

HOTEL HOUSEKEEPING

A Training Manual

Third Edition

About the Author

Sudhir Andrews graduated with honours in English Literature from St. Stephen's College, Delhi University. Thereafter, he completed his post-graduation in management from the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad. He was one of the first MBAs to join the hotel industry in 1971. He earned two Hotel Management Diplomas with distinction—one from the International Hotel Association, Paris, France and the other from the American Hotel and Lodging Association, US. He did a fellowship with CERT, an apex body of Irish hospitality education.

His experience of over 30 years includes his work with the following organisations and institutes of international repute:

- ◆ The Oberois—where he created the Oberoi Hotel School and was the General Manager of two Oberoi properties.
- ◆ ITC Welcomgroup—where he rose to be Member Personnel on the Divisional Board. He created the Welcomgroup hotel training centre in New Delhi and commissioned the Welcomgroup Graduate School of Hotel Administration at Manipal, Karnataka.
- ◆ Institute of Hotel Management and Catering Technology—where he was the Principal of the Institute of Hotel Management and Catering Technology, Pusa, New Delhi under the Ministry of Tourism. At this time he was also on the Board of many IHMs and the National Council of Hotel Management and Catering Technology. During this period he was involved in several ILO and UNDP programs as faculty, in India and abroad. He was also the member of the National Classification Committee and gave star ratings to many properties.

In 1994, he moved to Dubai as Director—Human Resources for the Metropolitan Chain. Here he set up the Metropolitan Institute of Hotel Management in collaboration with HIM, Montreaux, Switzerland. He also became Group Vice President—HR with a sister concern of the Metropolitan Group which have businesses in automobiles, airlines, hotels, travel agencies, etc.

He immigrated to Canada in 2000 where he worked with a Property Management Company. He returned to Dubai again in 2002. In his second sojourn in Dubai, he joined the “Executive Office”—a consulting wing to the ruling Sheikh of Dubai. He also acted as an advisor to the Merit Hotel School which opened two hotel school campuses in Dubai and Sharjah. He was also engaged as a consultant with “The Peoples Partnership”—a British HR consultancy firm doing some noteworthy consultancy projects for several banks, oil companies, and Dot.com companies.

At this juncture of his life, he also worked as a career counsellor and had his own programme on FM Radio 89.1 in Dubai. He brought out his own column on Career Counselling with *Khaleej Times*, a Dubai newspaper, for a year as well as taught at Eikon Academy which brought in the Herriot-Watt University.

Sudhir Andrews is now Dean—Academics of Ecole Hoteliere Lavasa in collaboration with Ecole hoteliere de Lausanne, Switzerland. He is also the author of 10 hospitality books.

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Sudhir Andrews

Dean—Ecole Hoteliere Lavasa



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*Dedicated
to
My Mother
(Late) Amrutha Andrews
who has been my source of inspiration*

Letter from the Author

Dear Reader,

Congratulations on joining the ever expanding world of hotels worldwide. Your decision to join hotels gives you ample access to global careers. You have chosen that part of hotel operations that maintains the glamour of a hotel. The Housekeeping Department is responsible for the cleanliness, maintenance, and aesthetic upkeep of the hotel. The department also maintains the most essential product of a hotel—the *rooms*. This role of the Housekeeping Department makes it crucial for a hotel as rooms contribute substantially to the revenue of the hotel. For you, as a future housekeeping professional, it is important to adopt the international practices, attitudes, and behaviours that are presented in this book.

My first book, *Hotel Housekeeping Training Manual*, has been in print for over two decades now. My readers, by showing their faith in my book, have encouraged me to write this third edition. The basic processes of housekeeping operations worldwide remain still the same as they were two decades ago, and shall not change much in future. However, the application of these processes has changed over the time, largely due to information technology and globalisation. This book attempts to empower housekeeping professionals with the knowledge of these new changes to meet the challenges of the future.

Let us examine some of the changes in travel and hotelkeeping that have emerged recently:

The guests today are global citizens who travel frequently, thanks to faster transport and better infrastructure. Now, the traveller can choose her/his “home away from home” from the comfort of her/his home or office by using websites that take him on virtual tours of hotels showing guest rooms and facilities with pricing options to suit all kinds of budgets. Not only this, she/he can also reserve a room for herself/himself as hotels, nowadays, also use websites to make reservations for the customers with the help of Reservation Distribution Systems. Such prior reservations ensure that the guest finds a room booked in her/his name upon her/his arrival in the hotel.



The modern traveller, being more aware of housekeeping standards, now expects a certain level of service during her/his stay in the hotel. She/he demands a high degree of cleanliness and sanitation. Now, using Information Technology, the traveller can customise her/his or her requirements on a user-friendly form on the web. The web searches and selects those hotels that meet the specifications given by the traveller, offering him a deluge of options. A woman traveller may want a hair dryer and ironing board in her room while a businessman may want teleconferencing facilities and secretarial services during her/his stay. There are no limits to guests' needs and the web accesses those hotels that attend to these needs at the click of a button. Hence, it has now become essential that the

housekeeping staff should anticipate and respond to guests' expectations as loyalty of the guests towards the establishment is at stake.

Large investments in creating opulent hotel spaces have no meaning unless these are maintained in pristine condition in spite of frequent use.

Downsizing is part of the new economic business strategy. Downsizing means the reduction of staff and unprofitable operations to keep overheads to the affordable limit. The result is that fewer people are retained and paid more to increase their productivity. If a room attendant once cleaned 12 rooms in an eight-hour shift which used to increase at the most to 14 rooms, she/he is now normally allocated 16 rooms in a shift. This new standard of 16 rooms per room attendant in a shift has been made possible by equipping the room attendants with better training; efficient equipment; competent supply systems; and a lot more autonomy. They are now required to multitask roles. Similarly, a floor supervisor is no longer only an inspector but is also required to handle guest complaints, and control inventory and budget. Her/his set of skills has become wider and now she/he is expected to show competency in first-aid, fire-drills, report-writing, budgeting, training, motivation, problem-solving, and decision-making. The floor supervisor is now expected to become an intrapreneur (internal entrepreneur). She/he is required to think like an investor and be cost, quality, and productivity conscious.



Empowerment is the logical consequence of downsizing. Empowerment encourages employees to control their own performance to meet business goals. A floor supervisor has now the authority to provide additional guest amenities and services to regular guests. Executive Housekeepers are now permitted to develop personal rapport with guests by writing letters to them and inviting them to visit the hotel again. The room attendant is also given total control of floor operations and held accountable for the total guest experience. So we see that organisations now, in order to facilitate instant decision-making and following the principle of "lean is beautiful," are empowering their staff by equipping them with skills of the managers' profile and by giving them authority to perform tasks earlier executed only by the managers. Hotel personnel have now become knowledge workers as they are equipped with technical knowledge, information, competencies, and skills to execute and fulfil higher responsibilities.

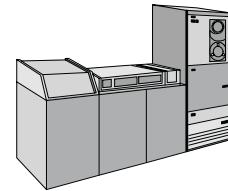
Leasing is another new business strategy and is becoming a way of hotel life. Investors now believe that standalone hotels are unlikely to give the return on investments. A hotel now has to be a part of a community complex with shopping malls, cineplexes, entertainment centres, furnished apartments, convention centre, and office blocks, all set in spectacular environments with landscaping and watercourses. The housekeeping role has changed accordingly as a housekeeper is required to act either as consultant to lease holders or to manage housekeeping roles beyond the traditional frontiers of a hotel to include additional facilities as maintaining entertainment centres, cineplexes, etc. Housekeeping with its expertise could also become a profit centre earning revenues for the establishment.



Rooms Focus: A hotel investor concentrates on room revenues only, which is another form of leasing. She/he likes to increase the number of rooms to distribute overhead costs. Moreover, rooms give a greater contribution to profits. So hotel investors generally like to create one captive all-purpose dining room, or a coffee shop, and bar, in a hotel while leasing other spaces within the hotel's premises to branded restaurants like TGIF, Chillis, etc. This leasing is exercised with strong legal instruments.

Franchised Operations: Hotel investors have seen the virtue of linking their hotels with internationally acclaimed hotel chain operations having the muscle of economies of scale, reputation, professional management, standardised systems and procedures, common advertising budgets, and technical support. This has prompted me to bring in the subject of "Hotel Chain Associations" in Lesson 2.

Information Technology has taken over all the processing work. Innovative software and mainframe servers make accurate and productive information quickly available. Reports are churned out by the minute to make operational decision-making respond to daily changes. Most lessons give the role of automation in the sub-spheres of housekeeping operations.



Outsourcing services is another strategy to manage downsizing. Outsourcing means giving the responsibility of certain aspects of operations to external experts and consultants. The obligation of the hotel is to pay a contracted fee and set standards required by the organisation. This has become a way of life in most organisations. Large hotels are outsourcing their housekeeping, accounting, security, horticulture, laundry, food preparation, etc. This is because of the several reasons such as:

- ◆ High energy costs to maintain these departments.
- ◆ High cost of raw materials, especially those that are imported.
- ◆ High labour costs and the availability of skilled personnel.
- ◆ High costs of real estate to accommodate non-revenue operations.
- ◆ Rapid changes in technology and the expertise required to keep pace with it.
- ◆ Outsourced businesses attain mastery in their specialisation.
- ◆ Quality movements require different expertise and certification for several sub-functions.

The call for outsourcing has seen the mushrooming of specialist companies like the Housekeeping & Maintenance Companies, Security Companies, Landscaping and Horticultural services, Industrial laundries, branded restaurants, etc. This in itself has opened additional employment opportunities to hotel professionals. These outsourced services have to adhere to the hotel policies while retaining their individual identity. All this is established with well-designed legal instruments. Hiring the right consultants becomes important for the hotel management but getting the right talent becomes a challenge. I have discussed the roles and competencies of the new housekeeping professional in the "Introduction" of this book.

Youth will be the future workforce. Mature professionals will have to re-engineer themselves to consider self-employment (see "Housekeeping as a Career" in the "Introduction"). They could either open their own businesses or turn into outsourced specialists. Hotels prefer youth for various reasons:

- ◆ They are better informed through the advancement in education.
- ◆ They bring the latest technologies and ideas.
- ◆ They keep the workforce fresh.

- ◆ Multi-roles require high energy and longer hours.
- ◆ They are ambitious to earn more.
- ◆ They are hungry for success.
- ◆ They enjoy working and are open to new ideas.
- ◆ They come with better competencies.

In spite of the whirlwind of change, the housekeeping specialist will continue to be there to faithfully create a “home away from home” for the guest. Gone are the days when a service professional went to a hotel, did her/his job in an eight-hour shift, and returned home. Housekeeping professionals will have to think like an entrepreneur and be empowered to respond to changing business situations and customers constantly (*see the section of the “Introduction” titled “The Future Guest”*).

This book has been carefully written to serve several segments of the hotel industry. This book, therefore, is ideal for:

- ◆ Housekeeping professionals
- ◆ Hotel Management students
- ◆ Craft course students of Housekeeping
- ◆ Lecturers of Hotel Management and Craft services
- ◆ Apprentices in housekeeping
- ◆ New entrants who have no formal training or education in housekeeping but are entering the industry raw
- ◆ Housekeeping and maintenance companies
- ◆ Entrepreneurs who wish to set up their own housekeeping company
- ◆ Training centres of hotels
- ◆ Independent hotel owners and staff
- ◆ Hospitality trainers



Readers, it is time to shed the old coat and wear the new one of this new exciting millennium. I wish all of you the best of luck in your pursuit of becoming the new housekeeping professional. I hope this edition will be your able companion throughout your career. I may be contacted by e-mail at Sudhir_andrews@hotmail.com. Good Luck!

SUDHIR ANDREWS

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Introduction

▲ THE FUTURE GUEST

The revolution brought about by cyberspace has changed everything around us, including the traveller. People can now cross boundaries of their country from the comforts of their homes at the click of a mouse button. This has made them knowledgeable and adventurous. People have moved beyond the political boundaries of their countries to survive in global economies. The movement of people to places like the Middle East, USA, etc. for jobs, has made them more accessible to hard currencies, cultures, cuisines, and customs. Technology has made travel quicker and easier. The web has shrunk the world into a global village. The housekeeping professional, as a consequence, has been presented with new challenges in the midst of these changes. The new housekeeping professionals should be aware of and sensitive to the changes in attitudes of the guests who come to their hotel.



Woman Power: Women have entered all possible professions—from airline pilots to corporate executives—which were earlier considered to be male territories. Balancing their home and career, they now represent a substantial part of travelling public and expect special attention to be given to their specific needs. They expect hair dryers, ironing facilities, extra security features, privacy, etc. in their rooms. Eating and drinking alone in public bars and restaurants may not be a common custom in many cultures and therefore, women require efficient room service with menus that suit the diet conscious. Many expect an array of television channels, to keep abreast of their popular soap operas on television, and satellite communication, to keep in touch with their homes.



Business Wealth: Private enterprises have reached horizons never imagined before. Worldwide investments and access to big capital funds have fostered big businesses. Giants like the aerospace industry, computer industry, courier services, and credit cards have overtaken oil, automobiles or shipping industries. Individuals too have amassed incredible wealth. Software professionals have become millionaires overnight by creating just one unique software program. The result of this wealth is that business executives and entrepreneurs expect high quality rooms and business services to make an impression of their financial strength on their clients. They expect well-equipped business centres in the hotel and facilities such as secretarial services, videoconferencing, and telecommunication services as never before. In the room, they expect facilities for easy worldwide communications and unobtrusive housekeeping services that keep their rooms clean and sanitised.

Emotional Experiences: Guests have become adventurous. They want total experiences that trigger emotions. A perfect experience is one that appeals to all the senses of sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste. The eyes like to see unique costumes, pleasant interior lighting, evidence of cleanliness and

sanitation, and aesthetic room presentations and décor. Guests want their hotel experience to touch their egos, creative tastes, need for adventure, and most of all, their heart. They like to hear silence and touch the softness of bed and bath linen just as much as they want to smell freshness in a room. They may touch the underside of sinks or chest of drawers to ascertain whether there is dust or not. The way the housekeeping staff gives the service, contributes largely to the touching experience. They expect staff to anticipate their needs and respond efficiently to them. Guests today are very demanding and patronise hotels that recognise their special ways.



Time Conscious: The new guest of this fast-paced world is time conscious and is willing to perform tasks herself/himself to save on time. Many guests are quite willing to go to the floor pantry to set ice and cold snacks for themselves. They are willing to prepare their own morning tea or coffee in their rooms rather than depend on a slow-paced room service. Guests want speedy responses to their demands for additional blankets or cleaning services so that they can move on with their fast-paced lives. Guests want immediacy and do not tolerate delays.



Health Conscious: Guests are working hard at keeping fit and healthy. New research has made people aware of benefits of healthy living. As a result, health clubs, gyms, and swimming pools have become popular. Guests have also become nutritionally conscious. This is why health foods have crept into many menus. Food preferences extend to vegetarian and fat-free dishes. Some want saltless food while others want cholesterol-free preparations. In the room, they need the freshness of a non-smoking room or the sanitisation of drinking glasses or toilet bowls. Many may inspect their bedsheets for stains before sleeping in them or smell their pillow for freshness before laying their head on them. They can sue hotels for unhygienic conditions. Most governments give importance to healthy and hygienic conditions in hotel service areas. Litigations on this count proves to be expensive for the establishment and also leads to bad publicity.

Value-addition: This refers to the extras given for a particular price. For example, business executives may expect a free limousine service from the airport to the hotel, free business lounge services, free newspapers, and even a free breakfast included in the price they are paying for a hotel room; women may want free admission to the sauna and Turkish baths; families may want free baby-sitting services while on their vacations; guests may want extra pillows or blankets, bathrobes and bath slippers, and vanity supplies like shampoos, moisturisers, shaving creams, and razors in the room. Most quality hotels provide these at the room price only without charging any extra money for them.

Information: Curiosity has spurred guests to travel which has been made easy by quicker transportation and economy holiday packages. Guests do expect high and authentic standards of service and have no patience for fakes. They want information of the hotel facilities at their fingertips without having to ask anyone. They want access to their room bills on their TV sets to be able to monitor their budgets and expenditures.

D-I-Y Competent: Guests now are willing to do things themselves (D-I-Y stands for Do-it-Yourself). While the western person is normally manually competent, the vast population of oriental people who have migrated to the west, where domestic help is not available, have also learned to help themselves. Rooms now are fitted with mini-bars, microwave ovens, and tea/coffee stations. Floor

foyers or pantries have shoe-polishing machines, and vending machines for ice, and hot and cold snacks. One of the benefits of self-help is that it reduces time for the guest who is in a hurry.

Techno-savvy: In addition to D-I-Y competency, guests are comfortable in using the web and like to take control of their living experience over the web and via phone. They want to make their room reservation from the comfort of their homes and expect it to be honoured when they reach. They want to place their own wake-up calls in automated systems or have access to their bills in the room television monitor.

Language Savvy: While English is still the popular language in the global economy, hotels with multi-lingual housekeeping staff are able to attract and deal with multinational clientele. Where French and German were the common international alternatives for English before, Spanish, Russian, Chinese, Hindi, and Japanese have now become necessary for the emerging business communities.

Point Casting: The term relates to specialisation in a very narrow field. Guests patronise hotels, which have achieved consistent excellence and authority in a narrow field. This has created business hotels, convention hotels, casino hotels, group hotels, etc. each providing to a specific client segment its particular needs. Business hotels provide for instance, business centres with meeting rooms, secretarial services, office processing equipment, and worldwide telecommunication facilities. Rooms are equipped with writing desks, telecommunication facilities, internet connections, etc. Group hotels may provide group check-ins with minimum delay, buffets, coach services, doctor services, handicapped facilities, and multi-lingual staff for the demands of a group. Housekeeping staff must be aware of the market segment for which the hotel has positioned itself as different types of establishments like casino, resort, business, convention, etc. cater to different market segments.



▲ THE NEW HOUSEKEEPING PROFESSIONAL

Cyberspace has forced the world to see things in different ways. It has shrunk the world into a global village and we are now witnessing true globalisation. What does globalisation mean? It means that people have access to products and services worldwide, at the click of a button. We are in the service age where the customer is the centrepiece. The key mission of cyberspace is to create value for the customer. In this new age, housekeeping professional has now become a frontline personnel also as he is in direct contact with guests.

Let us see how roles and competencies of frontline staff will change in future:

Frontline Staff

Relational: Frontline personnel will be good at customer relations with strong interpersonal skills. They will make people interaction a joyful art. They will be adept at remembering faces and names and be able to remember the special needs of regular guests. They shall keep elaborate guest history records to note special needs of the guests in the past, and respond to them whenever these guests will come again in the hotel. Frontline staff will be skilled in handling difficult guests and know exactly what to do in emergency situations.

Multilingual: Frontline personnel will have a good command over the English language. However, the housekeeping professional will also learn other languages such as Japanese, Russian, Chinese, Arabic, Hindi, and Spanish. Frontline teams will be assembled to provide a range of language options to international clientele. Upcountry establishments will further need skills in local dialects. With multilingual skills, hotel professionals will greatly enhance their job opportunities globally.

Service-oriented: The future frontline staff will genuinely enjoy serving people and develop it into an art. They would acquire all the technical, interpersonal, and management skills to give an excellent guest experience. They will use technology to assist them in the process. Guest Histories on common servers will help fine-tune their awareness of guest needs and preferences. Computers will help in speedier service to an ever impatient guest who is perpetually in a hurry.

Creative Problem-solvers: Frontline staff will be skilled in problem-solving and decision-making. Managements will empower them to make on-the-spot decisions to enhance the guest experience. For example, a room attendant may be able to provide a regular guest with an additional vanity set if requested or a second or third service, if demanded.

Action-oriented: Frontline staff of the future will support promises with actions. If a room attendant promises the front office agent a cleared room in twenty minutes for a guest waiting to check in, she will be obliged to honour that time frame. If the floor supervisor promises to provide a baby-sitter to a guest by an allotted time in the evening, she/he will have to fulfill the promise to maintain quality service.

Techno-savvy: Frontline personnel of the future will be comfortable with fast changing technologies and environments that affect them. Software for hotel operations like Fidelio already exists. New recruits from hotel schools will come skilled in operating such software. Training programmes for the housekeeping personnel will focus on how to help them adapt to new changes in procedures and technologies. In future, even a room attendant will be able to change fused bulbs in rooms or resolve minor television problems.

Commission-oriented: Service staff will prefer to work on commissions as part of their compensation packages. They will be able to generate substantial secondary income through commissions and

bonuses. Hotels will provide a salary to cover the cost of living together with incentive packages to motivate direct revenue generating personnel to bring in new customers or generate additional revenues from regular clients by upselling. Each housekeeper may have her/his own database of regular clients to whom she/he provides personalised service. Guests prefer to take their business to hotels where professionals who know their lifestyle and preferences work, rather than cultivating their relationships again with new professionals. Housekeeping professionals can get commissions for repeat guests or they can get bonuses for the good feedback given by guests and the number of times they return to the hotel.

Multi-skilled: Service professionals of future will have management skills, technological skills, customer skills, and reporting skills. This makes the erstwhile Housekeeper a knowledge worker. The titles will also change to accommodate their new roles such as Hosts, Floor Relationship Executives, Customer Service Hostesses, etc. Multi-skilling is a strategy to reduce staff, pay better wages to those remaining, and have the flexibility to deploy them where there is a need. Housekeepers will learn to prepare guest rooms, take responsibilities in public areas, handle laundry tasks, manage the control desk operations, and manage floral decoration and landscaping. Housemen will double up as bell boys and houseman at resort properties, and even the Housekeeper will man the reception in smaller hotels.

Physically Fit: Frontline staff will have to be physically fit. They will have to be energetic to work actively and enthusiastically for long hours on their feet. The new housekeeping professional will enroll into a gym and make daily exercise a way of life. They will be diet-conscious and realise that their appearance is their fortune and that hotels and guests expect the smartest frontline staff.

Grooming: While hotels have traditionally given importance to grooming as part of the hotel culture, frontline personnel will take their own initiatives to seek the advice of beauty consultants to know the best way they can present themselves. The new frontline professional will visit salons regularly to look presentable. Consciousness about grooming has increased so much in society that now salons for men have also opened to give a perfect manicure and hair cut to them.

Backline Specialists

Specialists like the Executive Housekeeper, Interior Designer, Horticulturist, Florist, Laundry Manager, Linen Keeper, etc. will enrich the frontline performance with their expertise. They would either be standalone specialists or members of project teams who address special problems and innovations. Housekeepers are moving towards becoming internal consultants to hotel complexes that have large leasing operations for various businesses such as restaurants, beauty salons, shop owners, entertainment centres, etc.

