrive
- Make sure any staff in contact with food maintains high personal hygiene standards

### *Step2: Serving meals*

- Smile and be friendly while serving meals
- Be attentive to guests' needs
- Explain what is included
- Try to accommodate simple requests if possible

### *Step3: Cleaning up after meals – when the meal service is finished:*

- Clean the dining area
- Prepare whatever you can for the next meal service

*Table 5.4.1 Preparing dining area checklist Tool 1*

Preparing dining area checklist
Clean the dining area from top to bottom (ceiling, walls, furniture, floor)
Arrange table cloth, napkins, chopsticks, knives, forks, spoons, glasses, cups, etc.
Place clean condiments on table as needed (salt, pepper, seasonings, sauces, etc.)
Prepare beverage service (coffee, teabags, hot water, milk, sugar, etc.)

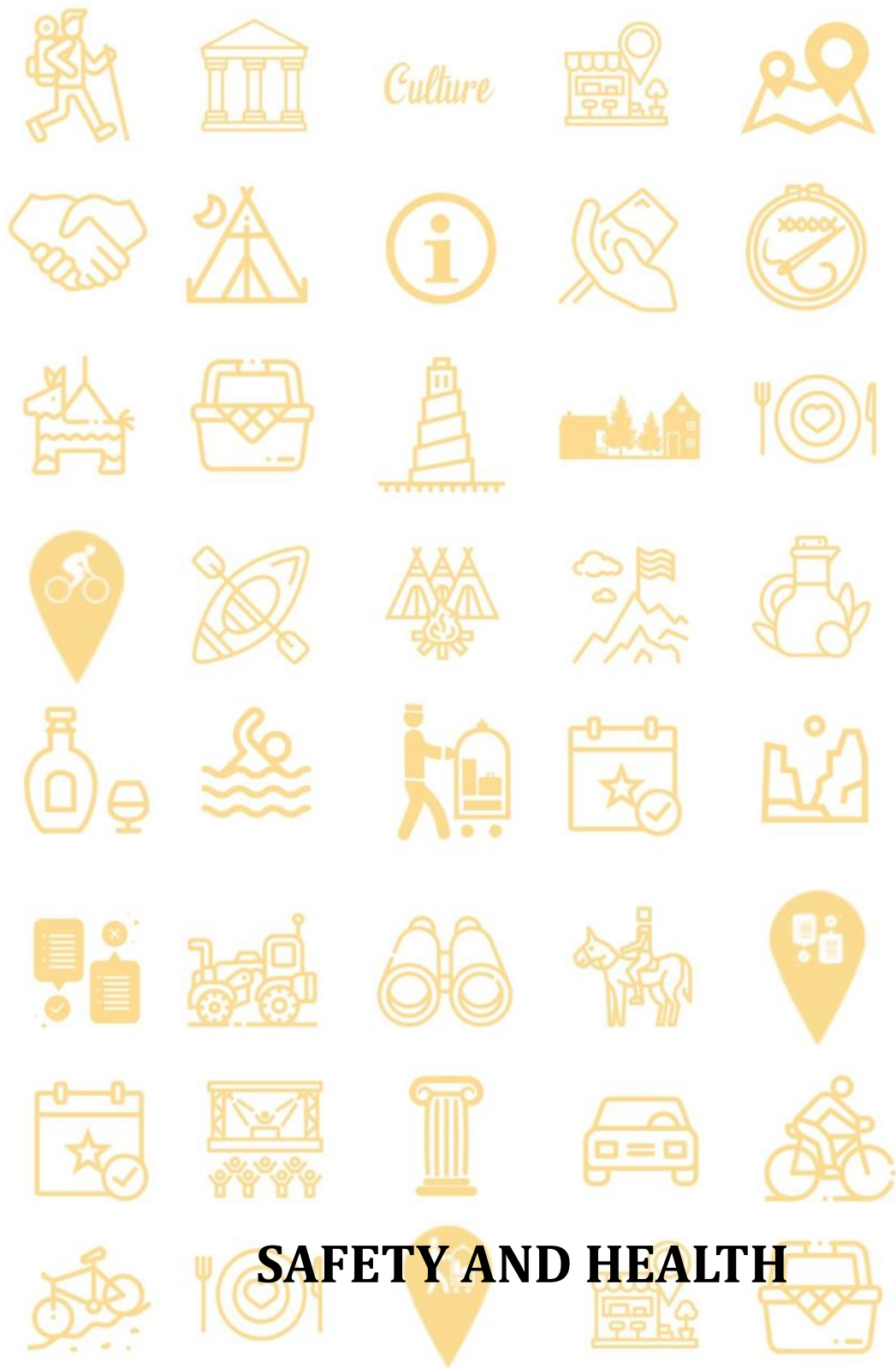
*Table 5.4.2 Serving meals checklist Tool 2*