Mastery in Functional Area: The specialists will believe in continuous learning as a way of life to bring the best practices available in their field. They might have a high level of education and experience to give organisations a leading edge; however, they would do some research and find ways to beat competition with new models of performance. They will act as consultants to the organisation rather than just paid employees.

Creative in Applications: Specialists would not be bureaucratic and rigid in their approach. Their skills would be to find solutions to existing problems and will develop new ways to enhance guest experience. This requires innovation, research, cross-modification skills, and candour. Above all they must be thoroughly aware of systems and procedures.

Technically-Oriented: Service personnel would be comfortable with technology and may guide software developers in developing new applications for their sphere of operations. They will become active members of development teams.

Loyal to their Profession: Backline specialists will believe in their profession and will commit themselves to excellence. They will benchmark themselves with other noted professionals and organisations in the field, so as to introduce best practices into the organisation.

Ability to Work in Various Teams: Problems that need a variety of specialist input will be solved in teams. For example, new guest history software will require IT specialists, guest relations executive, lobby manager, front office manager, front desk agents, order-takers, housekeepers, telephone operators, etc. They will have to work in teams with each member being a resource to the project. This type of working will require interpersonal skills, negotiation skills, problem-solving skills, listening skills, assertion, and knowledge.

Focus on Continuing Education: Specialists will invest in their self-development from their own pockets. They will use substantial part of their income in continuing their education. Obsolescence is the greatest fear of the new millennium. Hotel professionals will have to continue learning to keep up to the latest developments and avoid obsolescence.

▲ HOUSEKEEPING AS A CAREER

Introduction

We often wonder how all the premises like offices, conference centres, malls, movie theatres, etc. are kept clean and attractive. This is the work of a silent but large workforce called *housekeeping*. Housekeeping is responsible for the cleanliness, maintenance, and aesthetic upkeep of the entire premises—both externally and internally. It is an extension of basic housekeeping multiplied into commercial proportions. Therefore, just as we enjoy keeping a sparkling home, the housekeeping department takes pride in keeping a sparkling hotel to create a ‘home away from home.’

The concept of housekeeping is simplistic but when one considers maintaining a house of several hundreds rooms and numerous public areas, the task becomes gigantic and more complex. It takes a well organised approach and technical understanding to enable housekeeping to cope with the volume of work.

A hotel survives largely on the sale of rooms which contributes a minimum of 50 per cent to revenues. In other words, a hotel’s largest margin of profit comes from room sales because a room, once built, can be sold over and over again.

The room sale depends on the quality of room décor, room facilities, cleanliness of the room, and how safe it is. To make a room appealing to a guest is the task of housekeeping which has to ensure that the basic human needs of comfort and security are present in the room. The personal effort of the housekeeping department has a direct bearing on the guest experience in a hotel. This is achieved by trained staff, specialised equipment and tools, cleaning solutions, and proper systems and procedures. Housekeeping, as mentioned before, encompasses three major functions:

1. Cleaning
2. Maintenance
3. Aesthetic upkeep of the property

Let us look at each to understand their full implications:

Cleaning

Cleaning is not just having a duster cloth in hand and wiping surfaces. While it may include that activity too, it requires a comprehensive understanding of different surfaces and the best tools and solutions to clean them to preserve the long life of those surfaces. There are different surfaces in a large commercial operation like a hotel that pose a challenge for the housekeeper. First she must have the knowledge of these surfaces and their properties; then the technical knowledge of how best she can clean them. She must also know how to manage different degrees of stains and soil.

All the surfaces require independent understanding of their use and their properties. Part 9 deals extensively with this subject.

Maintenance

Housekeeping identifies and follows up on those items that are malfunctioning or defective throughout the facility and ensures that they are rectified with engineering support. Since housekeeping has access to all parts of a facility in the execution of their cleaning role, they are the right people to locate deficiencies and report them to the engineering support for rectification. Engineering sup-

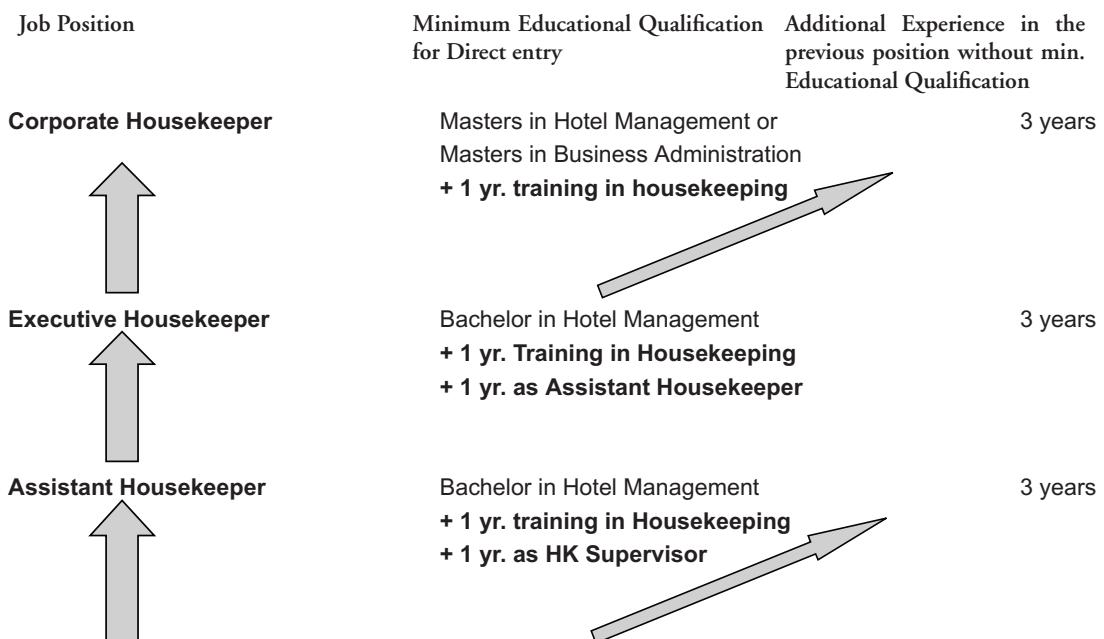
port comes in the way of electrical, mechanical, civil, carpentry, plumbing, and any masonry work. The housekeeping staff, for example, will identify corridor lights that are not working; bathroom taps that are leaking; lobby chairs that wobble; or meeting room walls that show water seepage. Housekeeping has an effective communication system with engineering to alert and rectify problems. In some establishments, housekeeping staff are trained to attend to some basic engineering needs such as changing fused bulbs, attending to defective TV connections, or changing a washer of a leaking tap.

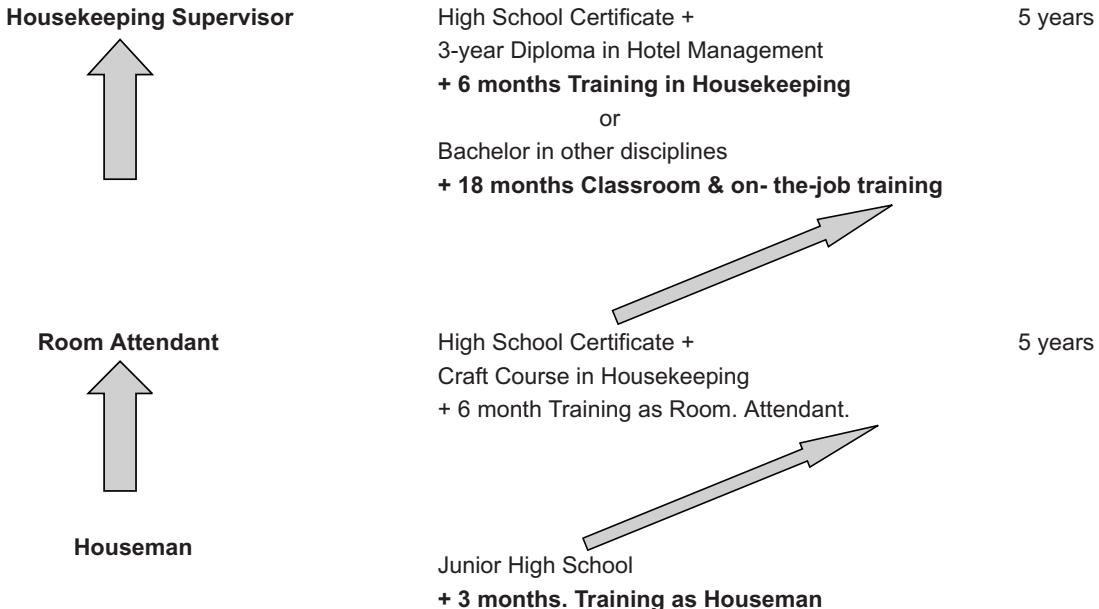
Aesthetic Upkeep

Aesthetic upkeep refers to the effort taken to beautify the property. This includes landscaping around the premises as well as providing flower arrangements and decorations in internal public areas and offices. To do this, the housekeeper has to have basic knowledge of horticulture including the maintenance of nurseries and green houses. She is also concerned with floral art to keep interiors attractive. At this stage, we must be clear about the difference between the role of housekeeping and the internal designer. The interior designer decides on the theme, colour furniture, and fixtures of facilities while the housekeeper maintains the facility as conceived by the interior designer. Some accomplished housekeepers may even be qualified interior decorators.

Career Paths

A person who chooses housekeeping as a career may enter the profession by attaining certain professional qualifications. The chart below gives the correlation of various certification required at different entry points in a hotel. It also charts out the career path for those without the minimum educational qualifications:





One observes in the chart above that there are two paths (shown by arrows) to reach higher positions. One path is a direct entry level which requires a minimum educational qualification with training to fill the position. In that stream there are several educational options:

1. A person can join housekeeping at the lowest skilled level after having completed junior high school or a minimum 10 years of schooling. They could join directly and receive on-the-job training by the hiring organisation for minimum durations as per their policy.
2. Alternatively, the candidate can enroll into an institution that provides technical education. Governments in most countries provide trade qualifications for different professions in their effort to encourage skills to feed the hotel industry. It is also a measure to empower individuals to acquire gainful employment. In India, the Indian Technical Institutes are a good example of such technical education. The Department of Tourism in India has supported State Tourism Departments to create the Food Craft Institutes to provide technical qualifications for the hospitality industry. All technical institutes provide trade certificates.
3. A person may enter the housekeeping profession with a high school certificate or a minimum 12 years in school. Such students do a three-year diploma that qualifies them to enter the hospitality industry at supervisory levels. Diploma students will further need about six months practical training in housekeeping in the hotel to be confirmed as a supervisor.
4. At management levels, the minimum educational qualification for a direct entry would be a Bachelor Degree in Hotel Management. In spite of the degree, the candidate would require one-year training in housekeeping with the hotel that hires them. This training is to give students a practical exposure to real life housekeeping. Graduate students of other disciplines like liberal arts, social sciences, science or commerce who opt for a housekeeping career will need 18 months to two years on-the-job training and classroom lectures to qualify as a housekeeping supervisor.

5. Those aspiring for senior management levels require a minimum graduation preferably in hotel management. This would have to be supported by a minimum three years of experience in an earlier position to qualify for the post.

We also notice that those who do not have the educational qualification for entry can also aspire for higher positions given a minimum adequate experience in an earlier position. We must understand that higher positions require not only knowledge of the trade but also the administrative inputs.

FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions)

1. Does a career in housekeeping attract good salaries?

The salaries at skilled and supervisory levels are adequate for a basic standard of living supported by statutory perquisites such as annual leave, leave fares to one's hometown and back, medical coverage, medical leave including extended maternity leave, and house rent allowance. Most hotels support the salary with job-related benefits such as free duty meals, uniforms, laundering of uniforms, transportation to and from home and overtime. These make earnings more than comfortable. At management levels, the earning power makes a quantum leap with perks and benefits equal to any other profession within hotels and other industries. Management salaries are comparable to other management positions in the industry.

2. What status does housekeeping have in the hospitality industry?

Housekeeping is crucial to hotel operations. All departments lean on them for the proper facilitation of their work. They do respect the department and give them full cooperation. In recognition of this, the Executive Housekeeper holds a senior position equivalent to a Food and Beverage Manager, Front Office Manager, etc. reporting directly to the General Manager. Chain operations also employ a Corporate Housekeeper who is the senior most housekeeping resource to guide hotel general managers of the chain.

3. Can I become a General Manager of a hotel if I were an Executive Housekeeper?

While there are few cases of Executive Housekeepers who have risen to General Manager's positions, it is normally unlikely. Housekeeping is considered as a specialist position and not a generalist one. Housekeeping, however, has its own hierarchy that is equivalent or even more senior to a General Manager's position. There are positions as Director Housekeeping, Area Executive Housekeepers, or Corporate Housekeepers who earn good salaries as well as command a status equivalent to other senior positions.

4. Is housekeeping a woman's profession?

Traditionally, housekeeping has been dominated by women. This was done on the belief that the hotel was an extension of the home and that women had the best skills and competencies to execute the function well. However, men have entered this profession and have succeeded equally well. Hotels may choose a male for many reasons:

1. Some countries like those in the Gulf that uphold traditional Islamic values may not permit women to work in public locations such as guest rooms.
2. Chains find it difficult to transfer a woman from one hotel to another as they would be uprooting her domestic links.
3. Women start careers and abandon them when they get married and start a family due to social and family commitments.

5. Who employs qualified housekeepers apart from hotels?

Readers would be surprised to see the range of businesses that employ housekeepers and other housekeeping personnel:

Airlines, Airports, Casinos, Cine-complexes, Commercial Offices, Condominiums, Convention Centres, Cruise liners, Entertainment Centres, Exhibition Centres, Food Courts, Hospitals, Hotels, Independent Restaurants, Museums, Railways, Residential Apartments, Resorts, Schools and Colleges, Shopping Malls, Sports arenas, Studios, Theme Parks, Training Centres, etc.

There are plenty of opportunities worldwide for the serious housekeeping professional.

▲ TRAINING METHODOLOGY

This training manual is fashioned to be the core text for training in housekeeping service. It, therefore, has adopted the following features:

- ◆ It is divided into lessons.
- ◆ It is concise, eliminating unwanted words.
- ◆ It is sequenced in the way that the subject should be learnt.
- ◆ It adopts a simple language.
- ◆ Terminologies are explained carefully and re-emphasised in *Key Terms* at the end of each lesson.
- ◆ The text can be used for self-learning as well as by a trainer.
- ◆ It acts as a ready reference for those in a hurry.
- ◆ It deals with direct housekeeping operations.

Any good training deals with four aspects:

1. **Knowledge**—the foundation of information required to perform a task effectively
2. **Skills**—the logical and motor skills required to complete tasks
3. **Attitudes**—the emotional way we interact with the environment (workplace)
4. **Competencies**—the behaviours required in a job to be effective

This manual has been divided into those components. The competencies are mentioned in Lesson 7 titled “Competencies of a Housekeeping Professional.” Trainers and learners must look at this lesson in the context of the four aspects of good training.

From the many training methodologies available, I have suggested the following methodologies in this manual as they are practical and in common use already:

Lecture

Ideas expressed orally. It is usually a one-way communication from trainer to trainee. This may not ensure complete learning. It is advised that trainers get more participative in the session by asking them questions so that they think for themselves. A question answer session at the end will complete any doubts and give the trainer a feedback to ascertain whether the trainees have understood the ideas. The trainer must use illustrative training aids which will be discussed later.

Demonstration

A performance of a skill by the trainer while learners watch. This is an effective method that improves learning. The trainer will naturally have to assemble the various equipment, tools, ingredients (as in the case of cooking), and accessories in advance to ensure the smooth flow of the session.

Practice

An opportunity for learners to perform what they have learnt. There are bound to be mistakes initially till the trainee achieves proficiency. The more the practice the greater is the chance of attaining proficiency. Most demonstrations must be followed by practice.

On-the-Job Training

The method is employed when learners have acquired a certain level of proficiency before they are put into live situations. This is the most

effective method of learning. The main challenge is to perform tasks under time pressure and while dealing with guests.

Role-play

The method employs learners to act out scenes of real situations but in simulated conditions. The learners can afford to commit mistakes without serious consequences. Most competencies and guest relation skills are best taught by role-play.

Study Tours

These are guided visits to actual work sites for learners to translate their knowledge into practical orientations. It is effective for learners to actually see and touch real equipment, accessories, and visualise real layouts guided by the principles learnt in the classroom.

Most methodologies come alive with support materials called *training aids*. Here are some of the aids suggested in the manual that work well with the methodologies suggested above:

White Board

It is inexpensive and reusable. Most training classrooms are equipped with it.

Flip Charts

This is a flip-over chart paper hung on an easel. The benefit of this aid is that many diagrams can be prepared in advance for a session. Flip charts have the advantage of recording important points in the classroom discussion for use later in the session.

PowerPoint

In today's world of computers, the PowerPoint software is a marvel that comes with most Microsoft packages. The advantage is that presentations can be made more colourful. and with some animation features. The computer will require an LCD projector with necessary accessories to project the matter. Such projectors are expensive.

Samples

These are actual exhibits like bottles, ingredients, forms, and formats, etc. that can be brought in a classroom. These are essential for demonstration purposes and enhance understanding of the trainees.

Part-1

OVERVIEW

Types of Hotels

Learning Objective



To help the reader understand the meaning of a hotel and its categorisation so that he/she can understand the uniqueness of a hotel while working for it.

▲ WHAT IS A HOTEL?

British Law defines a “Hotel” or “Inn” as “a place where a bona fide traveller can receive food and shelter, provided he/she is in a position to pay for it and is in a fit condition to be received”. Therefore, a hotel must provide food (and beverages) and lodging to travellers on payment and has, in turn, the right to refuse admission if the traveller is drunk, disorderly, unkempt or is not in a position to pay for the services.

By this definition, a hotel must provide rooms and meals. The provision of beverages is subject to local customs and practices. Therefore, in Europe and America, bars are an important part of hotel facilities, while in Islamic countries, bars may be considered a taboo on religious grounds. The right of admission is reserved in all hotels and many of them display that sign prominently at their doorways or reception. A hotel can refuse accommodation to a guest if he/she is not in a fit and orderly state. With this tradition, hotels have always been a place where visitors and guests always dress their best.



▲ HOTEL CATEGORIES

With the evolution of hotels and their proliferation around the world, it is impossible to categorise them under one term. This has been made easier for readers by classifying them under several categories:

- (i) Location
- (ii) Number of Rooms
- (iii) Ownership

- (iv) Pricing Plan
- (v) Type of Clientele
- (vi) Length of Guest Stay
- (vii) Facilities Offered
- (viii) Other Lodging Concepts

Let us examine each one of them in detail:

Location

Hotels are classified by their location as follows:

- Downtown
- Suburban
- Resort
- Airport
- Motel
- Camp

Downtown Hotels

Downtown Hotels are located at the centre of the city in busy commercial and shopping districts. Their features are:

1. Close to government and private offices, shopping malls and entertainment centres.
2. High hotel room rates as the price of land is expensive.
3. Quality hotels meant for moneyed clientele, usually the business and corporate community. Upmarket groups may also find downtown hotels affordable.
4. Cater to guests on short visits lasting maximum one week.
5. Have leading restaurants, bars and night clubs.
6. Close to day and night shopping, eateries and entertainment and, therefore, may cut costs by having only bars and an all-purpose coffee shop off the lobby.
7. Modern downtown hotels have purpose-built shopping malls with food courts, residential apartments, commercial offices and cineplexes attached to their hotel, creating self-contained communities.
8. Built upwards as tower blocks because of a lack of space.



Housekeeping personnel have to travel by elevators to reach higher floors while chutes in tower blocks transport soiled linen to the laundry quickly. The real challenge is to provide speedy quality service in a fast turnover hotel which increases if hotels become community complexes.



Suburban Hotels

Suburban hotels are located on the outskirts of a city where land is cheaper. Their features are:

1. Have sprawling constructions with ample parking spaces.
2. Attract cost-conscious clientele, though not necessarily budget travellers.

3. Ideal for training programmes, conferences and seminars as participants find a peaceful environment to learn.
4. Have quick and efficient local transportation to make travel to the city centre and back, easy and convenient.
5. Modern suburban hotels have become community complexes, as discussed earlier.
6. Offer better room rates and facilities for groups, making such properties ideal group hotels for handling volume traffic.
7. Many suburban hotels are close to the airport and capture the airline crew, passenger layover and transit stay.

The challenge for housekeeping is to prepare volume rooms by personnel who reside largely in the suburbs.

Resort Properties

Resort properties are located at natural and man-made sites. Resort hotels will be found at hill stations, seaside resorts, ski resorts, canyons, waterfalls, etc. Niagara Falls, St. Moritz ski resort, Miami Beach resort, Safari park and the Grand Canyon are some good examples of resorts around natural resources. Disney Land, Lego Land, Universal Studios in Hollywood and dam reservoirs are good examples of man-made marvels. Historical monuments like the Taj Mahal in India, Pyramids of Egypt, etc. are other historical sites for resorts. Their features are:

1. Cater specifically to the visitors of those sites.
2. Highly seasonal depending upon climates and holidays to get their clientele. Resort properties have to make most of those times and charge well.
3. Provide heavy off-season discounts to the budget-conscious traveller.
4. Main clientele are families, educational groups and couples.
5. Have possibly one all-purpose dining room with meals that depend on local seasonal produce.

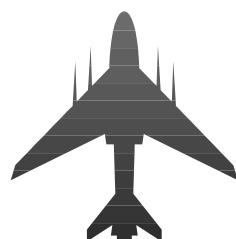


Housekeeping will employ a team from the local community during the season. Such personnel may not necessarily be career professionals but part-timers who earn during the season. The rooms may be cleaned once a day with bed linen being changed every alternate day. Often arrivals and departures of transport are fairly predictable as they ply at fixed times, so rooms can be prepared for those timings.

Airport Hotels

Airport hotels, as the name suggests, are located in the precincts of an airport. Their features are:

1. Cater mostly to transient airline passengers who catch another flight to complete their journey and therefore, need a room for a few hours before the next flight.
2. Cater also to those passengers with cancelled or delayed flights when the airlines provide hotel facilities.



3. Cater additionally to transient airline crews who find the airport hotel convenient between flights.
4. Unlikely that these hotels will have gourmet restaurants and entertainment.
5. Have large coffee shops to accommodate a full flight of transient passengers and crew.
6. May provide an all-purpose drug store and a few emporiums with local arts and crafts for passengers who do not have time for city shopping.
7. Have efficient wake-up call services and perhaps a cybercafé.
8. Linked to airport air traffic schedules for passengers to check their flight arrival and departure timings.
9. Provide a shuttle coach service.
10. Have left-luggage facilities for those who have a little more time to visit the city.
11. Simple in structure, possibly two floors, with the least frills.

The challenge for housekeeping is the quick turnover of rooms for passengers on short stay. Airport hotels have three shifts to service airline arrivals and departures throughout day and night, especially at busy airports.

Motels

Motels are located in principle highways and road junctions. A motel has the following features:

1. It is a lodging facility with 15–100 rooms for the automobile traveller.
2. Have direct access to their rooms from their car after registering.
3. Low buildings, maybe a storey or two high at the most.
4. Have ample parking spaces.
5. Guests can park their cars in front of their rooms.
6. The rooms are equipped with tea/coffee kettles, tea/coffee satchels, creamers and sugar for travellers to make their own hot beverages.
7. Fitted with a microwave oven for travellers to heat their own food.
8. May have a diner and a bar at the most.
9. Supplement eating facilities with food and beverage dispensers at convenient spots on the guest floors.
10. Earlier motels provided garage facilities to service old model cars.
11. Rooms are simple and clean with hot and cold shower or bath facilities.
12. Guests stay overnight at the most.



Housekeeping personnel are part-timers from local small towns and provide cleaning services once a day.

Camps

Camps are located on trekking routes. Modern features are:

1. Cater to caravans which are mobile homes.
2. Have large parking lots where caravans are parked.
3. Each lot has a water-hydrant connection and electricity plug-in point for the caravans.
4. Have common toilet and bath facilities with hot and cold water.
5. May have an all-purpose diner.

Types of Hotels

6. Guests sleep in their own caravans.
 7. Earlier camps had plots to pitch tents with common toilet and bath facilities. Food was cooked around a campfire and people trekked on foot.
 8. Other variations are the forest lodges in remote locations that are fully equipped for self-cooking, bed linen and water supply, though not necessarily hot water.
 9. Payment for the use of the lodge is done at the nearest village office.
 10. Some lodges may have a caretaker from the local village to meet the needs of the guests.
- Housekeeping personnel of tented camps are public cleaners as there are no rooms as such.



Number of Rooms

Hotels may be classified by the number of rooms they have:

- 25 and less—small Motels, lodges, bed & breakfast
- 26–100—medium Family operations promoted with personal wealth
- 101–300—large Family owned with assistance from financial institutions
- 300–1000—very large Hotels with public issue
- Above 1000—mega Hotels with public issue

The size of property depends on the financial strength of the investor. Most motels, lodges, bed and breakfast establishments, etc. come under the small category where individual families and entrepreneurs supplement the tourism effort of the country. More ambitious individual entrepreneurs may establish medium-sized properties as a regular business which must give the investor a return on investment. These properties would still be closely held by families to keep total control on operations and expenditures. The large and mega properties enter a different league where large investments are involved. Housekeeping challenges will vary by size and scope of each size from simple services to complex ones discussed above.

Housekeeping personnel will range from part-time caretakers to professionals.

Ownership

There are different types of organisations based on their ownership:

- Sole Proprietor
- Partnerships
- Public Limited Companies (PLC)
- Private Limited Companies (Ltd)

Sole Proprietor

The Sole Proprietor is an individual business person who uses his or her own resources to set up the business. He/she limits the size of operations to the extent of his or her financial limits. Funds come from personal wealth in terms of cash and fixed assets like land, building and jewellery, against which the proprietor gets additional loans from the banks. The funds must cover the cost of land, building, interiors, facilities and operational costs. Naturally, the sole proprietor should have

small to medium size properties so that he/she can manage them personally. The sole proprietor is the main architect and promoter of the business based on his or her knowledge and skill. Upon his/her death, the business ceases to exist unless there is a family heir competent enough to take over the reins.

Partnerships

Partnerships is another method of raising funds. Partnerships help businessmen in aspiring to establish medium to large hotels. Partnership Act of UK (1890) states that “A partnership is the relation that subsists between persons carrying on a business in common, with a view of profit.” Partners are limited to 20 persons only. Partnerships can be Limited Companies or Unlimited Companies. In Limited Companies, the shareholders are liable for debts only to the extent of their investment. In Unlimited Companies, the shareholders are liable for all debts of the company.

Public Limited Companies

Public Limited Companies (PLC) are those companies that finance mega hotels of 1000 rooms and above. Las Vegas is an example of mega project where the number of rooms go as high as 5000. Obviously, no one entrepreneur can finance such a project and will have to raise funds by having several shareholders interested in the project. They issue shares to the public.

Pricing Plans

Pricing Plans is another way to classify hotels. In each pricing plan, a price is quoted that includes room and food charges.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ European Plan—Room charges only ➤ American Plan—Room + all meals ➤ Modified American—Room + Breakfast Plan + Lunch or dinner ➤ Continental Plan—Room + Continental Breakfast ➤ Bed & Breakfast—Room + English Breakfast | Downtown hotels
Resorts, suburban hotels, convention centres
Group hotels
Downtown hotels
Bed & Breakfast establishments
Downtown |
|---|--|

Type of Clientele

Type of clientele is another way to classify hotels. This classification enables the hotel to specialise for a market segment, as against those that are geared for multi-guest profiles. These segments are:

- Business Hotels
- Group Hotels
- Family Hotels
- Convention Hotels
- Youth Hostels

Business Hotels

Business hotels specialise in providing facilities and amenities for business and corporate travellers. Such facilities are:

Types of Hotels

1. Business centres with meeting rooms, secretarial services, office automation and modern telecommunication facilities including the Internet.
2. Business lounge allows executives to have private meals and has the latest newspapers and perhaps a library.
3. Rooms are equipped with high-speed Internet facilities, direct dial telecommunication link-up globally, ergonomic writing desks and chairs, mini-bar, safety lockers, multi-channel television, etc.
4. Limousine service to and from the airport.
5. Concierge service.
6. Same day laundry service.
7. Health club.
8. Access to golf courses.



Group Hotels

Group hotels are geared for volume traffic at any given time. Their features are:

1. Large lobbies to welcome groups
2. Separate registration counters
3. Lobby staff equipped to handle volume baggage
4. Separate baggage lifts
5. Rooms with twin-beds
6. Large dining halls to seat several groups at a time
7. Briefing rooms for tour groups
8. Do not have the frills of a business hotel
9. Facilities for the handicapped
10. Medical services for the aged
11. Infant care.

Family Hotels

Family hotels are found mostly at resorts geared specifically for families. Their features are:

1. Interconnected rooms with perhaps a kitchenette and basic cooking facilities
2. Entertainment lounges equipped with television, indoor games and children play area
3. Outdoor children parks
4. Jogging paths
5. Independent barbecue areas

Convention Hotels

Convention hotels are specifically planned to hold large conventions. Their features are:

1. Plenary halls (to seat all participants).
2. Smaller meeting rooms for break-out sessions.
3. Administration offices.

4. Large registration areas.
5. Large dining halls to feed upto 2000 people.
6. Rooms with twin-beds and equipped with modern telecommunication systems, mini-bars, safety lockers and the like.
7. Shuttle coach services from the hotel to the airport and the city centre to transport delegates.

Youth Hostels

Youth hostels cater to the travelling youth. Their features are:

1. Dormitory style accommodation
2. Some single rooms for the discerning
3. Common toilets and shower areas
4. Large dining halls with simple food
5. Gymnasium
6. Games courts and fields
7. Assembly hall with a stage for youth gatherings and entertainment



The YMCA and YWCA hostels are the best examples of this type.

Length of Stay

The length of stay is another classification where hotels specially gear themselves to short-term and long-term stay of guests as follows:

- Transient Hotel
- Residential Hotel
- Semi-residential

Transient Hotels

Transient hotels are the type of accommodation where guests stay for short durations which at the maximum last for a week. Downtown hotels, motels and airport hotels are good examples of transient hotels. Their features are:

1. Comfortable and clean rooms with en suite bathrooms with hot and cold water
2. In-room tea/coffee facilities
3. Coffee Shop or Diner
4. Bar
5. Room Service (excluding motels)
6. Quick check-ins and check-outs
7. Laundry service (excluding motels)

Residential Hotels

Residential hotels are equipped to cater guests on a longer stay. Hotel apartments found in many community hotel complexes, are a good example of this. Their features are:

1. Suites consisting of two rooms—one a living area and the other a bedroom.



2. Fitted with kitchenettes for personal cooking.
3. Rooms are cleaned by outsourced housekeeping service.
4. Security service with pass keys to enter the building.
5. Guests may lease this accommodation for a period of upto a year.
6. Convenient for long tenure business executives who do not want the hassle of running a home, and mature students with families on university campuses.

Suite Hotels

Suite hotels are similar to residential hotels but they are meant for guests on a shorter stay of perhaps six months or less. Its features are:

1. Ideal for families who need a temporary accommodation before moving into their permanent abode.
2. Suitable for travelling professionals who find it convenient to set up travelling offices in their living area without intruding into the bedroom.
3. Have all the facilities and amenities of the residential hotel except that they may have a coffee shop bar and perhaps one more specialty restaurant.

Most lodging investors nowadays are opting for Suite Hotels.

Furnished Apartments

Furnished apartments are another variation of extended stay properties.

Their features are:

1. Have studio rooms with open fully equipped kitchens.
2. Lobbies for meeting visitors.
3. Outsourced housekeeping services.
4. Swimming pool and gymnasium.
5. Laundromats in the basement.
6. No eating facilities except for some vending machines.
7. Close-circuit television for security.
8. A receptionist who acts as a caretaker, security guard, cleaner of public areas and guest relations person who rooms guests.
9. A plumber and electrician on full-time role. Between them they operate all the utility services including water supplies, central air-conditioning, central heating and swimming pool maintenance.
10. Ideal for single professionals who do not want the hassle of running a home.



Facilities Offered

The facilities offered by hotels are another way to classify them:

- Star Rating
- Deluxe Hotels
- Palace Hotels
- Convention Hotels
- Conference Hotels
- Casino Hotels
- Business Hotels

- Sports Hostels and Hotels
- Budget Hotels
- Suite Hotels
- Bed & Breakfast

Star Rating

Star Rating is one of the most definitive standards which guides travellers as to what to expect in a hotel (see Annexure 1 for greater details). The star ratings are organised by the State Tourism Department who puts together a team of representatives from the government, hospitality educationists, travel agents, airlines and the hotel industry. They are guided by a checklist of minimum requirements to award a certain star rating. The owner of the property informs the Tourism Department of the star rating he wants for his hotel and sets a date for the inspection. Star Ratings range from one to five-star though there are even six and seven stars which are outside the purview of this lesson as these properties are rare. A five-star rating, for instance, will have the following features:

1. Rooms of certain minimum dimensions with attached bathrooms supplying hot and cold water.
2. Bathrooms with bathtubs.
3. Shopping arcade with a bank, post office, travel agency and so on.
4. A coffee shop and other dining options.
5. Swimming pool and gymnasium.
6. Room service.

From those high standards of investment, the hotel rating reduces as hotels provide lesser facilities. Hotels are required to display their star rating at the main portal of the hotel so that a guest can know what standard to expect.

Deluxe Hotels

Deluxe Hotels normally have a minimum of five-star rating. These hotels are rated as deluxe as they have décor and appointments of luxury. They have every conceivable comfort built into the guest experience. Take Burj-al-Arab in Dubai where accommodations are suites that overlook the Persian Gulf. The rooms are fitted with remote control window shades, gold-plated taps, etc. Guests are transported to the hotel from the airport by the hotel helicopter that lands on a helipad on the hotel rooftop. It has a restaurant under the sea as well as one at the roof top that gives breathtaking aerial views. Deluxe hotels ooze opulence and are available only to those people who can afford the stay. Some deluxe business hotels provide individual butlers and specialised cuisines. Many older, stand alone hotels like the Grosvenor House, The Claridges, etc. set standards of luxury. Many palaces, mansions and villas of the royalty of yore have been converted into hotels, which really cannot be given a star rating because of their uniqueness. Both can certainly be classified as deluxe.

Palace Hotels

Palace Hotels are really an Indian concept where ancient Indian maharajas converted their palaces into hotels after they were stripped off their princely privileges. The palaces transport guests into old heritage, architecture and priceless appointments. The Umaid Bhawan Palace in Jodhpur, for

example, boasts of a crystal fountain in the lobby and an array of vintage cars in the private garage complex. The beds on which the guests sleep are the ones where actual royalty once slept. Of course these palaces have been equipped with modern conveniences such as television, mini-fridges, air-conditioning and telephone connections though they introduce into the original uniqueness of the property. Guests are exposed to rare art and artifacts that are not found anywhere else in the world. A similar concept may be found in Europe where manor houses of the royalty have been converted into luxury accommodations.



Conference Hotels

Conference Hotels have similar facilities as convention hotels (mentioned earlier) but scaled down in size. Many hotels may have conference centre attached to their main hotel to have the flexibility for business, tourist and conference business. The conference annexes have independent entrances and large parking lots. Some conference hotels may also include auditoriums that are leased out for public shows.

Casino Hotels

Casino Hotels serve only one purpose —to serve guests who want to gamble. Las Vegas in Nevada, USA is the best example of the location of casino hotels, each one more dramatic than the other. The essential features of casino hotels are gaming halls sometimes the size of a football field with all possible gambling games including banks of slot machines, blackjack tables, roulettes tables, etc. Every hotel outdoes each other in terms of features and entertainment. *New York, New York* boasts of a lobby that represents a New York street with street cafes, steam from sewers, street lamps leading to the gambling floor; *MGM* boasts of a sunken bar on the style of the Brazilian rainforest. *Treasure Island* has a sound and light show of a sinking pirate ship while *Bellagios* has dancing fountains that offer a unique sight; *Caesar's Palace* has all its staff dressed in Roman togas and boasts of amphitheatres where famous modern day stars perform; The Bar is a Roman galleon built in the lobby itself. With funds to create and maintain such set ups, casino hotels are truly deluxe with the best facilities to meet every guest need. Most rooms are large and fitted with twin queen-sized beds with bathrooms that have separate bathing, shower and toilet areas. A bathroom would perhaps be the size of a guest room in a smaller property !



Business Hotels

Business hotels have specifically built-in structure and facilities to cater to the business and corporate clients. We have already discussed these types of hotels in detail earlier in this chapter.

Sports Hostels and Hotels

Sports Hostels and Hotels may go back to the time of the Olympic Games in 776 B.C. at the height of the Greek empire. The games started in Olympia about 18 kilometres from Pirgos, Greece.

While Olympia was devastated by earthquakes and floods, later excavations showed that the complex had a wrestling and boxing school, gymnasium and dormitories for athletes to stay. Olympic Games were held every four years later and split into the Winter Olympics (in 1994) and Summer Olympics. Nowadays, sport has become an industry that earns mega bucks from television rights, sponsorships and large gate money. Games like soccer, basketball, cricket, rugby, tennis, football, etc. have become multi-million dollar industries pulling huge crowds. The investment in events like World Cups and championships has now become a lucrative proposition.

Sports Hostels

Sports hostels are found in games villages which are set up for major championships or Olympic games. The games villages carefully segregate national teams. They have independent gyms, practice fields and large dining halls to provide different cuisines. The games villages have special security, medical rooms, dope-testing facilities, media centres, sports equipment maintenance centres, boutiques for sportswear and other administrative features. Purpose-built sports hostels and hotels are built at popular stadiums to accommodate athletes and spectators of the sport. Essential features of these accommodations are:

1. Dormitory style accommodation with single rooms for sports officials
2. Gyms
3. Health clubs
4. Swimming pools
5. Large dining halls
6. Doctors specialised in sports medicine
7. Special security to protect rampaging fans reaching their sports idols
8. Dieticians for special diets for sportsmen and sportswomen
9. Trainers

Budget Hotels

Budget hotels are relatively a new concept that makes travel inexpensive in a world that is getting more and more costly. Budget hotels strip rooms and services to the bare minimum and use automation to fulfil many guest needs. Typical features are:

1. Air-conditioned rooms with cupboards and mini-bars
2. An ensuite bathroom with shower tray and hot and cold water
3. A dining room with buffet
4. A wall-mounted mini-television
5. Common floor pantries with dispensers for hot and cold food, ice, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, toiletries, etc.

Bed and Breakfast

Bed and Breakfast establishments are usually small family businesses. A family may have an extra set of rooms in their home that they let out to tourists. This is a typical concept from Europe which perhaps earlier did not have well-developed hotel facilities. Ireland and Scotland, for example, supplement hotel



Types of Hotels

accommodation in the huge tourist season with bed and breakfast properties. The family of the establishment takes the responsibility of providing comfortable rooms much on the home style with their dining rooms serving as the breakfast venue. Breakfasts are sumptuous English Breakfasts with a full array of cereals, meats, breads and tea and coffee. These breakfasts are legendary for many travellers who can sustain a full day with this meal.

Time-share Hotels

Time-share Hotels is a relatively new concept of ownership of holiday rooms or suites. Each room or suite is owned by several people who schedule their visit well in advance with the management office to ensure that the room or suite is available. Time-share properties are located at dream sites, normally at beaches, ski slopes, hill resorts, waterfalls, spas, etc. People book time from a week to a fortnight. If they are not free to avail the room for any reason, they can rent their time slot to another person. Sometimes, the management company can help in this process. One great advantage is that time-share owners can become members of international time-share properties and exchange their time with another time-share owner at another location. Time-share properties have fully-furnished rooms with kitchenettes. They may have a dining hall with a bar. They outsource recreation expertise such as guides, boatmen, ski instructors, paragliding specialists, etc.



Condominiums

Condominiums (or Condos) are another type of accommodation. Here the owner of a unit which is a room or an apartment in a complex of several such accommodations furnishes it to his/her taste and informs the management of the times he/she will occupy the apartment. He/she permits the management to rent out the apartment at other times and the rent goes to the owner. Condos have restricted entry. Owners have their own password for entering into the premises. These passwords are given to lessees of their property. Owners pay a monthly or annual maintenance fee that covers cleaning of common areas; central air-conditioning/heating maintenance; landscaping and gardening; water supply; security and garbage disposal. Condo management, which is appointed by the owner's association, may lease space to a grocery store in the basement to provide the items of basic needs to the residents of condos.



Other Lodging Concepts

In addition to traditional hotels, there are other lodging options to a traveller, which include concepts unique to a country and other unique concepts. Let us take a look at these:

- Ecotel
- Bedsit
- Boarding House
- Caravan
- Chalet
- Floating Hotel

- Government House
- Hospices
- Hostels
- Ice Hotel
- Log Cabin
- Matel
- Rotel
- Sanatoria
- Tree House

Ecotels

Ecotels are a relatively new concept of properties that give respect to the natural environment and provide carbon-efficient construction and operations. These are environment-friendly hotels.

It is believed that by the year 2050, residential, commercial and institutional buildings will consume as much as 38% of the global energy production by releasing 3,800 megatons of carbon into the atmosphere. This and other similar concerns have led to the emergence of green buildings and green operations concept.

Green buildings cut down on carbon emission. A green building has the following aspects:

- Commitment to energy-conscious architecture
- Eco-friendly designs
- People's participation in the planning and maintenance of the building
- Operations with strong infrastructural thrust on minimum energy use

Green buildings use shaded facades (especially glass), light colours and insulation to make it energy efficient. Research is still ongoing regarding low-energy architecture, hybrid air-conditioning, autonomous energy and water systems, earth construction and community-based design of common property. Green buildings make use of natural lighting and ventilation to maintain a balance between temperature, humidity and oxygen levels.

The US Green Building Council started the green building movement by creating the Leadership in Energy and Environment Design (LEED) rating system. This system encourages efforts towards making buildings clean and energy efficient by implementing steps that will improve the structure's operational efficiency. It focuses on energy and atmosphere, water, green material, education and innovation. In India, the CII-Sohrabji Godrej Green Business Centre in Hyderabad set the trend and became the model for the construction industry by being the only building in the world to be awarded the 'platinum rating' under this rating system. It was able to save 60% energy and 30% water bills compared to conventional buildings. Since then, the ITC Green Centre has won the Platinum Award and the Grundfos Building in Chennai has won the Gold Award. A LEED-rated building can prevent 12,000–15,000 tons of carbon per year. Other global-certified bodies are Ecotel, ISO 14001 and Green Globe.

In India, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) joined hands with the World Business Council for sustainable development to form energy efficiency in buildings. TERI developed the Green Rating for Integrated Habitat Assessment (GRIHA) rating system to address Indian buildings and environmental conditions. As per this system, the environmental performance of a building over its entire life cycle is evaluated, thereby creating a definitive standard for certifying it as a green building.

The benefits of green buildings are:

- Reduced energy consumption without sacrificing the comfort levels
- Minimised destruction of natural areas, habitats and biodiversity and reduced soil loss from erosion
- Decreased air and water pollution with direct health benefits
- Reduced water consumption
- Limited waste generation due to recycling and reuse
- Reduced pollution loads
- Increased productivity
- Enhanced image and marketability

Coming to hotels, there are 36 green-certified hotels worldwide, of which five are in India. ITC Sonar Bangla in Kolkata became the first Indian hotel to be successful in implementing this concept. Lemon Tree in Chennai and Uppal's Orchid in Gurgaon are other shining examples. Apart from the architecture, the operational features and practices of such hotels also bring about energy savings. Some of these are:

- Using medium-density woods in construction
- A green button in rooms to stabilise temperatures
- Energy-saving light bulbs (up to 40%)
- Furniture of steel and glass
- "Request for Fruits" card and no fruit platters
- Water not filled to the brim
- Fresh flowers replaced by object d'art
- Sewage treatment plants to reuse waste water for horticulture
- Providing guest supplies from recycled material
- Aerated water in taps where air is injected to provide bulk
- Not using chemicals and chlorine in water
- Reusable jute bags for laundry
- Jute bath slippers
- Using chefs' caps made from reusable material
- Use of jute mats as throw rugs in rooms
- Avoiding the use of polythene
- Changing bed linen once in two days instead of everyday
- Replacing towels on request
- Offering organic foods
- Reuse of food material to create compost
- Sending used oil in the kitchens to soap factories
- Sending old flowers to those agencies that extract colours from flowers for the textile industry

A successful marketing point of Ecotels is to receive accreditation and certification. Ecotels realise that such initiatives not only give them a marketing advantage but also help in maintaining the bottom line. Certification bodies offer guiding principles that Ecotels have to adopt to be considered as such. Such certification bodies are Ecotel, LEED, ISO14001 and Green Globe. In India, we have GRIHA under TERI.