Serving meals checklist
Greet guests as they arrive
Help guests find seating
When guests are seated, explain what food and drink choices they have
If you use menus and something is not available inform guests immediately
Offer guests beverages (water, coffee, tea)
Ask for their breakfast choices
Take the order to the cook
Continue to greet guests, seat them and take their order
Serve the food to guests, as it is ready. Place each person's order in front of them
Ask them if there is anything else that they need, and ask guests if they are enjoying their meals
While guests eat, take away empty plates
Keep checking that self-service areas are well stocked
When guests leave, smile and say, "thank you, have a nice day" (or evening)
Clean tables and dining area after guests leave



*Table 5.4.3 Cleaning up after meals checklist Tool 3*

Cleaning up after meals checklist
Clean tables and chairs (or benches) – remove all spills and crumbs
Clean menus (if you use them)
Clean and refill condiments (salt, pepper, spices, etc.)
Clean and refill accessories (napkins, toothpicks, etc.)
Arrange condiments and cutlery either neatly on the table or stored away
Put dirty tablecloths, cloth napkins, etc. in the laundry
Sweep and mop the floor
Wash and dry cups, glasses, plates, forks, spoons, knives, chopsticks, etc.
Review supplies and restock items as needed



## 6 SAFETY AND HEALTH

### OBJECTIVES:

- Improve safety and health for those working in the guesthouse and for guests
- Give you tools and checklists to ensure good safety and health standards in your guest house.

Maintaining good safety and health standards in your guesthouse will help you to attract and keep guests. As the owner or manager of your guesthouse, you are responsible for the safety and health of your guests and employees.

This section provides an overview of the different areas of safety and health that relate to your guesthouse. Example checklists are included that you can change to suit your needs. Share the information with your staff so they can follow the tips and advice and keep your guesthouse standards high.

*Note:* You can keep safety and health standards high in your guesthouse at little cost. Failing to maintain high standards will reduce the number of guests who will stay at your guesthouse. You can prevent some accidents and problems by following basic safety and health systems. Not all accidents and problems can be prevented but knowing in advance how to respond to them can limit damage and losses.

### ***6.1 Occupational Safety and Health (OSH):***

#### **Accident prevention**

Many accidents can be prevented with careful planning. Using a system of regular maintenance of your buildings, tidying and cleaning common areas and keeping guestrooms secure can prevent injuries or damage to personal items. Making sure your staff members wear clothing that is safe, and that they all know how to use equipment safely, can reduce accidents at work and improve your standards. (See OSH tools 1)

#### **Good Hygiene**

It is important that you and your staff follow a system of good hygiene for the workplace, such as regularly washing their hands and keeping hair tied back when cooking. (See OSH tool 2)

#### **Fire safety**

You can reduce the risk of fire by following an accident prevention system that includes maintaining equipment, frequently checking gas and electric circuits, regularly tidying corridors and keeping corridors and doors unobstructed. Fires often take people by surprise, so creating a fire safety checklist can limit damage. (See OSH tool 3)

#### **Pest control**

Following a basic hygiene and cleanliness system in your guesthouse can help keep pests away. (See OSH tool 4)

### Accident response

Having accident response systems in place can help limit damage if accidents occur. (See OSH tool 5)

### First aid

Do you have a first aid kit to treat small injuries and illnesses? Is it easy to access, and do all your staff members know where it is? Does it have all the items you need and are they within their expiry date? (See OSH tool 6)

### Fire response

What plan do you have in case a fire occurs? Would you and your staff know what to do? Maintaining a fire response checklist and running regular fire drills can help you save lives and limit damage to your property. (OSH tool 7)

## Occupational Safety and Health CHECKLIST

*Table 6.1.1 Do's and Don'ts of Guesthouse Safety and Security Tool 1*

<i>For Managers</i>	
DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Keep corridors and common areas clean</li> <li>· Put handrails on all stairways</li> <li>· Put locks on windows and doors</li> <li>· Maintain steps and stairs in good condition</li> <li>· Make electric outlets grounded (earthed)</li> <li>· Maintain fire extinguishers</li> <li>· Keep your first aid kit well stocked</li> <li>· Practice fire and accident drills with your staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Leave obstructions in public areas or fire exits</li> <li>· Install any hooks at eye level</li> <li>· Allow domestic animals in kitchen or dining area</li> <li>· Allow unsafe knife usage</li> <li>· Lock fire exits</li> <li>· Leave valuable items unattended</li> <li>· Use broken equipment</li> <li>· Over-work your staff</li> </ul>
<i>For Employees</i>	
DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Block off wet floors when cleaning to prevent people slipping</li> <li>· Repair broken equipment</li> <li>· Let staff (including you) rest when sick</li> <li>· Wear strong, supportive shoes</li> <li>· Wear a mask and gloves when working with toxic chemicals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Carry things higher than eye level</li> <li>· Leave guestroom doors unlocked</li> <li>· Move or lift heavy items alone</li> <li>· Stretch too far while on a ladder</li> <li>· Touch electric sockets with wet hands</li> <li>· Try to fix something yourself if it is not safe</li> </ul>