Ecotels can earn carbon credits. For example, ITC Sonar Bangla earned 1886 tons of Carbon Emission Reductions (CERs) in 2006, which earned them Rs. 14,71,760. Green Buying is another

new concept adopted by Ecotels. It refers to the purchase of those products which have a minimal side effect on the environment, and to abandon the use of environmentally unsafe processes anywhere in the supply chain.

Bedsit

Bedsit or flatlette (in Austria) is a single flat equipped with a bed and a small kitchen with an electric kettle and an electric stove. It has a shared toilet down the common corridor. Bedsits were created from larger dwellings in England as alternatives to those looking for independent set-ups from traditional boarding houses with communal dining. It is affordable and ideal for tourists who want a simple independent house when on a long vacation.

Boarding House

Boarding house is also known as “rooming house” in the US. It is used by people who are on vacation for one or more days. In a boarding house, boarders share washing and cooking. It is found in resorts and college towns. In the UK, boarding houses are typically run by landladies who provide bed and breakfast, half-board (breakfast and dinner) and full-board (breakfast, lunch and dinner). Boarding houses are especially suitable for families on holiday and are available on low budgets. The bed and breakfast is a form of boarding house usually run by families.

Caravans

Caravans are mobile homes that people take across the country. Caravans are fitted with sleeping, dining, lounge and bathroom facilities. They have tanks with fresh water and septic tanks for refuse. Some caravans have kitchenettes with basic heating facilities. As discussed earlier, caravans are moored at camping sites constructed for this purpose.

Chalets

Chalets are vacation homes unique to Switzerland. They are typically small homes that travellers can rent and run as though it were their own house. They give the freedom to adopt whatever lifestyle the vacationer wishes. Chalets were the mainstay for travellers during the 18th century but have now been adopted in many other countries. Holiday cottages in the UK dot the countryside.

Floating Hotels

Floating hotels are those found on passenger ships. Some are permanently docked at a port while others are cruise liners taking passengers on a week-long trip around famed locations connected with water. The ships are five star hotels with every conceivable luxury, including several multicuisine restaurants, suites, ball rooms, shopping arcades, and so on. Guests are served by well-trained and talented personnel. A wonderful variation of this concept is the houseboats of Kashmir. Houseboats are moored on the banks of the lakes and fitted with telephone connections, modern sanitation in bathrooms and the most luxurious appointments and décor. The roof acts as the sun deck while the boat has a living room, a dining room and several bedrooms. The houseboat is staffed by the owner and his family, who cooks, cleans and runs small errands. Shikaras are smaller boats that sidle along the boat for transportation around the lake. Hawkers come alongside the houseboats

Types of Hotels

in their shikaras (open or covered row boats) to sell their wares. Houseboats are fitted to suit all budgets from the economical to the ultra-luxurious.

Government Houses

Government houses are a composite name for *Dak* Bungalows, Circuit Houses, PWD Houses and Forest Lodges which were the legacy of the British Raj in India. These were primarily built for government officials during the administrative tours. *Dak* Bungalows were for the postal couriers to rest while circuit houses were for the higher-ranked officials. Forest Lodges were built for those involved in forestry and building the winter capitals of the Raj. The PWD Houses were for those officials involved in road building and laying electricity power lines. These establishments have caretakers drawn from local villages who are multi-skilled to cook, clean and provide security to the establishment. They are trained to give the standards required by the officials and are very capable. These establishments are still available to government personnel and authorised public.

Hospices

Hospices have been traditional church lodgings in Europe for the Christian pilgrims travelling to Jerusalem. Each religion has its religious support groups running on charity. For example, the Hokke Club of Japan is specially designed for the Buddhist pilgrims. It provides meditation centres for prayers. Followers of Islam provide *madrassas* while Hindus have their *dharma shalas* for the pilgrims of their faith. Another variation is the *choultry*, which is of Indian origin and refers to simple accommodation run by charitable institutions at nominal rates.

Hostels

Hostels are a type of accommodation where guests can rent a bed (sometimes a bunk bed) in a dormitory. Residents share common bathrooms, kitchen and lounge rooms. They can be co-ed, all male or all female. Private rooms are becoming increasingly common in all types of hostels. They are cheaper for both the host as well as the guest. For travellers, the main benefit is its low cost compared to hotels. Travellers also get a chance to interact more with other travellers and make new friends, especially in foreign environments. They are frequented by young travellers between 18–26 years of age giving sprout to youth hostels like the YMCA or YWCA. Hostels can be independent or part of a licensed authority and ideal for backpackers. Hostels today offer dormitories and en-suite single-occupancy accommodation.



Ice Hotels

Ice hotels are temporary hotels made up entirely of snow and sculpted blocks of ice which one may consider as novelty architecture. They are for those who are interested in novelties and unusual environments. Their lobbies are decorated with ice sculptures while food and beverages reflect the environment and local produce. These hotels are reconstructed each year. The ice hotel near the village of Jukkasjarvi, Kiruna in Sweden is the first and most famous ice hotel. The hotel has 80

rooms and suites, a bar, reception area and a church. The ice hotel in Canada near Quebec City is the first in North America. It has 85 rooms with ice beds lined with deer furs and covered with mattresses and arctic sleeping bags. The Mammut Snow Hotel in Finland is made of snow with ice sculptures as decoration. The Alta Igloo ice hotel in Norway is built yearly since 2000 and has 30 rooms with unique lighting systems that highlight the crystalline formations. In 2006, the first ice hotel was built in Eastern Europe at Balea Lake, Romania.

Log Cabins

Log cabins are found at remote locations, especially in mountains that are fully equipped for self-cooking, bed linen and water supply, though not necessarily hot water! Payment for the use of the lodge is done at the nearest village office. Some lodges may have a caretaker from the local village to meet the needs of the guests. Log cabins are called Biwakschachtel in Germany. These are usually located in the Alps and are maintained by Alpine clubs.

Another version is the Bothy found in England, Wales and Scotland. It is a simple shelter left unlocked and available to anyone to use without charge. Most bothies are former ruined buildings that have been restored to a basic standard providing a windproof and watertight shelter. They vary in size from little more than a large box to a two-storied cottage. Bedding is not provided but have candles and firewood to keep warm. However, there is no option to cook. These facilities are accessible to foot-trekkers and bicyclists. Bothies are usually located near a natural water source and may or may not have a bathroom.



Matels

Matels are fully-automated hotels which require minimum human contact. A guest can book it online and gets an immediate confirmation. On arrival, he punches in his reservation number and name in a machine which initiates a dialogue with a virtual receptionist who registers the guest through a close circuit TV and issues a key to the room through a slot machine. Outsourced cleaning crews come during the day to clean the room and make it fresh and impeccably clean. This concept was started in Japan and is likely to be the future of hotels.

Palace on Wheels

Palace on Wheels is a unique railway journey recreating the journeys of the maharajas of India. It is a tour from New Delhi, India, to the historic sights in Rajasthan and covers forts, palaces and cultural attractions. The guests are served traditional Indian food by liveried waiting staff.

Rotels

Rotels are double-decker buses where passengers sit on ergo-planned seats on the ground floor and sleep on the second. Such buses are used for long cross-country tours covering fifteen days or more. The second floor has tiered berths fitted with bedside lamps, toilet shelf and privacy curtains. Buses are fitted with bathrooms much like those found in an aeroplane and kitchens with a chef to cook

Types of Hotels

their foods. The buses are fitted with heating and/or air-conditioning facility. Buses stop at vantage points en route for meals and hotel accommodation for a hot bath. The greatest benefit of such travel is that guests do not have the hassle of packing and unpacking. They are provided with cupboards on board. Rotels were introduced by Conti Hotel Bus Company of Germany.



Sanatoria

Sanatoria are found at spas and other health resorts. The rooms are specifically equipped for therapy, including sauna, Turkish bath and Jacuzzi. Meals are personalised diet regimes for each guest. These hotels have proper dieticians, doctors and medical arrangements. This is ideal for those recuperating from surgeries and illnesses. It is also a place for attaining physical fitness.

Tree Houses

Tree houses are small houses built among branches of mature trees. Such accommodation is found in safari parks as protection from scavengers. It is an eco-friendly facility that merges with the environment and is least polluting to its surrounding areas. Although traditionally built of wood, experimentation with technologies (especially fabrics) now have produced viable living structures more like tree tents. These are ideal for those adventurous tourists who can be in the middle of a jungle yet be safe. A famous tree house hotel is the Treetops Hotel in the Aberdare National Park, Kenya, which was opened in 1932 and was rebuilt in 1944.



Key Terms



Airport Hotel	Lodgings in the precincts of an airport
American Plan	A pricing plan that includes the room and all meals
Bed & Breakfast	A pricing plan that includes a room and English breakfast
Budget Hotel	An economic lodging with minimal services
Business Hotel	One that caters to the business and corporate traveller
Casino Hotel	One that provides accommodation and gambling facilities
Condominium	A complex with rooms and apartments under individual ownership
Conference Hotel	A property dedicated to holding conferences
Continental Plan	A pricing plan that includes a room and a Continental breakfast
Convention Hotel	One that is equipped to hold conventions

Deluxe Hotel	A luxury hotel
Downtown Hotel	Lodging located in the heart of a city
Ecotel	A hotel built and serviced with a mind towards eco-friendliness
European Plan	A pricing plan that includes room charges only
Family Hotel	One that caters to families travelling together
Furnished Apartments	An extended stay property with studios to suites equipped with open kitchenettes
Group Hotel	One that serves 15 members and above, travelling together
Hospices	Early European hostels for Christian pilgrims
Hostels	Budget accommodations with common facilities
Ice Hotels	Hotels made of blocks of ice for a unique experience
Log Cabins	Wooden furnished lodgings in remote places, especially mountains
Matels	Automated hotels
Palace Hotel	A royal palace converted to a hotel
Palace on Wheels	A princely train that takes travellers to destinations in Rajasthan, India
Partnership	A business run by two to twenty individuals committed to a common objective
Public Limited Co.	A business with multiple shareholders
Residential Hotel	Two-room suites equipped with kitchenettes for extended stay travellers
Resort Hotel	Lodging located at a place with a natural or man-made feature
Rotels	Sleeping facilities on buses for mobile travellers
Sanatoria	Lodging at spas and health resorts equipped for health and fitness
Sole proprietor	A person who uses his own resources to set up a business
Sports Hostels	Those located beside stadiums to serve sportspersons and officials
Star-Rating	A rating set by state tourism departments to guide travellers on the minimum facilities they can expect
Suburban Hotel	Lodging located on the outskirts of a city
Suite Hotel	Lodging with suites equipped with open kitchenettes for short duration travellers
Time-Share Hotels	Lodgings in which rooms or apartments are owned by several people who occupy the facility on mutual time agreements
Transient Hotels	Lodging that caters to short-duration travellers
Tree Houses	Eco-friendly lodgings on branches of mature trees
Youth Hostels	Inexpensive lodging for the travelling youth

Review Quiz



Multiple Choice Questions

Fill in the Blanks

1. A business lounge will be found in a _____ hotel.
 2. A property that has self-sufficient units with kitchenettes is called _____.
 3. A property which provides full ownership of units is called a _____.
 4. Lodging facilities attached to sports arenas are called _____.
 5. We can find unique artefacts and accommodations in _____ hotels.
 6. Lodgings where one finds a Laundromat is called _____.
 7. A property equipped with the state-of-the-art audio-visual aids will be found in _____.
 8. A strategy that serves different markets is called _____.
 9. A facility that has arrangements for caravans is called a _____.
 10. Online flight schedules may be found in _____ hotels.

2

Hotel Chain Associations

Learning Objective



To help the reader understand various chain associations so that he/she can respond to their unique features when working for them as a housekeeping professional.

INTRODUCTION

It is important for a professional housekeeper to understand hotel chain associations, as they could well be employed by these chains. A hotel chain has several hotels under the same brand name, located at different geographic locations both domestically and internationally. Some of these hotels are owned by the chain and the others are franchised operations with independent owners. Some famous hotel chains are: Sheraton, Intercontinental, Ramada, Best Westin, Holidays Inn, Howard Johnson, etc. **A brand is a patented name that has unique products and services associated with the name.** The benefit is that a traveller can expect basic international standards of products and services when they check into a branded hotel anywhere in the world. The typical features of a hotel chain would be:

1. An international brand name of quality
2. A unique culture and work ethos of the principals
3. International standards of hotel products and services
4. Set systems and procedures of the principals
5. Standardised products and services
6. Procedural manuals for each aspect of operations
7. Strong professional support services like engineering, training, facility planning, central purchasing, etc.
8. Global reservation networks
9. International management services
10. Synergy of other hotels in the chain. (Each hotel becomes an active “salesperson” in that location.)
11. International marketing
12. International cuisines

13. Professional training to international standards
14. Multilingual staff

While domestic chains operate within a country, international chains operate in all the continents. Individual hotels cannot avoid being absorbed in this multidimensional, multinational operation which provides expertise, technology, and marketing thrust that they cannot do individually.

▲ HISTORY OF CHAIN OPERATIONS

In 1925, **Howard Johnson**, a soda pop restaurateur, created the **Howard Johnson Motor Lodge** in Savannah, Georgia, that expanded into the first chain operation domestically and later internationally.

Another famous hotelier, **Willard Marriott**, started as a restaurateur with A&W fast food restaurant chain in 1928. He entered into the hotel industry in 1940s and expanded it into a \$5.3 billion **Marriott Corporation** with segmented hotel chains such as Marriott Hotels, Residence Inns and Courtyard Hotels.

In the late 1950s, another new concept emerged—budget hotels. Budget hotels bought cheap land and offered lodging only. They stripped all services like food and beverage, laundry, housekeeping, uniformed services to be able to offer a cheap rate to the travellers. The rooms had no televisions and telephones. Guests sometimes had to rent the bed, linen and blankets for their rooms. The first budget hotel was the **Travelodge**, Tacoma Washington that grew into a successful chain throughout North America. Travelodge now has added amenities such as TV and telephones and bed linen as essential to stay in the business.

Many other corporations have also spawned into international chains offering the following associations with individual owners:

Types of Chain Associations

- (a) **Partnership**—Sharing equity and profits
- (b) **Franchise**—Providing name and association against a fee
- (c) **Management Contract**—Providing professional managers, technicians, manuals, systems, etc. against management fees and a share of profits as incentive payment

In most of the cases, the sub-staff are all hired locally to save labour cost. They are trained according to the standards of the chain. The Executive Housekeeper can be an employee of the chain or a local hire with the privilege of consulting chain housekeeping specialists. Let us look at each of these associations in detail.

Partnership

A partnership occurs when a chain and an independent investor jointly finance a hotel project. The features of a partnership are:

1. Both the partners become owners of the property.
2. They bring to the table their individual expertise and talents.
3. They share in the profits and liabilities on an equal basis.

Another arrangement that is popular nowadays is the straight lease agreement. A hotel chain reviews a property built by an investor who then leases the property to the chain on an annual lease basis. The owner becomes a landlord and does not interfere in the operations of the property. The chain

becomes the tenant and is responsible for all taxes and recurring municipal fees which are paid from the operations.

Another arrangement is the sale of a property by a chain which leases it back from the new owner under a lease basis, management contract or franchise arrangement. Chains opt for this when they want capital funds for other projects or when they want to reduce direct investment as a strategy.

The professional housekeeper has to understand the involvement of each hotel owner, especially the one accountable for day-to-day operations. The General Manager provides such clarifications. It is also important to know the systems, procedures and standards adopted by the hotel. Often the Executive Housekeeper on the rolls of the principal has to convince the owners of the hotel on the best housekeeping practices and budgets required for operation.

Franchise

A franchise is a licence given by a franchiser (in this case the chain) to a franchisee who can be an individual, partner, a small corporation or a group of investors.

Why does an independent owner take on a franchise?

1. To get a worldwide brand name of consistent quality.
2. To generate large revenues through referral business. Each hotel in a chain becomes salesperson for other franchisees.
3. To have access to their central reservation system to get worldwide reach.
4. To get professional expertise and support services.

Why does a chain give a franchise?

1. It is the fastest way to expand overseas.
2. Direct investments in hotels are high for any hotel chain corporation to finance.
3. A new franchisee becomes a salesperson in a location for other franchised properties of the chain.
4. Franchise fees demanded by the franchiser from the franchisee generates substantial revenue without direct investments.

The housekeeping professional in a franchised property must be trained in the systems and procedures of the principals. They are specially required to understand and execute the set minimum standards. Such guidelines come in the form of procedural manuals which state the way in which things should be done in the housekeeping department including the job titles used for various positions. There can be no deviations from set procedures which are audited annually by the franchiser, to maintain the promise of international standards.

Management Contract

A chain and individual hotel owner can enter into a management contract. A management contract is one where the principal appoints professionals of the chain to run the hotel operations. Such professionals would include the General Manager, Food and Beverage Manager, Executive Chef, Executive Housekeeper, and Rooms Division Manager. Sub-staff are hired locally and trained by the chain's corporate trainer. The owner takes this option for the following reasons:

1. To get professional expertise not available locally.
2. To get international recognition.
3. To establish international standards to attract foreign travellers.

4. The owner becomes the dormant partner in operational matters and only intercedes when expenditures exceed budgets. All operational expenses are borne by the owner.

Under this association, the housekeeping professionals receive guidelines and instructions from the resident representative of the chain, usually the General Manager who is a full-time employee of the hotel seconded by the chain. Housekeepers get technical guidance and training from area housekeepers, regional housekeepers or corporate housekeepers.

Key Terms



Brand	A patented name
Capital funds	Money to purchase long-term assets
Chain	A series of hotels under a common brand name
Franchise	The licence to use a brand name
Management Contract	A contract to provide management expertise by a chain to an independent owner for a fee
Partnership	Joint financial association between a chain and an independent owner

Review Quiz



Fill in the Blanks

1. An association where the chain and individual owner share in equity and profits is called _____.
2. An association that provides a licence to use the brand name is called _____.
3. An association where the chain provides management expertise is called _____.
4. An association when the owner becomes the landlord only is called _____.
5. The reason why a chain sells a property and leases it back is because it needs _____.
6. International standards are brought in by the chain through _____.
7. Under a management contract, local staff are brought upto standards by _____.
8. The process of recommending other hotels in the chain to the guests is called _____.
9. Under a management contract, the owner provides _____.
10. Travellers reach a chain hotel in any location through the chain's _____.

3

Organisation of a Hotel

Learning Objective



To help the reader understand and appreciate the role of various divisions and departments of a hotel and their demands on housekeeping.

▲ INTRODUCTION

This lesson helps housekeeping professionals appreciate the role of various divisions and departments of a hotel and their contributions to operations. They will especially learn their needs from the Housekeeping Department. For example, most departments rely on the Public Area section of the Housekeeping Department for their cleaning requirements. First, let us see how a hotel is organisationally structured.

▲ LARGE HOTEL ORGANISATION STRUCTURE

First let us understand some terms:

1. **Organisation Structure:** A framework that assigns responsibilities and channels of communications
2. **Organisation Chart:** A schematic depiction of relationships between jobs
3. **A Division:** A grouping of related departments
4. **Department:** An independent activity that contributes to business

The Housekeeping Department is clubbed under the Accommodations Division. There are essentially two major divisions: *Accommodations* and *Food and Beverage*, both supported by Staff Departments.



Accommodations Division

This division has a set of departments responsible for the sale of rooms. These departments are:

- **Front Office** Includes reception, concierge, lobby services, transport, business centre, guest relations, and telecommunications
- **Engineering** Includes electrical, civil, carpentry, mechanical, electronic, plumbing and fire-prevention activities
- **Housekeeping** Cleaning, maintenance and aesthetic upkeep, horticulture and florist
- **Laundry** Guest and in-house laundry
- **Health Club** Includes gymnasium, swimming pool, yoga, aerobics, saunas
- **Recreation** Water sports, racket sports
- **Business Centre** Equipped offices with support executive services

Food and Beverage Division

The Food and Beverage Division has a set of departments responsible for the sale of food and beverage. These departments are:

- **Restaurants** Coffee shop, specialty restaurant, grill room, night club, etc.
- **Kitchens** Includes central and satellite kitchens
- **Kitchen Stewarding** Kitchen cleaning, dish washing, pot washing
- **Bars** Central bars and dispense bars
- **Room Service** Food and beverage service to guest rooms and offices
- **Banquets** Indoor and outdoor catering for functions and meetings
- **Delicatessen** Shop that sells forced meats
- **Pastry Shop** Sells confectionaries
- **Bakery Shop** Sells assorted breads, pies and muffins

Staff Departments

Staff departments are non-revenue departments that create and support sales.

- **Human Resources** Recruitment, orientation, training, and compensation
- **Sales and Marketing** Advertising, promotion, marketing and selling
- **Finance and Accounting** Financial management, accounting, F&B controls, purchasing, receiving, storing, MIS and audit
- **Information Technology** Installation of hardware, software, mainframe servers, cabling, networking and troubleshooting
- **Security** Guest, employee and hotel security, fire prevention and fire fighting

The organisation structure then puts these divisions and departments into a relationship of communication and responsibility given in the management organisation chart overleaf in Fig. 3.1. It is representative only, and can be modified according to the objectives and policies of each hotel.

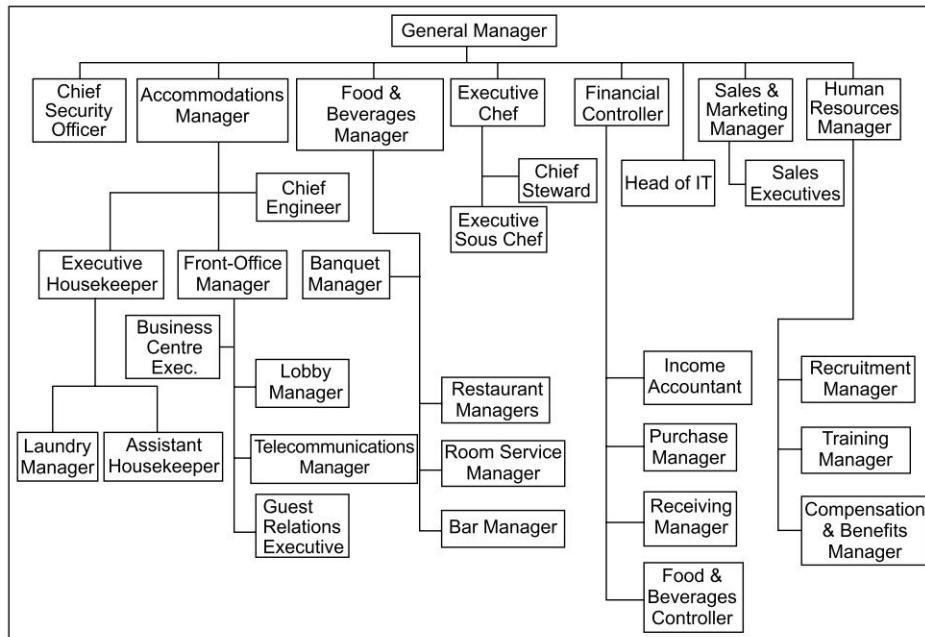


Fig. 3.1 Management Organisation Chart of a Large Hotel

▲ SMALL HOTEL ORGANISATION STRUCTURE

Smaller hotels have similar functions as larger hotels, executed by fewer people with multiple skills. For example:

1. The General Manager takes on the roles of human resources manager and sales manager in addition to the operations responsibilities.
2. The Front Office Supervisor oversees the front desk operations as well as lobby activities.
3. The Dining Room Supervisor oversees the dining room operations and bar. Small operations would have limited restaurant options, possibly only a dining room that serves at all meal times. It is possible that the dining room has a dispensing bar to provide drinks eliminating the need for a formal bar.
4. The Housekeeper takes on the roles of the floor supervisors or the housekeeping control desk supervisor.
5. The Accountant takes over the income and payable responsibilities in addition to producing the statutory requirements such as Profit and Loss Statements and Balance Sheets.
6. The Purchase Clerk also performs the receiving and store functions. Though this is strictly not ideal in terms of food and beverage control, the operations are small enough for direct supervision and control of the General Manager.
7. The Food and Beverage Cost Clerk does all the costing functions.
8. The Engineering Supervisor is multiskilled to troubleshoot engineering problems. However, any operation requires specialists like air-conditioning and heating mechanics and plumbers.
9. Most other services such as laundry, horticulture, civil works, etc. are outsourced.

The management organisation chart in Fig. 3.2 shows how the structure of a small hotel is pruned to fit limited payroll budgets. We see that job positions are held by lower-titled positions to keep down the costs of payroll.

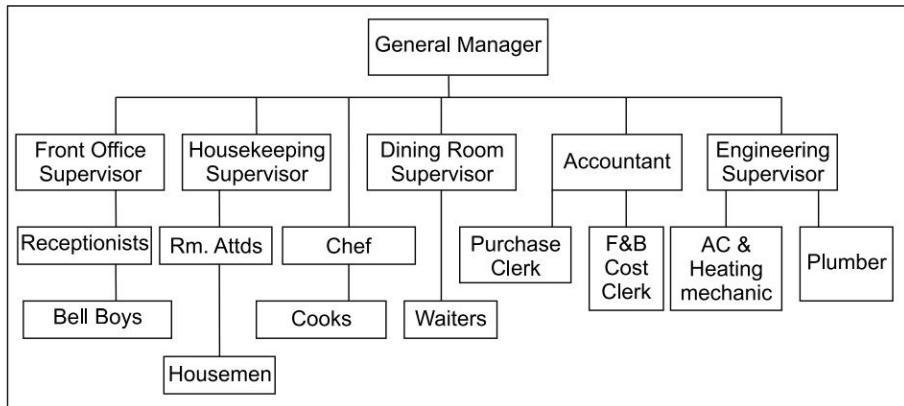


Fig. 3.2 Management Organisation Chart of a Small Hotel

Now let us look at each division and department in detail.

▲ ACCOMMODATIONS DIVISION

Front Office

The Front Office Department has the following functions:

- To reserve rooms
- To register guests into the hotel
- To provide information to guests during their stay
- To maintain their master bills

Their prime responsibility is to sell rooms achieving budgeted revenue targets. The principal job positions are:

Front Office Manager: Oversees the front office and lobby. He translates company policies and procedures in practice in the department.

Front Office Supervisor: Oversees a shift in twenty-four hour front office operation.

Registration Agent: The person who registers guests into the hotel and allots rooms to them.

Reservation Agent: Makes room reservations and controls the supply of rooms for sale.

Front Office Cashier: Maintains the guest folios (bills) and receives payment when guests check out. He functionally comes under the Accounts Department, but administratively coordinates closely with the front office.



Uniformed Services

The front office is supported by the uniformed services based in the lobby. Their main functions are:

- To provide porter services to handle guest baggage.
- To provide a lobby manager's desk for round-the-clock management contact.
- To provide transportation services.
- To provide concierge assistance for external facilitation.
- To provide valet-parking services.
- To administer a left-luggage facility.

The principal job positions are:

Lobby Manager: Oversees lobby operations and guest coordination services in a shift.

Concierge: Provides information and facilitation to in-house guests and visitors; handles guest and hotel mail; and provides the messaging services.

Senior Bell Captain: Responsible for all guest baggage handling services through bell captains.

Bell Captain: Oversees guest baggage services in a shift through a team of bell boys.

Bell Boys: Primarily handle guest baggage.

Transportation Supervisor: Responsible for all hotel-owned transport and services provided by drivers. These include airport transfers, staff pick-up and city tours.

Doorman: Receives guests at the main portal and provides security information to Security Department. He also ensures traffic control in the hotel porch.

Valets: Provide car parking services to the visitors of the hotel.

Note: The Housekeeping coordinates closely with the Front Office for the preparation of guest rooms for sale through teams of floor supervisors and room attendants. The public area section cleans all front office and lobby areas while the florist provides floral arrangements. Details are given in subsequent lessons.

Business Centre

The business centre is a viable revenue-generating operation nowadays, in a business hotel. It is considered a minor operating department under the accommodations division. They lease office space to visiting business persons on a daily basis. The business centre provides the following services:

- Office space on hire
- Reception services
- Secretarial services
- Office automation
- Meeting rooms and board rooms
- Broadband computer connections and telecommunication services



The typical staff would include:

Business Centre Executive: Responsible for business development and centre coordination.

Receptionist: Books offices, handles appointments and handles the billing.

Secretaries: They provide the secretarial services to visiting business persons.

Note: Business executives who live on executive floors of the hotel have free access to a business lounge which has an exclusive ambience. The hotel provides special food and beverage service at these lounges. Housekeeping cleans both the business centre and business lounge.

Housekeeping

This department is responsible for the cleanliness, maintenance and the aesthetic standard of the hotel. Its primary functions are:

- To clean guest rooms for sale
- To clean public areas
- To maintain and provide laundered employee uniforms
- To maintain and provide laundered guest room and restaurant linen
- To decorate the hotel with fresh and dried flower arrangements
- To maintain the landscapes and gardens
- To administer the lost and found articles of guests



Typical job positions are:

Executive Housekeeper: Translates the policies, procedures and standards of the hotel in the housekeeping operations.

Assistant Housekeepers: Assists the Executive Housekeeper in managing employees in a shift.

Floor Supervisors: Oversees the standards of cleanliness on a guest floor.

Linen and Uniform Supervisor: Maintains the large inventories of uniforms and linen ensuring that they are clean and fresh for issue.

Public Area Supervisor: Oversees all cleaning schedules in public areas.

Night Supervisor: Oversees the night cleaning operations.

Control Desk Supervisors: Maintains communication with housekeeping personnel spread across the hotel.

Room Attendants: Clean a set of allotted rooms.

Housmen: Perform hardy cleaning tasks in guest floors and public areas.

Horticulturist: Oversees the landscapes and gardens.

Gardeners: Maintain the gardens and the supply of fresh flowers.

Florist: Provides the hotel with fresh and dried flower arrangements.

Laundry Manager:

Oversees the laundry operations that dry-clean, wash and press the house linen and garments of guests and staff.

Laundry Operators:

Are crews of washermen, dry-cleaners, pressmen, valets, spotters, and markers who identify guest laundry.

Health Club & Recreation Centre**Health Club**

A health club is responsible for all health and recreational activities.

These include:

1. Swimming pool
2. Children's pool
3. Gymnasium for men and women
4. Massage rooms
5. Turkish baths
6. Saunas and Jacuzzis
7. Spas
8. Yoga rooms
9. Aerobic rooms



Sometimes, the operations are so large that health and recreation are segregated—the health club is under a Health Club manager, while recreation is supervised by a Recreation Supervisor. Typical jobs include:

Health Club Manager: Responsible for the organisation and control of all health club activities.

Masseurs and Masseuses: For massage of men and women. There are variations in massages such as Thai massages, Kerala massages, etc.

Yoga Instructors: Qualified to give yogic instructions.

Life Guards: For swimming pool safety.

Gym Instructor: Supervises and maintains the gym independently for men and women, and gives specialist counsel on muscle building and weight loss.

Aerobic Instructor: One who provides aerobic instruction for health and fitness to guests.

Receptionist-cum-Cashier: Who registers guests and raises bills for the use of facilities. She would perhaps also maintain membership cards if the facility is open to the local populace.

Note: While the poolside is cleaned by the Housekeeping, the swimming pool itself is maintained and cleaned by the Engineering department. Health club areas are cleaned by the Housekeeping.

Recreation

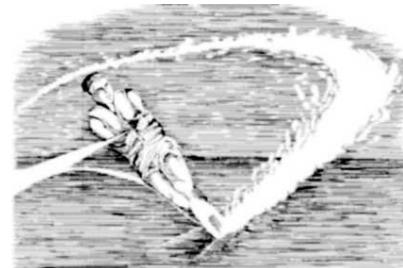
Recreational facilities in a hotel can include:

1. Squash courts
2. Tennis courts

3. Badminton courts
4. Parasailing
5. Jet skis
6. Motor boats
7. Paddle boats
8. Surfing

Typical jobs include:

Recreation Supervisor: Manages/oversees all recreational activities including the purchase of sports equipment, its safe storage, maintenance and repair of courts and revenue generation campaigns.



Coaches: There may be separate coaches for tennis, squash, badminton, etc. There are separate coaches for water sports like parasailing, jet skis and surfing.

Life Guards: Provides safety at water sport centres like beaches, lakes, rivers and waterfalls.

Receptionist-cum-Cashier: Generates billing records and ensures due payment. Controls all memberships.

Note: The cleaning of beach fronts is a challenge which requires different skills including the ability to work in and tackle sand.

Beauty Salon

A beauty salon has become increasingly essential in most of the superior hotels. This is because of the emergence of women travellers as a significant market segment. Women have pervaded all professions especially business. Hotels often lease space to beauticians who run the business. Many hotels want to ensure standards and have their captive beauty facility. Beauty salon personnel include:

Beautician: She is qualified in the subject and also supervises operations.

Hair stylists: Specialists on hair cuts, perms, trims, styles, etc.

Manicurists: Experts on maintaining good hand and feet nails.

Waxing specialists: These are experts in unwanted hair removal.

Cashier: Raises bills and receives payments.



Barber Shop

An extension to the beauty salon for women, is the barber shop for men. Men nowadays have become very fashion conscious and are influenced by superstars and the television. The barber is a stylist, and is as accomplished as the beautician. A large hotel can earn well from such a facility. The people that are found in the barber shop are:

Hairstylists: Crops and style the hair to latest fashions.

Manicurists: Attends to finger nails and toe nails.

Flower Shop

This minor revenue outlet falls under the purview of housekeeping. A hotel with plenty of landscaped gardens, nurseries and greenhouses use this source for additional revenue. Resident guests require well-assembled bouquets for various occasions. The flower shop is manned by:

- **Florist:** Organises the flower shop. She also decorates the hotel with dried and fresh flower arrangements.
- **Assistant:** Supports the florist in flower arrangements by cutting and pruning flower arrangements.
- **Gardeners:** Grow the flowers.



Engineering and Maintenance

This department is responsible for the following services:

- Air-conditioning (or heating)
- Exhaust systems
- Boilers for providing hot water (and steam where applicable) for guest rooms, kitchens, and laundries
- Lighting including the use of solar energy and biogas
- Mechanical works including maintenance of mechanical equipment
- Electrical works including managing the electricity substation
- Carpentry
- Electronic systems which includes sound systems and channel music, electronic panels, etc.
- Civil works including water supply, construction, masonry work, and painting, waste management
- Plumbing
- Firefighting system including water reservoirs, fire alarm systems, and firefighting systems. They conduct fire drills periodically.



Chief Engineer: A man qualified and experienced to lead a team of engineers.

Mechanical Engineer: Responsible for all mechanical works like elevators, escalators, mechanical equipment, etc. He has a workshop where mechanics repair and maintain things.

Civil Engineer: Responsible for all building and allied services. In addition to carpentry, masonry, and plumbing, he is also responsible for all water treatment and sewage systems.

Electrical Engineer: Responsible for all electrical systems like power and lighting fed by substations to the building. He has the responsibility for the air-conditioning and refrigeration.

Electronics Engineer: Responsible for all electronic equipment including networked personal computers, electronic engineering control panels, security systems, fire alarm systems, audio-visual systems, etc.

Note: The Engineering Department maintains the housekeeping equipment, furniture and fixtures used in housekeeping operations. It also provides the central heating or air-conditioning as well as lighting systems of the department.

▲ STAFF DEPARTMENTS

Staff departments are those that support revenue-generating activity of the hotel.

Finance and Accounts

The Finance and Accounts Department is responsible for two major activities:

1. **Finance**—responsible for raising funds and multiplying profits through innovative investments. It is because of this that the traditional accountant has been retitled as the Financial Controller.

2. **Accounts**—monitors the revenues and expenditures of the hotel.

They ensure that cash flows are available for daily operations through the General Cashier. The Accounts Section prepares the statutory Balance Sheets and Profit and Loss Statements for the hotel investors. The Accounts Section has the following important professionals:

- **Financial Controller:** Creates the finance and accounting policies and procedures and ensures that they are followed.
- **Financial Analysts:** Manages funds.
- **The Income Accountant:** Monitors all the cash and credit receivables from guests.
- **City Ledger Clerk:** Monitors all credit receivables.
- **Accounts Payable Clerk:** Pays all creditors including contractors and suppliers.
- **Salaries and Wages Clerk:** Computes monthly staff salaries and deductions.
- **Food & Beverage Controller:** Costs all food and beverages consumed and food outlets. He is responsible for the inventories of all stores including the General Stores—for items like stationery and general supplies; the Food Stores—for food items with longer shelf lives like proprietary sauces, packaged peanuts, etc.; Beverage Stores—for supplies of spirits, beers and wines (such stores are often ‘bonded’ as they store imported beverages also); Perishable Stores—which are refrigerated for perishable food items like meats, poultry and vegetables; Engineering Stores—for engineering supplies; Housekeeping Stores—for supplies of linen, uniforms and draperies.
- **Purchase Supervisor:** For all purchases of the hotel from the market.
- **Receiving Supervisor:** For accepting all in-bound purchases by contractors.



Note: Housekeeping professionals lean on this department for the following things:

1. salaries and wages;
2. issue of supplies from stores;
3. approval of the annual housekeeping budget;
4. purchase of goods; and
5. audit.

This makes Finance and Accounting Department a key section of the hotel for the housekeeping operations.

Human Resources

The Human Resources Department is vital to any hotel operation as it is concerned with the very important resource—people. The department is responsible for the following:

- Recruitment and Selection
- Joining formalities
- Orientation and Socialisation
- Training and Development
- Compensation and Benefits
- Labour Relations
- Career Planning
- Rewards and Recognition
- Employee Welfare

Human Resources Department has the following professionals:

- **Human Resources Manager:** Provides the hotel with capable talent and ensures that the people hired are well trained and motivated to meet the organisational objectives.
- **Recruitment Executives:** Fill permanent and temporary vacancies.
- **Orientation and Socialisation Executives:** Orient newcomers.
- **Training Executives:** Develop skills and careers according to the standards set by the organisation.
- **Compensation and Benefits Executives:** Ensure that salaries and wages are kept competitive.
- **Labour Officer:** Manages union relations.

Note: The Human Resources Department selects and orients housekeeping professionals into the organisation. This Department sets the compensation package and pays salaries. Human Resources Department acts as a “friend, philosopher and guide” throughout the career of a person by offering professional counselling, career plans, and professional advancement. They maintain employee’s records during their career at the property.

Sales and Marketing

The Marketing Department creates the groundwork that results in sales. Its scope of activity includes:

- Advertisement in various media such as television, newspapers, trade magazines, etc.
- Sales promotions to attract guests in different seasons and festivities.
- Sales efforts to corporate houses, travel agents, tour operators and airlines for volume business.
- Co-ordination with the front-office to improve room occupancy.

Sales and Marketing Department has the following professionals:

- **Sales and Marketing Manager:** Alerts the management with the external changing environment through market research and market intelligence. He converts this into marketing plans that meet the revenue targets of the hotel.

- **Marketing Manager:** Coordinates with advertising agencies who prepare advertisement campaigns; brochures and sales kits; merchandising material for all revenue departments of the hotel; and special promotional campaigns. He will commission market research agencies to conduct guest surveys and competition analysis.
- **Sales Manager:** Conducts personal sales calls with his team of sales executives.
- **Sales Executives:** Their responsibilities may be distributed in two ways: (1) by geographical regions, or (2) by specialised clients such as travel agencies, airlines, corporate houses, diplomatic missions and government.

Information Technology

Hotels are leaning towards information technology to process information quickly to make important decisions. Departments are networked to access information that is important for their operational success. Progressive hotels have software systems that help them in the process. The IT Department is concerned with the following:

- Procuring and maintaining hardware (the computers and servers)
- Installing software
- Troubleshoot any user problems
- Network the departments to servers with lengthy cabling systems
- Train employees

The department is led by an IT Manager supported by specialists in hardware; software; cabling and troubleshooting.

Security

The concern for security has become very important in modern times in view of terrorist actions, fire, and theft. In most of the hotels, the Security Department reports directly to the General Manager. The security activities include:

- Surveillance
- Crowd management
- Traffic management within the hotel precincts
- Protection of hotel property
- Taking the lead in case of fire
- Intelligence work
- First aid
- Protection of hotel employees



The job positions in the Security Department are:

Chief Security Officer: To create and implement the security policies.

Security Officers: They are supervisors to oversee security concerns throughout the property with a team of security guards.

Security Guards: They are positioned at vital spots such as lobbies, guest floors, car parks, basements, entry and exit gates of the property, and staff entrances who provide safety to guests, employees, and hotel property.

Doorman: He is positioned at the hotel entrance to welcome guests. He also alerts the management of any suspicious or undesirable people who enter the property.

Key Terms



Organisation Structure	A framework that assigns responsibilities and channels of communication
Organisation Chart	Schematic depiction of relationships between jobs
Division	A grouping of related departments
Staff Departments	An independent activity that contributes to business departments that create and support sales generation
Minor Revenue Departments	Departments that generate lesser revenue for the hotel

Review Quiz



Fill in the Blanks

1. The division responsible for the sale of rooms is called _____.
2. The departments that create and support the generation of sales are called _____.
3. A schematic description of relationships between various job positions in an organisation is called an _____.
4. The Head of IT in a large property reports to _____.
5. The Chief Engineer reports to _____.
6. The Compensation and Benefits Manager reports to the _____.
7. The Manager Telecommunications reports to the _____.
8. The person responsible for all in-bound goods to the property is called _____.
9. The dining rooms supervisor of a small property reports to the _____.
10. Beverage stores come under the _____ department.

True or False

1. A hotel has four revenue-producing divisions.
2. Accommodations division is driven by the Front Office Department.
3. Front Office Department is supported by Telecommunications Department.
4. Information Technology is a Staff Department.
5. Smaller hotels have similar functions executed by fewer people with multiple skills.
6. The Guest Relations Executive reports to the Accommodations Manager.
7. The Laundry Manager reports to the executive housekeeper.
8. Horticultural teams report to the florist.
9. We find masseuses in beauty salons.
10. The F&B controller reports to the F&B manager.

4

Types of Rooms

Learning Objective



To help the reader learn the range of guest rooms that are available in hotels as he/she would be responsible for them as a housekeeping professional.

▲ INTRODUCTION

A housekeeping professional must be familiar with the rooms and should have knowledge of the rooms of the hotel available for sale. Housekeeping is responsible for cleaning and maintaining guest rooms and so this knowledge is essential for a housekeeping professional. The features in each room determine the time and guest supplies required to prepare a room for sale. Each hotel has a variety of rooms to meet the needs of guests. A single guest would like to stay in a single room which is more cost-effective for him, while a couple will find a double room more convenient.

A family may choose a suite to have more leg room for children to move around. A business executive may want a special suite to entertain privately or show off his financial status to his or her clients. Similarly, budget groups may be willing to share twin rooms, while upmarket groups may prefer single rooms. Guest needs are endless and their motives for booking a type of room may be varied.



▲ SIGNIFICANCE OF ROOMS

The sale of rooms contributes approximately 50 per cent or more to the total hotel revenue. In some lodging establishments, it could be the only source of revenue. A room ‘sale’ occurs when a

room is leased for occupation for 24 hours, at a predetermined cost. A room not sold on a particular day loses its opportunity to earn revenue for that day. Hence, rooms are referred to as ‘perishable’ commodities. The loss of sale can also result from the inefficiency of the housekeeping department to have a room ready when required. What does a room mean to a guest?

1. It means comfort: Hotel investors translate comfort in the following manner:

- Quality beds and mattresses
- Temperature control
- T.V. Entertainment
- Hot and cold water
- Attached bathrooms
- Soft linen

It is the responsibility of housekeeping to ensure that these comforts must be regularly maintained and in functioning order.

2. It means security: This need is translated in the following manner:

- A single door for entry and exit
- Double locks from inside
- Peep-holes
- Door chains
- Concealed electrical wires
- Secure connection of room equipment
- Fire detection system and sprinklers provide immediate response to a fire emergency
- Fire exit route plan behind the room door in case of an emergency
- Security personnel patrolling floors
- Entry into rooms by authorised personnel only

Housekeeping personnel should remain alert to unknown guests on a floor and contact the security in case of suspicion.

3. It means privacy: Privacy is provided by the following:

- Guest room windows are provided with curtains or blinds.
- Superior hotels have daylight sheer curtains and heavy curtains for the night.
- The Telephone Department and the Front Office are instructed to protect information of room numbers and guests staying in them from the external public.
- Authorised personnel that wish to enter a room have to announce themselves.

Housekeeping staff is trained to knock the door announcing themselves twice before entering the room.

4. It means convenience: A guest is provided with entertainment, food and beverage services, telephone services, etc. in the room. The housekeeping department provides the guest a house directory to access such conveniences.

5. It means cleanliness and hygiene: A room is the most personal area of a guest during his/her stay. The room must be clean and the bathroom made hygienic for the guest’s stay. This is a major factor that makes the guest to return. Housekeeping is responsible to clean and maintain all guest rooms.