	- ask someone to help
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*Table 6.1.2 Personal hygiene checklist for staff whom interact with guests Tool 2*

HAVE I?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Bathed or showered today?</li> <li>· Used deodorant.</li> <li>· Brushed my teeth today.</li> <li>· Cleaned and trimmed my fingernails?</li> <li>· Washed my hands after every time I used the toilet?</li> <li>· Washed my hands before and after eating?</li> <li>· Tied my hair back when near food?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Worn clean and neat clothes?</li> <li>· Worn shoes and clothes that are safe to work?</li> <li>· Used a Band-Aid to cover open cuts?</li> <li>· Covered my mouth when I coughed or sneezed?</li> <li>· Thrown dirty tissues away immediately.</li> <li>· Rested if I am sick?</li> </ul>

*Table 6.1.3 Fire safety checklist Tool 3*

Fire safety checklist
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Install smoke alarms in each guestroom (if possible)</li> <li>2. Post evacuation procedures on the back of each guestroom door</li> <li>3. Practice evacuation procedures with your staff on a regular basis</li> <li>4. Choose a safe place to evacuate to</li> <li>5. Keep fire extinguishers on each floor</li> <li>6. Ensure an easy exit from each guestroom (two ways are recommended: for example, through a door, and through a window)</li> <li>7. Have a safe means for all occupants to reach the ground floor</li> <li>8. Ensure that all windows and doors can be opened in case of fire</li> <li>9. Know and comply with all local and national fire codes</li> </ol>

*Table 6.1.4 Pest control checklist Tool 4*

Pest control checklist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Check stored food supplies for signs of pests</li> <li>· Store all food in sealed containers</li> <li>· Clean up spills and crumbs quickly</li> <li>· Do not leave food scraps exposed</li> <li>· Make sure doors and windows close tightly</li> <li>· Seal holes and cracks in floors and walls</li> <li>· Seal openings around pipes</li> <li>· Keep storage areas clean and dry</li> <li>· Keep lids on all trash bins</li> <li>· Clean and disinfect trash bins often</li> <li>· Keep all equipment clean</li> <li>· Trim plants regularly</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Insist on a high level of cleanliness</i></b></p>

*Table 6.1.5 Accident or emergency checklist Tool 5*

Accident or emergency checklist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Take everyone involved to a safe place</li> <li>· Call for help if needed (use the receptionists emergency telephone numbers)</li> <li>· Help the injured if possible (use your well-stocked first aid kit)</li> <li>· Find out what caused the accident or emergency and try to limit the damage</li> <li>· Later, discuss how you can prevent the accident or emergency from recurring</li> </ul>

*Table 6.1.6 First aid kit checklist (suggested) Tool 6*

First aid kit checklist
<p>Antiseptic cream</p> <p>Bandages in various sizes and shapes</p> <p>Sterile pads</p> <p>Cotton wool packs</p> <p>Surgical tape</p> <p>Safety pins</p> <p>Clinical thermometer</p>

Painkiller  
Tweezers  
Mosquito lotion  
Scissors  
Other

*Table 6.1.7 Protocol: In case of a fire Tool 7*

Protocol: In case of a fire
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Turn on the fire alarm</li> <li>2. Alert people in the area so they can move to safety</li> <li>3. Call the fire department immediately</li> <li>4. If in doubt, evacuate the buildings</li> <li>5. Take guests and staff quickly but calmly to a safe place</li> <li>6. Remove all cash, if possible</li> <li>7. Take the Monthly Arrivals and Departures Calendar, if possible</li> <li>8. Close doors and windows, if possible</li> <li>9. Turn off the fuel or heat source (gas or electricity), if possible</li> <li>10. Keep phone lines open</li> <li>11. Be vigilant in case of theft</li> <li>12. Use fire extinguishers, if it is safe</li> <li>13. Do not use water on a fire involving fat, oil, or electrical equipment</li> <li>14. Wrap blankets around someone whose clothes are on fire to put out flames</li> <li>15. Call for an ambulance or medical help, if necessary</li> </ol>