6. A ‘Home Away from Home’: A hotel room provides a residence and address when a guest is travelling. They expect all the comfort and security of a home and are willing to pay for it.

▲ TYPES OF ROOMS

A typical hotel has the following types of rooms:

Adjacent Rooms:	Two rooms opposite each other across the corridor
Adjoining Rooms:	Two rooms that are besides each other
Cabana:	A room with a sofa-cum-bed ideally situated beside swimming pools or beaches
Connecting Room:	Two rooms with an interconnecting door
Double Room:	A room with one king-size double bed
Executive Room:	A room with additional features like Internet connection, computer points, mini bars, etc; specially designed for the business executive
Single Room:	A room with a single bed
Studio:	A room with a sofa-cum-bed
Triplet:	A double room with one extra rollaway cot
Twin Room:	A room with two single beds
Quad:	A room for four people fitted with twin beds and two rollaway beds
Queen:	A room with a queen-sized bed for single or double occupancy

Suites

Junior Suite:	A room with a seating parlour and a bed
Double Suite:	Two rooms, one serving as a living-cum-dining area and the other with a double bed
Duplex Suite:	Two suites on two floors with an interconnecting staircase
Executive Suite:	Suite specially fitted for business executives
Single Suite:	Two rooms, one serving as a living-cum-dining area and another with a single bed
Tourist Huts:	An independent suite detached from the main hotel. They will be found in resorts for greater privacy and exclusivity. Some suites have kitchenettes.
Chalets:	Independent homes for lease found in Switzerland

Review Quiz

Fill in the Blanks

1. A room with two single beds is called _____.
2. A suite on two floors is called _____.
3. A room with a double bed is called _____.
4. Cabanas are found at _____.
5. Independent homes for lease are called _____.
6. The purpose of concealed wiring in rooms is to provide _____.
7. A house directory provides access to _____.
8. A couple would select a _____ room.
9. A family would prefer a _____.
10. Independent homes for lease in Switzerland are called _____.



Part-2

ORGANISATION OF HOUSEKEEPING DEPARTMENT

5

Layout of the Housekeeping Department

Learning Objective



To familiarise the reader with a typical layout of the Housekeeping Department so as to fulfill the various functions various functions of the department.

▲ INTRODUCTION

There is no ideal or universal model for the layout of a housekeeping department. The layout differs in hotels based upon the size and the limitations of physical space. However, the layouts must respond to certain considerations:

- The number of guest rooms determines the space required to maintain inventories of room linen and supplies.
- The number of function rooms determines the amount of linen to be maintained.
- The number of public area facilities and the anticipated volume of business determine the amount of restaurant linen to be maintained.
- Whether the hotel decided to outsource some services like landscaping, flower arrangements, tailoring, upholstery, laundry, etc. to be able to optimally utilise space.
- The number of total employees for the amount of uniform inventories that have to be maintained.

Hotel space is valuable and used mostly to generate revenue. An investor makes decisions whether to allot space to revenue-generating activities or to non-revenue activities such as housekeeping. The investor allocates unattractive locations in the building for non-revenue

activities. It is for this reason that the housekeeping department is located in the basement termed as 'backhouse' areas.

▲ HOUSEKEEPING DESIGN FACTORS

There are a few considerations to be kept in mind when planning housekeeping facilities:

- (a) It must be accessible to all employees of the hotel as they visit the uniform room for exchanging uniforms. Food and beverage personnel and floor supervisors visit the linen room for exchanging linen.
- (b) The location must be away from guest view and traffic.
- (c) The floors must be strong for heavy equipment such as laundry machines.
- (d) The sound and vibration of equipment should not disturb guests.
- (e) Effective climate control is necessary. Extreme temperatures ruin textiles and equipment.
- (f) Housekeeping corridors must be spacious for mobile equipment and staff traffic, especially at exchange counters of the uniform and linen rooms.
- (g) Adequate storage to stock volumes of linen, uniforms, cleaning detergents, operational equipment, lost and found items, toxic chemicals, etc.
- (h) Utilities such as power, fuel, water and steam connections are required for housekeeping and laundry equipment. The utility connections should be easily accessible and concealed for safety.
- (i) The facility design must be so that it is easy to keep the facility safe and sanitised. Cleaning crews must have access to every corner of the facility especially under heavy equipment.
- (j) The layout should match the type of building construction. Skyscrapers, for instance, require efficient service elevators while chalet-type resort properties may require sturdy access roads to roll trolleys and carts.
- (k) Distribution points for linen may vary. Busy hotels may have floor pantries, while chalet-type resort properties may need service huts to serve a given number of chalets.
- (l) Physical fatigue is caused by too much movement, lack of climate control and carrying heavy loads. The physical layout should take productivity of staff into account while planning the facility.
- (m) Lighting must be bright in linen and uniform rooms so that stains and damages can be spotted.
- (n) Every government prescribes safety codes especially where people work. The codes prescribe adequate methods of waste disposal, recycling of materials like bottles, newspapers and cans, sanitation schedules, preventive maintenance schedule, etc.

▲ LAYOUT AND HOUSEKEEPING FACILITIES

Figure 5.1 gives the layout of a Housekeeping Department. It is representative only. It portrays the basic facilities required by the Housekeeping Department.

Layout of the Housekeeping Department

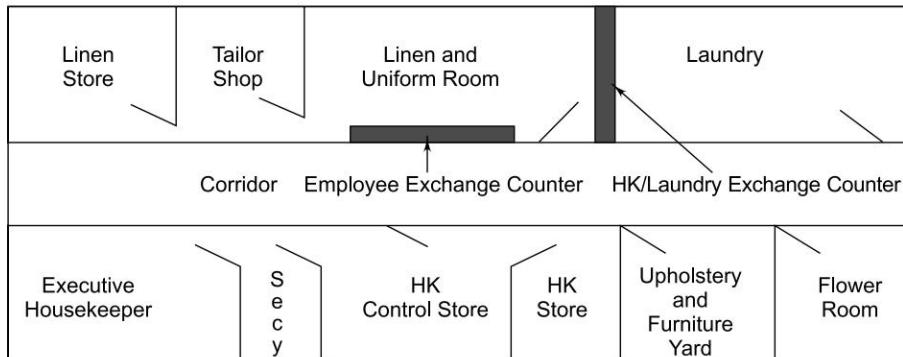


Fig. 5.1 Housekeeping Layout

Let us look at each housekeeping layout component in detail:

Housekeeper's Office

Its main features are:

- It is the main administration centre for the department.
- It must be an independent cabin for silence and privacy.
- It is glass-panelled so as to give the Housekeeper a view of what is happening outside her office.
- The office is preceded by a cabin for the secretary who would control movement into the Housekeeper's office.



Control Desk Room

Its main features are:

- It is the main communication centre where relevant housekeeping information is sent and received.
- It is the nerve centre for co-ordination with the front office, banquets, etc.
- The room has a desk and a chair, preferably more than one telephone, and a computer terminal for information storage and control.
- It should have a large notice board to display essential information for the staff.
- The Desk Control Room is the point where all staff report for duty and check out at the end of duty. It adjoins the Housekeeper's Office.



Lost and Found Section

Its main features are:

- It is a cupboard in the Control Desk Room to store misplaced guest belongings that may be claimed later.

- It is away from thoroughfare.
- The area is secure, cool, and dry.

The Linen Room

This is where current linen is stored for issue and receipt. Its main features are:

- The room is well lit, large and airy, and free from heat and humidity.
- It has adequate shelves to stack linen and secure it from pilferage.
- The linen room has a counter for the exchange of linen.
- The linen room must adjoin the in-house laundry for smooth and speedy exchange of fresh and soiled linen and uniforms.
- It is accessible only to authorised persons.
- It must have only one entry/exit door for security.

(See Lesson 17, 'The Linen and the Uniform Rooms' for more details.)

The Uniform Room

This room stocks the uniforms in current circulation. It is possible that smaller hotels may choose to combine this room with the linen room as shown in Fig. 5.1. The volume of uniforms in circulation determines whether to have an independent uniform room or not. The features of a Uniform Room are:

- Hanging racks as most uniforms are best maintained when hung.
- Shelves for regular hardy uniforms like dungarees, chefs' jackets, etc.
- Cupboards for small accessories like gloves, ties, bows, caps, etc.
- Exchange counter for employees who come to collect and deposit their uniforms.
- Exchange counter with the in-house laundry.
- It has only one entry/exit door for security.

Housekeeping Store

The store stocks materials for linen and uniforms. Ideally, the stock maintained should be enough to replenish once all over the whole hotel. However, due to budgetary constraints the hotel may stock less. Stocks in the store are only touched when the linen or uniforms in circulation fall short due to damage or loss.

The main features of the store are:

- The room should be cool and dry.
- It is provided with shelves to stock the linen and materials. Larger hotels may have an independent store for linen and another for uniforms, based on the volume of materials in circulation and the hotel's policy to stock such large numbers.
- It has only one entry/exit door for security.

Heavy Equipment Store

This is a store to stock bulky housekeeping equipment like vacuum cleaners, carpet shampoo machines, ladders for chandelier and window cleaning, etc. Its main features are:

- The room should be clean and dry.
- It is securely locked to prevent pilferage or theft, as they constitute substantial capital investment.
- It has only one entry/exit door for security.

Tailor Room

This room is for in-house full-time tailors who stitch and mend damaged linen and uniforms. Its features are:

- The room has sewing machines at machining stations based on the number of tailors employed.
- It has shelves and cupboards to store materials used for uniforms.
- It is accessible only to tailors and uniform room personnel.
- It is a clean and dry place.

Smaller hotels may outsource this function to reliable tailors in the city to save space and recurrent labour costs.



Upholstery and Furniture Yard

This is a space provided to store damaged upholstered furniture. Tailors specialised in re-upholstery work in this yard. Since furniture takes space, it requires adequate space to store them.

The Floor Linen Room (Pantry)

Each guest floor has a floor linen room to keep a supply of linen, guest supplies, and cleaning supplies to service the rooms on a floor. Its features are:

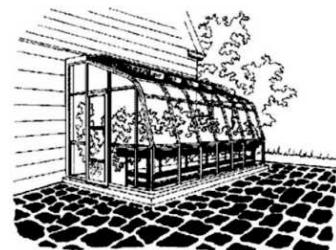
- It is the housekeeping nerve centre for the floor.
- It is away from guest view situated at the end of floors or off the foyers of service elevators.
- It maintains a complete turnover of fresh linen to service all rooms on the floor.
- It is equipped with shelves and cupboards; hampers and a sink with a water supply for washing glasses; etc.

(See Lesson 9, 'The Floor Pantry' for more details.)

Flower Room

This room is used by the in-house florist who prepares flower arrangements for display at various parts of the hotel. Flowers beautify rooms and public areas. They are supplied to restaurants for table decoration and buffet displays. Its features are:

- The room is air-conditioned to keep the flowers fresh.
- It has work tables to assemble the flower arrangements.
- It has a tap with running water and a sink.



Greenhouse

This is an external facility to grow exotic plants that need special climatic conditions. Horticulture comes under the housekeeping and therefore, this facility is provided by the housekeeper. Its features are:

- It is an area covered in polythene or glass.
- It has a water source to water the plants.

Horticulture Equipment Store

There are a number of garden tools such as lawn mowers, spades, rakes, pots etc that are essential for gardening operations. These need to be stored safely. The store is an external facility easily accessible to gardeners. The size of the store increases as the area of landscaping increases.



Key Terms

Control Desk	The communications centre of housekeeping
Flower Shop	The place where fresh flowers are transformed into arrangements for the hotel and guests
Greenhouse	The place where exotic plants are nurtured under certain climatic conditions
Housekeeper's Office	The main administrative centre of the department
Layout	A schematic design of facilities
Lost & Found	The section where misplaced guest belongings are stored
Linen Room	The place where all house linen in circulation are stored and issued
Uniform Room	The place where all staff uniforms in circulation are stored and issued

Review Quiz



True or False

1. In considering layouts, the Housekeeper must know the volume of business expected.
2. Housekeepers outsource services to save space.
3. Housekeeping is located at prime sites of a property.
4. The Housekeeping Department must be accessible to all employees.
5. Housekeeping must be in full view of guests.
6. The layout must be easily accessible to cleaning crews.
7. The layout must match the type of building construction.
8. The layout should have features of effective climate control.
9. The Housekeeper has an independent cabin for privacy.
10. The Lost and Found section is found in the Linen Store.

6

Organisation of the Housekeeping Department

Learning Objective



To help the reader understand

- (a) how the housekeeping function is organised in a typical hotel; and
- (b) the brief roles of key people in housekeeping.

▲ INTRODUCTION

Housekeeping responsibilities embrace the entire hotel. Naturally, the largest workforce of the hotel belongs to the Housekeeping Department. Figures 6.1 and 6.2 give the housekeeping organisation charts of a large and small property.

▲ RESPONSIBILITIES OF HOUSEKEEPING

We observe from the charts that Housekeeping has responsibility of six broad areas.

1. The cleaning of guest rooms
2. The cleaning of public areas
3. The upkeep and exchange of linen and uniforms
4. The maintenance of external landscapes and gardens as well as internal flower arrangements
5. The management of the laundry
6. Communications through the Control Desk

These areas need human resources to carry out the work. Each area needs an expert to fulfil the responsibility of tasks involved. Let us see briefly the responsibilities of each one of them.

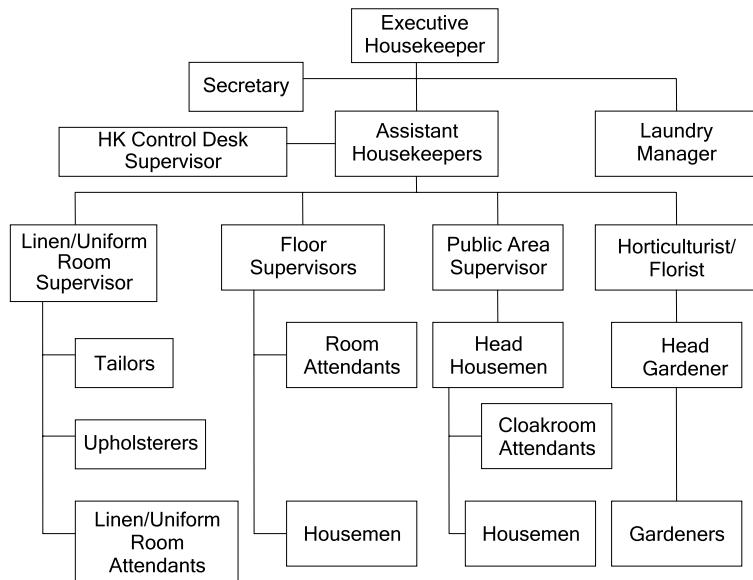


Fig. 6.1 Housekeeping Organisation Chart of a Large Property

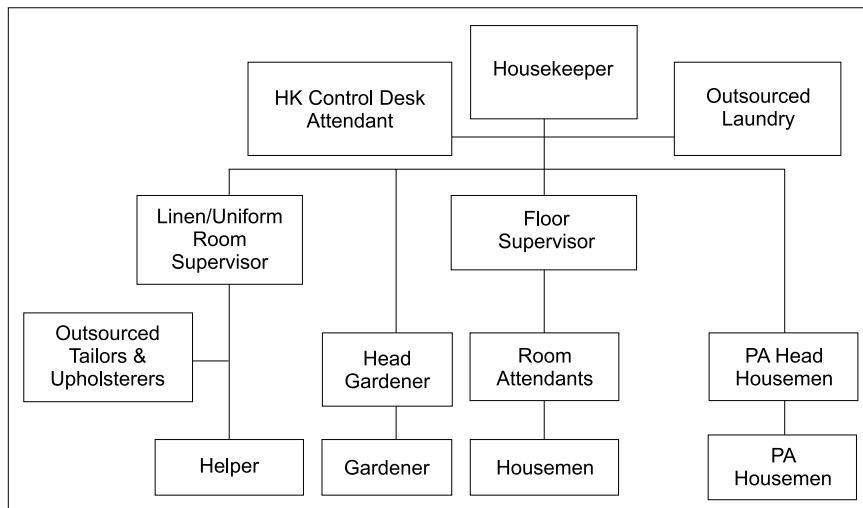


Fig. 6.2 Housekeeping Organisation Chart of a Small Property

Executive Housekeeper

- Is the head of housekeeping
- Is responsible for translating hotel policies, procedures, and standards into housekeeping operations.

- Is normally a woman's role and part of the middle-management team.
- She represents the department at the General Manager's meetings.
- Ensures that all the resources made available to her are effectively utilised.

Assistant Housekeeper

- Heads a shift in a twenty-four hour housekeeping service.
- Explains the Executive Housekeeper's policies, procedures, and standards to all the housekeeping supervisors and ensures that they are actualised at the operational level.
- Substitutes the Housekeeper in her absence.
- Performs some administrative functions.

Floor Supervisor

- Directs the cleaning and maintenance of guest rooms on allotted floors.
- Controls the resources on the floor which include room attendants and housemen; bed and bath linen; guest and room amenities; and cleaning equipment and detergents.
- Responsible for the cleaning and maintenance of guest rooms as per policies, procedures, and standards of the establishment.
- Supervises the exchange of floor linen with the laundry.
- Ensures the proper storage of linen in floor pantries.
- Ensures that the supplies are readily at hand and requisitions them from stores in case of any shortfalls.
- Give feedback to the front office on the occupancy status of guest rooms in each shift as a measure of controlling room sales and availability.

Control Desk Supervisor

- Co-ordinates communication with housekeeping personnel spread to all parts of the hotel.
- Co-ordinates with the Maintenance Department to ensure that all maintenance requests are attended to.
- Co-ordinates with the Front Office to take over departure rooms for cleaning and to release cleaned rooms.
- The Control Desk is manned in all shifts as it is the lifeline for all housekeeping staff.
- Controls lost and found procedures.
- Performs some administrative functions.

Room Attendant

This is a common title for both men and women. Women room attendants are also called chambermaids, housemaids, or room maids.

- Room attendants are responsible for cleaning and maintaining allotted guest rooms as per set procedures and standards.
- They are the eyes and ears of the security team to report any untoward incidents.
- They ensure the privacy of guests at all times.
- They alert the concerned department of any maintenance and engineering requirements in the room.

Housemen

They are male cleaning personnel allotted to rooms and public areas to manage heavy cleaning duties. Their duties include

- Moving heavy furniture.
- Vacuuming long corridors of carpet.
- Helping in the exchange of linen from floors because the sheer volume requires strong hands.
- Cleaning public area spaces and furniture.
- Cleaning windows.

Linen Room Supervisor

- Co-ordinates the exchange of soiled linen for fresh ones with a team of linen attendants.
- Is the custodian of the linen asset and ensures their security.
- Maintains proper storage conditions to minimise loss due to damage and theft.
- Works closely with the laundry for the supply of clean linen.

Uniform Room Supervisor

- Is responsible for keeping uniforms in safe storage conditions.
- Issues laundered uniforms to hotel staff against soiled ones.
- Is assisted by a team of uniform room attendants and tailors.
- Co-ordinates closely with the laundry for washing and dry-cleaning schedules to keep constant supply of fresh uniforms.

Tailors/Upholsterers

They mend uniforms, linen and upholstery to give them longer life. Some hotels may have the tailors stitch uniforms in-house. Smaller properties may outsource this activity.

Public Area Supervisor

He ensures the cleanliness, maintenance and aesthetic upkeep of all public areas like lobbies, restaurants, banquets space, etc. with a team of housemen. His area of control is very large and he has to be energetic to give close supervision to every public area.

Horticulturist

He is responsible for the upkeep of all landscapes and gardens with a team of gardeners based on the area. The task becomes more challenging when landscapes include waterways, fountains, waterfalls, rockeries, etc.

Florist

He/she is responsible for all internal flower arrangements for guest rooms, public areas, banquet, buffets, etc. He/she may be given an additional charge of maintaining a florist shop for sale of flowers and bouquets to resident guests and the public.

Gardener

He is responsible for the upkeep of an allotted area of a landscape. He may be required to maintain internal plants and roof gardens also, where required.

Laundry Manager

Normally a male, he has a large brigade of washermen, dry cleaners, ironers, etc. (discussed in detail in Part 10, “Laundry Services”).

Review Quiz

True or False



1. A small property has an in-house laundry.
2. A small hotel retains full-time tailors and upholsterers.
3. One of the main functions of housekeeping is communications with housekeeping staff.
4. Housekeeping maintains the fire safety systems.
5. A horticulturist is an important member of a small property.
6. The florist sells flowers to guests.
7. The Linen Supervisor is the custodian of linen assets.
8. The Uniform Room Supervisor ensures proper storage conditions.
9. Assistant housekeepers head a shift.
10. Assistant housekeepers translate policies and procedure into practice on a guest floor.

Competencies of a Housekeeping Professional

Learning Objective



To help the reader understand the competencies required for housekeeping professionals so that he/she can incorporate and develop them in his/her personality before entering the hotel industry.

▲ INTRODUCTION

Competencies are a set of behavioural traits and technical abilities that are suitable for a job. While the new technical abilities are covered extensively in the section of “Introduction” titled “*The New Housekeeping Professional*” (readers are urged to read it along with this lesson), we shall look at behavioural sets required. Preceding lessons have shown that the housekeeping professional has changed dramatically and is empowered with more responsibilities. To fulfil them, certain behaviour traits are essential to complement knowledge and skills. Recruiters give importance to competencies when hiring housekeeping professionals. Here are few competencies of which some are age old and some new in keeping with the times.

▲ COMPETENCIES

Smile!

Many of us may have forgotten how we look when we smile. Many have even forgotten to smile! Yet it is the most enduring competency required of hotel professionals. As simple as it may seem, it is the most effective way of dealing with guests. A smile gets a smile in response. It immediately breaks down barriers of fatigue, low spirits, doubt, anxiety, etc. Recruiters look for this competency at

the time of interview. It is recommended that housekeeping professionals smile in front of the mirror and assess their competency in it. Keeping a smile, while speaking on the telephone, is a powerful way to convey tone and intention to guests and colleagues who judge the caller by the voice. We must not forget that housekeeping personnel are in direct contact with guests in guest rooms, on the floor and in public areas. While care is taken to be as unobtrusive to guests as possible, contact with them is inevitable.



Grooming and Hygiene

Grooming is an important feature of a hotel professional. The room attendant, floor supervisor, houseman, public area personnel and cloak room attendants have face-to-face contact with guests of the hotel. He, therefore, carries with himself the image of the property. A well-groomed housekeeping member represents qualities of hygiene, professionalism, management style, reliability, etc.

Some Tips for a Male Housekeeping Professional

1. Hair should be cut close.
2. The uniform should be spotless and well ironed. A tight or oversized uniform should be avoided as it gives a sloppy appearance.
3. Nails should be well manicured and hands absolutely clean. This is important especially since housekeeping personnel deal with the most intimate part of the guest's stay—the room.
4. Staff must guard against body odours or cheap perfumes. The market has some wonderful anti-perspirants.
5. Shoes should always be polished, and of a conservative style.
6. A close shave is necessary before starting duty. Stubbles of a beard or moustache should be avoided as they could look uncomely.
7. Bad breath could be nauseating to a guest since a houseman could speak to the guest at close proximity.
8. Uniforms must be crisply ironed and clean.



Some Tips for a Female Housekeeping Professional

1. The elastic hair band should always be clean.
2. High heels could be physically strenuous to the women as they have to be on their feet for a complete shift. Flat shoes with sturdy heels are advisable.
3. Stockings should be clean.
4. It is preferred for them to wear a light make-up to project a professional working image.
5. Excessive jewellery should be avoided.
6. A very strong perfume could leave its presence in a room. Some guests could feel nauseated. Fresh light cologne is preferable.
7. Uniforms must be crisply ironed and clean.



Basic Etiquettes

The hotel business is a social business. All front/line personnel are required to have the ability to communicate effectively with certain manners and etiquettes associated to a good host.

The basic etiquettes that a housekeeping member should exhibit are to:

1. Smile and attend to guests as soon as they approach them. Acknowledge their presence by wishing them the time of the day.
2. Recognise guests—Recognition is a powerful tool to use for regular guests. The use of their name gives them importance and a feeling of belonging.
3. Be polite to guests by frequently using terms such as “Thank you”, “Please”, “May I help you?”, “Excuse me”, “Pardon me”, etc.
4. Avoid mannerisms such as touching the hair, scratching oneself, picking the nose, etc.
5. Stand erect at all times.
6. Listen carefully to guest needs. Note down their requests and room number.
7. Assist guests wherever possible especially in providing them information about hotel services. This requires thorough knowledge of hotel services. Take action on the request immediately.
8. Talk softly.
9. Avoid arguing with service staff and guests on the floors and public areas.
10. Carry pencils in the pockets and not behind ears or clipped in front of the uniform.
11. Desist from chewing gum or beetle nut.
12. Enter and leave the floor through the service door only.
13. Shut the doors quietly.

Orderliness

Guests evaluate a property by how orderly the hotel personnel are. They observe whether the maid's carts are kept clean and in an orderly fashion. Corridors must be kept clean and free from litter.

1. Keep all linen and supplies in the maid's cart in an orderly manner.
2. Ensure that flower displays in rooms and floor foyers are fresh and properly arranged. Contact the florist if necessary.
3. Keep the access door to the service landings closed at all times. Most properties install a swing door with a peep window.
4. Floor foyer telephone tables must be kept clean at all times. A handy duster is helpful to keep the counter tops clean and polished.
5. Ensure that cigarette urns in the foyer are cleared of cigarette butts regularly.
6. Garbage hampers are essential features of maid's carts and garbage chutes are important in service landings.

Teamwork

Teams have become the cornerstones of service operations. A poor team performance can severely damage the establishment's reputation, while superior team performance directly enhances it. Teamwork is one of the essential competencies at the time of recruitment. Results are the responsibility of the entire team and not the team leader alone. Team dynamics have changed over the years. Let us understand the anatomy of teamwork.

What is a Team?

A team is a small group of people, who rely on each other to achieve a common goal.

No one person can deliver any goals. It takes a team with complimentary skills to deliver results and hold themselves responsible for a success or failure.



Why should we have Teams?

Teams can meet significant performance challenges. They have a common purpose and are able to assist when a team member is slow. They harness the complimentary skills of team members and have trust in their competency. They can be an influence on each other to be ethical, disciplined, and motivating.

Who is the Team in a Housekeeping Operation?

The direct teams are the teams of the floor supervisors with their coterie of room attendants and housemen and the team of the Public Area Supervisor with her team of housemen; and the linen/uniform supervisor with her team of attendants and helpers. The indirect teams are the teams of the head gardener comprising gardeners; maintenance personnel who rectify engineering problems; and the laundry who supplies fresh linen and uniforms; etc. The performance of indirect teams is crucial to the success of direct teams.

What is the Team Leader's Role?

The team leader's role is to build commitment to the common purpose. He or she fills gaps in competencies; delegates leadership; is himself/herself a hands-on performer with the team; makes key decisions and manages external relationships including the management, guests, and suppliers.

What are the Team Member's Qualities?

They are all performers who find excitement in their performance. They take ownership of the task and objectives and hold themselves accountable for success or failure. They have a sense of urgency with youthful enthusiasm and energy. They are result oriented and respect each other.

Attitude

Attitude is a buzzword in modern operations. We wear an attitude. In other words, attitudes are something that we own and are responsible for. It comes from within and can be positive or negative, based on one's experiences. Let us take an inventory of key attitudes required in housekeeping operations:

1. **The joy of serving people**—The benefits of service are many. People are giving business to those who have better service. A good service gets better paychecks and tips. It ensures repeat customers. Service is the cutting edge.
2. **A cheerful attitude**—It is infectious and spreads cheer and goodwill to others. It fosters a pleasant and tension-free workplace.

3. **Cooperation** is vital in team performances. Unless you do not cooperate with others, they will not cooperate with you.
4. **Pride in one's work**—This brings excellence. There is a difference between doing routine work and doing work with an aim to make a difference. Service can be done with showmanship, sincerity and enthusiasm.
5. **Initiative**—This is a valued competency in today's world. The only way to beat competition is to innovate and bring in new ideas. Each housekeeping professional must always look for new ideas and introduce them. Some may have the benefit of directly introducing new ideas, while others will need to seek the approval of superiors.
6. **Salesmanship**—This is a vital job requirement to motivate the guest to spend that extra dollar.
7. **Honesty**—This is a precious attribute. There are many temptations in a service operation. There are opportunities for theft of property and guest belongings; misleading guests with information; giving secrets to competitors; etc. Organisations value and reward employees who are upright and truthful.



Self-Discipline

Discipline is the hallmark of a good housekeeping professional. This is because the temptations in a hotel are many. Discipline is of two types—*physical*, where grooming and physical conduct play a role; and *mental*, which demands sincerity, honesty and perseverance. Here are some tips for the housekeepers and supervisors to prevent indiscipline:

1. Update continuously with the house rules and regulations.
2. Make disciplined behaviour bring reputation, recognition, better rewards.
3. Act professionally at work by being businesslike in actions and conversation.
4. Amend mistakes immediately.
5. Always air grievances in privacy.
6. Be an example to others.
7. Improve skills by training to avoid mistakes that may be viewed as indiscipline.

Given below, on the left are the common reasons for indiscipline, while on the right side are the suggested positive ways to look at them:

(a) **Unavoidable Circumstances**

Sometimes there are sickness or pressing domestic demands—this is normally excused provided this is not too regular. Inform the superior in advance for her to make alternative arrangements. Remember your team needs you.

(b) **Adventurism**

The desire to be different can be converted into challenges at the workplace. Ask the supervisor for additional tasks.

(c) **System of Control**

Self-regulation is one of the empowerment tools given to modern professionals.

(d) **Ignorance of Rules**

It is important to update oneself constantly with the current rules and regulations. Clarify rules during briefing. Ignorance of rules is a crime.

- (e) **To Attract Attention** Get attention by excellent performance.
- (f) **Does not Accept the System** Clarify problems and doubts openly with the superiors and if not satisfied seek alternate employment.
- (g) **Rebel** Rebels are those who bring about change. Change can be instituted through dialogue and cooperation with superiors and not by rebellion.
- (h) **Affiliation with Negative Groups** Negative groups are counter-productive to good performance. Associate with winners.
- (i) **Bad Habits** Cultivate good habits.
- (j) **Short Cuts** Distinguish between innovation and taking short cuts. Innovations do not harm the organisation, while short cuts do.

Courtesy

1. It is the hallmark of a hotel professional. Courtesy must be shown not only towards guests, but also towards colleagues.
2. Courtesy should be inherent in one's nature and a sign of one's desire to please those with whom one comes in contact with. Courtesy should not be a "technique" but a spontaneous and genuine manner.
3. Being courteous not only makes the operations smooth, but also ensures better relationships.



Examples of courtesy are:

- (a) Each approaching guest must be attended to with a smile and a cheery greeting.
- (b) If the staff member knows the guest's name, it is advisable to address him or her by the name as this gives the guest recognition. Do not mispronounce names or call them by somebody else's name!
- (c) If rooms are not ready when a resident guest arrives, ask them if you should return later. If they permit you to continue, complete the task quietly and quickly.
- (d) When a guest is seeking assistance on the floor use the word 'assist', e.g. "May I assist you" or "May I be of assistance".
- (e) When listening to guest requests or complaints, show empathy and tell them what you will do to meet that need or resolve the complaint. Then do it. A guest must not need to remind housekeeping about the issue again.
- (f) After completing any transaction say, "Thank you, have a pleasant day". It should be said with utmost sincerity.

Intrapreneurship

Intrapreneurship means "internal entrepreneurship." Housekeeping professionals must think like businesspersons by constantly evaluating one's performance and find ways to improve productivity and quality. They should also be resourceful to meet emergency situations. The housekeeping thinks dollars and how to give the owner a return on investment.

Continuous Education

Housekeeping professionals will be required to upgrade themselves constantly. They should not wait for the organisation to improve their knowledge and skills, but take initiative for self-development. They can do this by reading relevant trade magazines, learning through websites, attending seminars, joining professional bodies that advance knowledge, go back to hotel schools to learn or read textbooks of hotel schools. Organisations expect the true professional to convert new ideas into business opportunities for the hotel and are willing to reward such enterprise. A follow-up on learning is certification. Professionals show physical proof of their learning. The effort of the future professional must be to get more technical qualifications.

Customer Orientation

The customer is the king. Unless a hotel makes the customer as their main focus, the business is likely to decline. Customer focus means putting all thoughts and actions towards creating positive customer experiences. This is achieved through empathy and proverbially described as “putting yourself in the guest’s shoes”. It requires sensitivity to guest needs and responding to them in a timely manner. If a lady guest requires a hairdryer at the middle of the night, she must have it! Excuses for inaction are many, but going that extra mile to provide the guest needs makes the difference between one hotel and another.

Physical Fitness

The television has rightly exposed the public to health and fitness. A housekeeping professional must be physically fit to manage rigorous hours on his/her feet. There is a saying that “a healthy body makes a healthy mind”. It is very true. If a person is physically fit it translates into energy, enthusiasm, ability to cope, lightness, youth and joy. Housekeeping professionals must bring in physical fitness regimen into their personal lives. It may be just an hour’s walk in one’s neighbourhood or a workout in a gymnasium.

Eye for Detail

Housekeepers worldwide have been known for their eye for detail. This term means that the person has a sharp eye to detect things that are not quite right. It is in view of this competency that women are selected as housekeepers, and it is presumed that women acquire a greater eye for detail from their roles at home. However, men have also come into housekeeping and have shown this competency over the years. This competency appears repeatedly in all housekeeping job descriptions.

Review Quiz

True or False

1. Grooming reflects on the image of the property.
2. The hotel business is the alchemy of showmanship, tact and sociability.
3. Housekeeping personnel can use the guest elevator to reach the floors.
4. Recognition gives a guest the feeling of belonging.
5. Guest requests may be actioned the next day.



6. A team consists of people with complementary skills.
7. A team leader's role is to build commitment to a common purpose.
8. Always air grievances in public.
9. A reason for indiscipline is to attract attention.
10. Intrapreneurship and entrepreneurship mean the same thing.

Part-3

HOUSEKEEPING ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES

8

The Executive Housekeeper

Learning Objective



To familiarise the reader with the job description, management responsibilities and basic administrative duties of the Executive Housekeeper.

▲ INTRODUCTION

The Executive Housekeeper is a very critical and vital position in the running of a hotel. She often has the largest team in the hotel, as her responsibilities are spread over the entire hotel, externally and internally. As mentioned earlier, she is accountable for the cleanliness, maintenance and aesthetic upkeep of the property. This requires the creativity of an artist and the efficiency of a scientist. Her department runs 24 hours and this requires sound management. To begin with, let us see how her job description looks like.

A **job description** is a written account of a job performed by a person. It specifies the parameters within which a job is to be performed. These parameters include the duties and responsibilities, reporting relationships, authority and control, coordination with other departments, status within a departmental hierarchy and the broad scope of function. A job description offers the following advantages to both the job holders and the organization:

1. The new recruit knows exactly what his or her job entails. This in itself is a vital part of induction when he or she joins the hotel.
2. A job description is a basis to set standards of performance.
3. It ensures a common perception of the job by both the superior and the subordinate.
4. It is a legal document for any disputes arising out of a lack of role clarification.
5. It protects an employee from an unreasonable superior who may like to overburden an employee through unnecessary role deviations.

In addition, a job description includes a **job specification** which describes the person in terms of education, experience, skills and competencies to perform a job. Some organisations may develop

job specifications separately, but the modern practice is to include them in the job description itself. Given below is a typical job description of an Executive Housekeeper:

Job Title	Executive Housekeeper
Reports To	For day-to-day administration: 1. Accommodations Manager 2. General Manager For housekeeping technical advice: ➤ Corporate Housekeeper
Job Summary	Responsible for the cleanliness, maintenance and aesthetic upkeep of the hotel through a trained and motivated team that observes the policies, procedures and standards of the establishment and delivers services according to the satisfaction of the guests.
Duties & Responsibilities	1. Develop and monitor an annual housekeeping budget and plan. 2. Hire, train, lead, and motivate the housekeeping team. 3. Ensure two-way communication through daily briefings and department meetings. 4. Organise and direct the various sub-activities of the department. 5. Approve expenses exercising cost control. 6. Represent housekeeping at co-ordination meetings. 7. Develop, update and monitor housekeeping policies, systems, procedures and standards. 8. Schedule staff rotations and duties. 9. Ensure staff safety and hygiene. 10. Maintain discipline and conduct staff performance appraisals. 11. Ensure co-ordination with the engineering department, laundry and the front office. 12. Conduct quality inspections. 13. Be responsible for all housekeeping assets and recommend specifications of purchase when required. 14. Conduct periodic market surveys of new suppliers and products. 15. Plan, control and supervise horticultural requirements. 16. Conduct periodic competition analysis. 17. Plan schedules of pest control, spring cleaning, renovation and audit. 18. Oversee the Lost and Found procedures. 19. Confirm that incoming supplies conform to specifications. 20. Prepare required management reports.
Directly Supervises	Assistant Housekeepers, Laundry Manager, Horticulturist, Florist
Limits of Authority	1. Evaluates performance of staff. 2. Ensures that staff maintains discipline. 3. Recommends budgets. 4. Can declare a room out of order. 5. Can refuse purchases if not as per the specifications. 6. Can spend within budgets. 7. Approves all housekeeping requisitions.

Coordinates with	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Front Office—For the cleanliness of rooms and making them available for sale. 2. Accounts—For budgetary approvals and expenses. 3. Engineering—On matters of maintenance and safety on guest floors and public areas. 4. Security—On matters of security and safety. 5. Purchasing—For purchases of capital and daily supplies. 6. Accommodations Director—For policy directions and evaluation of department performance. 7. F&B Manager—For the cleanliness, maintenance and aesthetic upkeep of all restaurants, bars and banquet halls
Minimum Educational Qualifications	Bachelor in Hotel Management or Home Science
Experience	Minimum three years of work experience as an Assistant Housekeeper in a reputed hotel
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Thorough knowledge of housekeeping ➢ Basic knowledge of interior designing and horticulture ➢ Knowledge of laundry processes and procedures ➢ Knowledge of housekeeping computer software ➢ Knowledge of textiles ➢ Knowledge of housekeeping equipment and supplies ➢ Knowledge of stain removal ➢ Knowledge of carpets and their properties
Skills and Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Communication and administrative skills ➢ Training skills ➢ Guest-handling skills ➢ Leadership and motivation skills ➢ Well groomed and physically fit ➢ Budgeting skills ➢ Eye for detail ➢ Physically fit and healthy ➢ Performance-management skills ➢ Computer skills

▲ DUTIES OF AN EXECUTIVE HOUSEKEEPER

We have realised by now that the Executive Housekeeper is the Head of Department (HOD) and is a senior member of the management team and in many cases reports directly to the General Manager of the hotel. Having said this, there are organisations that may position their Executive Housekeeper either below or above the HOD level, as a member of the Executive Committee. Some organisations may position its Executive Housekeeper at the corporate level as a Corporate Housekeeper. The positioning is based on the housekeeper's experience and seniority. Whatever the case is, it is a management position requiring the traditional management functions of Planning,

Organising, Directing, Controlling and Staffing. These functions translate into housekeeping duties as follows.

▲ PLANNING RESPONSIBILITIES

The Executive Housekeeper at the outset has to plan her activities for a year. While the cleaning of rooms and public areas is quite a routine activity, she has to plan her resources to achieve her tasks in terms of workforce, budgets, supplies, equipment and time. She would be actively involved in recruitment and training after determining how many people she would require in three shifts to achieve her goals.

Workforce Planning

How does the Executive Housekeeper decide on how many people she requires? She depends on some norms or thumb rules gathered from years of experience and industry practice. Some of these yardsticks are given below:

Shift	Straight Shift	1st Shift	2nd Shift	3rd Shift	Reliever	Comments
Executive Housekeeper	1					
Secretary	1					
Assistant Housekeeper		1	1			
Floor Supervisors		1/32 rooms	1/50 rooms			1/7 supervisors
Public Area Supervisor	1					
Linen Room Supervisor	1					
Uniform Room Supervisor	1					
Night Supervisor				1		Oversees Floors and Public Area needs at night
Room Attendants		1/16 rooms	1/16 rooms	1/30 rooms	1/7 room attendants	
Floor Housemen		1/floor	1/floor	1/floor		
Linen Attendant	1					
Uniform Attendant	1					
Desk Attendant	1	1		1	1	

Public Area	1/2500 sq. ft.	1/5000 sq. ft.	1/2500 sq. ft.	1/7 P.A. Housemen	Night shift, clean banquets and restaurants
Housemen					
Cloakroom Attendants	1/cloakroom	1/ cloakroom		1	Cloakrooms at night can be cleaned by public area housemen. Remember there are male and female attendants.
Laundry					
Laundry Manager	1				
Desk Attendant	1	1			
Laundry Supervisor	1	1			Assuming that the night shift works two shifts only
Washerman	1	1			
Drycleaner	1	1			
Sorter/Marker	1	1			
Spotter	1	1			
Flat Iron	2	2			
Hot Head Press	1/machine	1/machine			
Steam Press	1/machine	1/machine			
Shirt Press	1	1			
Horticulture					
Horticulturist	1				
Head Gardener	1				
Gardeners	1/5000 sq. ft.	1/500 sq. ft.			

One can see that the numbers will increase with the size of the property. The housekeeper would decide which positions are to be filled by full-time salaried employees, part-time employees, who earn hourly wages to fill in gaps; and outsourced contractors to do specialist jobs like carpet shampooing, chandelier cleaning, external window cleaning, and so on. These decisions are based on demand and supply of human resources.

While the above table deals with *how many* people are required to fulfil housekeeping services to customer satisfaction, the other aspect of workforce planning is the *quality of staff* required. The housekeeper would take the help of Human Resources Department to carry out **job analysis** (what

is required in a job); **job evaluation** (the value of the position in relation to others) to determine the level in the hierarchy in terms of responsibilities and compensation worth; **job description** (to formally describe the job position); and **job specification** (profile of the job the person is suitable to do).

Armed with the numbers and quality of people required, the housekeeper can go ahead and recruit the right person for the right job.

▲ PLANNING OF HOUSEKEEPING BUDGET

A **budget** is the forecast of expected revenues and expenditures at the beginning of a financial year. It is a planning function and later used as a means of controlling finances. A budget is a management tool and not an accounting tool. However, it uses the accounting process established for a business. A sound knowledge of accounting reports is essential for an Executive Housekeeper to prepare a budget. For instance, she must know the components of a profit and loss expected statement and how it is presented. It only differs from pure accounting by noting predictions while accounting records actual facts. The housekeeping budget must cover a period that is controllable. Most hotels prepare an annual budget as a reasonable period for control. An interesting feature of the housekeeping department is that while it prepares rooms for sale, the actual revenue reflects in the front-office budget. The Housekeeping Department remains an expense centre and, therefore, mentions costs of maintaining rooms. However, the Housekeeping Budget starts with the expected income and occupancy throughout the year. The expenses of maintaining guest rooms are a relation to the revenues received from these rooms. The accommodations budget, however, is a composite of the front-office revenues and the housekeeping expenses. However, the expenses of housekeeping must factor in anticipated occupancies and should be kept within the revenues generated.

There are two types of budgets: the **capital budget**, which is a statement of the expenses covering long-term assets like linen, equipment and furniture that will be used for more than a year and the **operating budget**, which lays down the anticipated expenses in daily consumables like guest supplies and cleaning supplies to do business on a daily basis. When preparing a budget, there are certain rules to be followed:

- The goals set by a budget must be attainable. Many investors have set unrealistic sales and expense goals that demoralise the performing teams affected by it.
- There should be wide participation in the budgeting process. An Executive Housekeeper who prepares the budget without involving the housekeeping team can set goals that the team is unable to attain. Participation of the team gets the team member's commitment to perform and achieve.
- All members of the team must be informed of the approved budget. Many Executive Housekeepers believe that they are the only ones privileged to see the budget and try to steer the team towards it when the team itself is in the dark as to what they are expected to achieve.
- The budget must be completed before the performing period. Teams cannot be held accountable for the time that has elapsed.
- We have seen that the budget is a measure of performance. Employees must know exactly that their role is to attain the budget goals.

- Employees must have authority and control over their work process. They must be able to influence the amount that they are accountable for.
- Budgets must be flexible to permit revisions for unanticipated changes.
- Budgets must not compromise on quality and guest satisfaction. The table below gives an idea of the items that come under capital budgets and operating budgets:

Capital Expenses	Operating Expenses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Linen—For guest rooms, restaurants and bars ➤ Equipment—Such as vacuum cleaners, scrubbers, maid's carts, trolleys, hampers, filing cabinets, lawn movers, laundry equipment and sewing machines ➤ Furniture—Racks, folding tables, desks, chairs and cupboards ➤ Fixtures—Guest room lamps and lamp shades 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Salaries and Wages—Full-time, part-time and daily wagers ➤ Employee Benefits—Usually, 1½ times the basic salary ➤ Outsourced Contractors—External window cleaners, chandelier cleaners and pest control ➤ Operating Supplies—Guest amenities, cleaning supplies, dusters, mops, flower pots and manure ➤ Stationery—Guest stationery and office stationery ➤ Heat, Light and Power—Required for the department only ➤ Water—For landscapes, flower shop and laundry floor pantries

Capital Budget

Capital budget items are usually expensive like equipment or linen. The decision to purchase them has to be carefully thought out in terms of whether they are really necessary immediately. While purchasing capital items, one must keep the following factors in mind:

- Expected life of the asset and its durability
- Cost of asset, including taxes or custom duty
- Competitive alternatives available in the market
- Whether the item is purchased locally or abroad
- After-sales services
- Availability of spare parts (in terms of equipment)
- Lead time for purchase and replacement
- Whether the item is custom made or off the shelf
- Other hotels' feedback on the use of the assets and suppliers
- Whether to buy the item or hire it
- Cost of maintenance
- Cost of accessories (to equipment)

Operating Budget

The expenses under operating budget usually recur daily or monthly for maintaining assets and providing guest services. Some of the operating expenses featuring in a Housekeeping Budget would be:

1. **Salaries, wages and benefits:** This would perhaps be the largest expense of the housekeeping department. It includes the compensation to full-time employees, part-timers, daily wagers and apprentices. We all know that hotels provide benefits to employees. These benefits will reflect under this head and include house rent or housing costs; uniforms for housekeeping staff; duty meals; health insurance; transportation; leave pay; and social welfare.
2. **Cleaning supplies and detergents:** This could well be the next highest expense as the department is concerned with cleaning as its primary function. Cleaning supplies would include consumable items like buckets, mops, brushes and the like. Detergents include cleaning powders and solutions for various surfaces in the hotel. The laundry is the greatest consumer of detergents in view of the large volume of linen and uniforms that are laundered each day. Then there is the cost of laundering guest laundry, which is factored into the price to guests for laundering their clothes.
3. **Guest amenities:** This category includes all those items in guest rooms that are to be exclusively used by the guests. These include writing pens, soaps, vanity sets, drinking tumblers, guest hangers, bathrobes, bath slippers, and special supplies to VIPs like flowers and cakes. These costs may find their way to direct costs before gross profit.
4. **Printing and Stationery Expenses:** Stationery may be divided into what is required for housekeeping use such as forms and formats; and those required for guests such as guest stationery, feedback forms, room service menus, tent cards used in rooms selling other facilities, and so on.
5. **Other Supplies:** These would include all items that are required to keep the housekeeping running like seeds and manure for the gardens; flowers for floral arrangements throughout the hotel; maintenance of the nursery and greenhouse and others.
6. **Energy:** This is an item that is growing in cost every day. The cost of power and steam is high. Apart from the electricity consumed by the housekeeping department like in the linen/uniform room, control desk room, housekeeper's office, etc., there is a huge cost of power to run the heavy equipment in laundry. The laundry also needs steam to operate the steam presses.
7. **Water:** There is a large requirement for water in housekeeping. The Housekeeping Department needs water to service the external gardens; terrace gardens; indoor plants, floor pantries, and so on. The largest consumer of water is the laundry for the cleaning of linen and uniforms.
8. **Telecommunications:** There is an expense for external calls to suppliers and guests. Sometimes, the Information Technology Department may apportion costs of web-based communications to the Housekeeping Department.
9. **Advertising and Promotion:** These costs may be apportioned to all revenue departments as the cost to get business. Media costs are expensive and need considerable allocations.
10. **Repair and Maintenance Costs:** These are the expenses that the Housekeeping Department needs to keep the rooms fresh and serviceable. These may include costs of renovating a room.
11. **Contracts:** These are the expenses for hiring outsourced services like commercial laundries, interior designers, horticulturists, external window cleaners, chandelier cleaners and the like.

Developing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

A Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is a written routine procedure for daily operations. It is a tool to standardise the accomplishment of tasks. The benefit of an SOP is that everyone is trained into it to bring about consistency in (a) service performance; (b) quality standards; (c) productivity norms; (d) interdepartmental collaboration; (e) generation of reports for decision-making and cooperation; and (f) the correct use of equipment and materials. There is a tacit understanding in

professional housekeeping operations that SOPs are to be followed and no deviations should be tolerated. Revision of SOP is done after an approval at the highest level. SOPs are documented and numbered in a manual that is available to everybody to refer to in case of doubt. SOPs start with statement of policy governing the procedure, followed by procedural directives, type of forms to be used and records to be generated. While there is an argument that SOPs stifle creativity, employees do have an opportunity to suggest better ways to do things and influence SOPs. SOPs are best for routine recurring items. An example of SOP is given below:

Department: Housekeeping Department	SOP No: SOP-001	Date Issued: 7/9/2011
Name of Hotel: Hotel ABC		
Procedure: Lost and Found	Approved by: Ms. Jane Wood (Exec. HK)	
Background		

Guests or employees in the hotel sometimes forget or misplace their personal belongings. The hotel holds and stores these items in safekeeping. If the guest or employee is known as the legitimate owner of the item, all efforts are made to contact the concerned person. Should the owner not be known, then the item is locked for a period of six months, during which period the guest or employee can lay a claim. After six months, the item is auctioned, given free to the person finding the item or sold at a discounted price.

- Policy:** (a) The Housekeeping Department shall be responsible for the safekeeping and dispensation of Lost and Found items.
 (b) Lost and Found items will be stored for minimum six months.
 (c) The finder of the item has first claim on a Lost and Found item at no cost.

Procedure

- When a member of the staff finds an item, he or she is expected to immediately inform his or her immediate supervisor and hand over the item.
- The supervisor will immediately call the Housekeeping Desk Attendant who will verify with the Front Office Cashier in case the guest is known whether he or she is still in the hotel clearing his or her bills. Simultaneously, the Lobby Manager is also notified. If the guest is present, the item is immediately handed over to the guest.
- The Supervisor deposits it at the Housekeeping Control Desk for documentation and custody.
- The Housekeeping Desk Attendant will enter the item into the serially numbered. Lost and Found Slip in duplicate giving the date, time, room number (if a resident guest), location, guest's name and the name of the staff who found the item.
- The original slip is attached to the article and stored in the Lost and Found safe cupboard. The duplicate slip is kept in the Lost and Found Register which records all the details of the slip, including the slip number.
- The Executive Housekeeper will sign the Register to acknowledge the receipt of the same.
- The Executive Housekeeper will write to the guest to claim the article getting the address from the Front Office in case of a known resident guest who has checked out.
- If the guest is not known, the item is stored for a period of six months and disposed of as per the policy of the property.

▲ DIRECTING RESPONSIBILITIES

Briefing

Briefing is that process at the beginning of a work shift which is initiated by management to facilitate two-way communication between the management and the staff. It takes place once at the beginning of a shift when the housekeeping staff assemble to share information and feelings before they disperse for work. This is after the employees have formally clocked into the hotel at the time office and have collected their fresh uniforms which they change in the locker rooms, provided separately for men and women. All employees are required to report for briefing properly attired and before the scheduled commencement of the shift.

In the Housekeeping Department, briefing is conducted at the Housekeeping Control Desk room. Ideally, the Executive Housekeeper must conduct the briefing. However, when she is busy she may delegate this responsibility to the Assistant Housekeeper. Given below are the issues covered in a briefing that takes about 15 minutes:

Grooming

Each staff member is checked for whether his or her grooming meets standards (as discussed in detail in Lesson 7, ‘Competencies of a Housekeeping Professional’). Physical presentation is vital in the hospitality industry as it provides the vital physical evidence of intangibles such as efficiency, cleanliness, professionalism, identity and hygiene.

Allotment of Duties

Housekeeping personnel are allotted their duties. Some housekeepers rotate staff on floors and public areas while others may assign dedicated floors and public areas on the belief that this brings about ownership of their domain. Supervisors are assigned to floors. The Public Area Supervisor receives special instructions about public areas that need more attention in a given day. Her duties would also include periodic preventive maintenance schedules like chandelier cleaning, carpet shampooing, wall cleaning and other such tasks.

Policies and Procedures

The briefing is the opportunity for re-emphasising existing policies and procedures of the property especially those that have an impact on housekeeping staff. It is the time to introduce new policies and give receive queries and clarifications about them.

VIPs in the House

The Housekeeper gives the names and room numbers of VIPs in the house. Each room attendant will check those room numbers which are in his responsibility. VIP rooms will receive special attention and amenities. The VIP list is further displayed on the communications notice board of the Desk Control room.

Feedback from Staff

Briefing time is the best opportunity to handle professional grievances that impact the productivity of the staff. (Personal grievances are handled in privacy on a one-to-one basis and not in a public forum

like a briefing.) It is beneficial for productivity and morale if grievances are resolved immediately and not allowed to fester. Feedback is valuable in the quest for continuous improvement. Frontline personnel know best how guest experiences can be enhanced by giving suggestions.

Training

Briefing is the time to coach staff in minor tasks. Staff is trained in the standards of performance. Standards are re-emphasised daily. The Housekeeper gives feedback on supervisor's reports on standards and ascertains those that need training or disciplinary action.

Recognition and Praise

The briefing time is the best opportunity to praise those who have performed well. It is considered to be a good management practice to praise in public and discipline in private.

Guest Complaints

In spite of the best intentions, guest complaints continue to occur as each guest perceives service in his/her own special way. Such complaints are logged by the guest with the (a) Control Desk Supervisor, (b) Guest Relations Executive, (c) Lobby Manager, (d) Guest Comment Forms, (e) General Manager, (f) Floor Supervisor and (g) Room Attendant. Complaints must be looked upon as gifts by the guest to improve services. A guest who does not voice a complaint is dangerous because he would not come again and definitely speak about the bad experience to others. It is best to tackle complaints immediately and encourage suggestions from the housekeeping staff on how to rectify the same.

Other Information

It is important to give information of a general nature. The housekeeping staff must be integrated with the rest of the hotel so that they see "the larger picture" of operations rather than being cocooned in their own small world. Some additional information that should be shared is:

1. Performance of the hotel
2. New projects and developments
3. New policies and practices
4. Functions in the house
5. New management and staff joined in other departments
6. Inspections by government authorities in the house
7. Special food promotions in restaurants
8. Groups and crews expected
9. Special requests by guests regarding amenities in the room
10. Assignment of babysitting services.

Assigning Work

An important job of a housekeeper is to ensure that all the responsibilities of the Housekeeping Department are fulfilled to guest satisfaction and the management's quality standards. For this, she has to take into account several factors:

1. **Creating three shifts:** A normal shift (work period per law) is eight hours with an additional hour for lunch/dinner and tea breaks. A busy hotel would have three shifts to cover 24 hours of the day while a remote resort property may operate with one general shift. Then there is the aspect of covering seven days a week. Employees will also need an off day. The US has a five-day week. This complicates scheduling further to find substitutes (relievers) during the off days. A simple rule of thumb for relievers is one reliever for every six employees (or five employees in the US). The housekeeper has the option of hiring daily wagers; scheduling on the basis on split shifts; creating teams for critical areas who will cover each other; or outsourcing Saturdays and Sundays to an outsourced housekeeping company.
2. **Covering three shifts:** A busy city hotel will need to have all three shifts manned as arrivals and departures are continuous. While the normal check-out time is 12 noon, people may check in at all different hours based on their flight arrivals, road and train schedules, and so on. The housekeeper has to balance the productivity norms, off days, relievers, and peak and trough times. The housekeeper always factors in the expected occupancy to determine the number of people required.

▲ CONTROLLING RESPONSIBILITIES

Controlling responsibilities are again an important aspect that the Executive Housekeeper has to take care of. The functions are explained below.

Taking Attendance

Attendance is taken in every shift as it affects salaries and wages. Some workers are paid hourly wages while others are paid a monthly salary. Salary is related to attendance or the person's presence at work.

The Executive Housekeeper must maintain three attendance registers:

- (a) One that has all the names of housekeeping personnel listed on a single page.
- (b) One that devotes a page to each housekeeping member, recording the number of hours each has worked, along with their off days, overtime statistics and special duties.
- (c) One register that records the hours put in by daily wagers or hourly based employees.

Modern technology has introduced the time card system that does away with tedious registers. The moment an employee is hired, the Human Resources Department issues a time card that is maintained at the time office located at the employee entrance at the back of the hotel. This is a single door through which all employees enter and exit the building. The time office (as the name suggests) is where employees register their time-in and time-out. The time office is manned 24 hours of the day by timekeepers in three shifts because the hotel operation is a 24-hour business with employees entering and exiting continuously. Often, the security personnel at the employee-gate take over this role as the gate is manned 24 hours by them. The system consists of specially designed cards with columns for the dates, time-in and time-out and maintained in racks at the time office. The timekeeper punches the time through a time-punch machine each time an employee enters or exits the hotel. This is a foolproof method as machines do not lie. Modern technology has introduced electronic time-punch machines that send the data directly to terminals in the accounts, human resources and the housekeeping control desk. Each one of these departments can monitor when an employee has clocked in and out. To make it foolproof, modern timekeeping machines have introduced the thumbprint to record the attendance.

The registers or time cards are legal documents maintained as per the labour laws and are carefully controlled. While registers are used for a year, time cards are issued each month. The payroll section, located either in the Human Resources Department or the Accounts Department, as per the policy, calculate the salaries and wages given at the end of each month. Some establishments may pay salaries every fortnight to help their employees maintain their personal cash flows. Salary payment schedules are also determined by the labour laws. The Executive Housekeeper must ensure some norms while maintaining the attendance of staff:

- Staff coming late must be marked late because latecoming is taboo in the service industry. Service is provided by ‘warm bodies’ and latecoming can seriously jeopardise the quality of service. The Human Resources Department can incur legal penalties on the staff through wage deductions to emphasise the importance of attendance.
- The Executive Housekeeper must mark the attendance with a pen to prevent any malpractice. Any additions or deletions must be countersigned by the Housekeeper and employee in acknowledgement of amendments.
- The Executive Housekeeper must counsel habitual latecomers and absentees before taking action. Latecoming and absenteeism are punishable offences and can even lead to dismissal of the employee.
- The Executive Housekeeper and Supervisors must always emphasise the importance of attendance in all briefings.

Managing Discipline

Discipline is the hallmark of a good hotelier. Discipline is required for many reasons:

- (a) Guests like to see staff in professional outfit doing their duties with clockwork precision.
- (b) Indiscipline reflects on the image of the property, which can be ruined through the word-of-mouth.
- (c) A lack of discipline severely affects the final quality of service — Imagine a room attendant who forgets to log a request for babysitting services by a guest or when a room attendant forgets to leave water tumblers in the room.
- (d) It reflects badly on the hygiene and sanitation standards of the property if employees are not well groomed and hygienically unclean—imagine room attendants with soiled uniforms.
- (e) There is discipline in the way employees communicate with guests. A lack of courtesy, etiquettes and manners can spoil the entire experience for a guest.
- (f) Following systems and procedures to avoid chaos during busy operations. Shortcuts to service invariably affect standards.
- (g) Co-ordination with other departments and fellow-members is necessary to get their cooperation. If the kitchen decides to slow down its service, the restaurant brigade will be faced with the wrath of the guests as they are in the frontline.
- (h) Discipline in the punctuality and attendance. If there are no “warm bodies”, the department cannot give the desired standards of service.



Indiscipline happens for several reasons as seen in the previous lesson. Table 8.1 gives the reasons for indiscipline, which are also listed in the previous lesson, and how they can be addressed by the Executive Housekeeper.

Table 8.1 Reasons for Indiscipline

Reasons for Indiscipline	Course of Action
Unavoidable Circumstances	Pressing domestic situations like family sickness, parent-teacher meetings, etc., cannot be avoided. These should be excused provided the employee has excused himself or herself before the operation starts. Any proof like a medical certificate authenticates an absence, however, the housekeeper is guided by the track record of the employee.
Adventurism	Young employees are hot blooded and like to beat the system. Don't kill adventurism because it can be converted to enthusiasm. Give such staff challenging tasks and additional responsibilities that will occupy their time and need for adventure.
Lack of Control Systems	Many acts may seem as indiscipline but actually they are caused by a lack of systems and procedures. A Housekeeper must seal loopholes in the system. A written code of conduct is also necessary to let employees know the rules. The Housekeeper can seek the assistance of the Human Resources Department to draw-up a code of conduct.
Ignorance of Rules	Ignorance of rules is a crime and therefore, employees can be penalised for this. However, the Housekeeper must re-emphasise rules during briefings to keep such things on the top of the mind daily.
To Attract Attention	The industrial age has brought isolation and anonymity when huge workforces are employed. It is easy to be ignored and lonely. Many people deliberately cause indiscipline to attract the attention of the supervisors. A housekeeper, in the first instance, must know and have a dialogue with his/her team collectively and individually to get respect. It is a necessary ingredient of leadership.
Does not Accept the System	The Housekeeper should counsel the employee and make him/her realise the importance of the system and how it fits into the larger scheme of things.
Is Rebellious	Rebellious people are so because of perceived injustice. The Housekeeper can sit with the "rebel" and understand the injustice meted out to him/her. Well-defined grievance procedures have helped in avoiding rebellious situations. It is important for the Housekeeper to be fair and equitable in his or her dealings with the team.
Affiliation with Negative Groups	The Housekeeper should identify these negative groups and their leader. He/she should try to understand the reasons behind negative behaviour. Win over the group leader by giving him/her importance and a say in proceedings.
Bad Habits	Reinforce good habits during training sessions and briefings.
Short Cuts	Penalise the employee after giving two warnings.
Wilful Motives	People with wilful motives are dangerous. If counselling has failed, then dismiss the person from the team.

While the above are some reasons for indiscipline and how to deal with them, the following are some general guidelines to maintain a disciplined team:

1. Ensure that there are written house rules and code of conduct. These must be distributed to each employee and reinforced at briefings.
2. Motivate staff to follow rules and maintain discipline and how it can benefit them in terms of advancement, better tips and cooperation from team members.
3. A fault committed must be checked at once.
4. Always discipline in private.
5. Set an example by being self-disciplined. Staff must see their housekeeper or supervisor as their role model.
6. Check the labour laws regarding disciplinary proceedings. Normally two warnings are given in writing before formal charges can be made.
7. Take the help of the Human Resources Department who are trained and qualified to handle disciplinary proceedings within the law.

Cost Control

A measure of increasing the profits of a housekeeping operation is by reducing costs. While this is the responsibility of the entire brigade, the accountability for cost control lies with the Executive Housekeeper. Here are some tips to reduce costs:

1. Check that quantity standards are strictly maintained. The guest amenities in a room must number those that are prescribed. The amount of detergents used must be in the correct quantities.
2. Staff must be trained to handle equipment correctly. Proper usage gives equipment a longer life.
3. Linen is expensive and constitutes a major investment by the owner. It should not be used for wiping tables or floors. Dusters are of cheaper material and used for cleaning purposes.
4. Expensive stationery must not be used as rough pads for dawdling.
5. Employees must be trained to meet productivity standards. Labour costs consume a large portion of the budget.
6. Inspections are important to ensure that correct procedures are followed.
7. Staff scheduling must ensure that there is the best utilisation of human resources in any given day.
8. Send timely maintenance orders to the maintenance staff. Items fixed on time will avoid higher costs when bigger breakdowns take place.
9. Recycle reusable items like flower arrangements, soaps, discarded linen, newspapers, bottles and cans.
10. The staff must be trained to complete their tasks correctly the first time round. Repeating a task takes valuable human resource time.
11. Florists must raise checks for flower arrangements ordered by guests. Similarly, babysitting services, special laundry charges must be meticulously accounted for.
12. The housekeeper must be hawk-eyed for pilferage by staff.
13. Ensure the daily cleaning of the premises to keep assets fresh.
14. Ensure that the staff strength is optimum to meet business demands. Excess staff is a cost.
15. Multi-skilling is a new method of reducing human resource costs as people are easily exchangeable to perform various tasks.

16. Lacquer used on brass preserves brass fixtures longer, thus saving on consumables like Brasso.
17. Expensive flower arrangements can be kept longer by pruning decaying flowers only and not changing the whole arrangement.
18. Switching off air conditioners when the room is vacant is a good practice to conserve energy. Hotels have installed key holders inside the entrance to switch off lights once the occupant has removed the key.
19. Discarded shower curtains can be used as aprons for the butchery or kitchen stewarding.
20. Regular stocktaking ensures optimum inventories, loss due to spoilage, theft and wastage.
21. Proper storing procedures should be used.
22. Use sprinklers in gardens to conserve water.
23. Compost dried/dead leaves into manure.

Inventory Management

The Executive Housekeeper is the custodian of several stores which account for major capital and operational costs. These stores are:

- Linen Store—for a cycle of new linen
- Uniform Room—for recycling fresh staff uniforms in operation for used ones
- Linen Room—for recycling fresh linen for used ones
- Housekeeping equipment store
- Chemical Store—for cleaning detergents and laundry
- Furniture Yard—for storing furniture under repair
- Housekeeping Store—for operational supplies
- Floor Pantries
- Nursery (for young plants) and Greenhouse (for exotic plants)
- Gardeners Shed (garden tools, fertilisers, flowerpots, hoses, and so on)

In order to keep strict control on these valuable assets, the Housekeeper has to follow some strict guidelines:

Market Surveys: The Housekeeper conducts periodic market surveys to ensure quality, price and supply. Surveys are done to determine what is available in the market in terms of housekeeping requirements; who the reliable suppliers are; the right competitive price for the right quality; volume discounts available for bulk purchase; and lead time of supply and financial strength of the supplier.

Establishing Par Levels: A par level is the minimum quantity in stores, required to supply an operation daily. These levels are established by experience and past history of consumption. Each store has a par stock of items to ensure that items do not run out, to service the customer.

Establishing the Lead Time: Lead time is the minimum period required by a supplier to replenish the stock level of a consumer. Each supplier has different time frames to provide items, based on whether the item is custom-made or off-the-shelf; whether it is imported rather than bought domestically; geographic distances of warehouses to the point of supply; and so on. The par stock = the existing quantity + lead-time quantity. The lead-time quantity would be the amount of stocks consumed from the time of order to the time of supply.

Anticipated Consumption: The amount of anticipated consumption is based on historical data, occupancy levels and level of business. The storage space must match the realistic consumption levels to ensure supplies are in stock.

Monitoring Consumption: It is a key duty of the Executive Housekeeper to keep consumption within budgets. The best is to have a documented system of requisition. It starts with store requisitions which have to be monitored closely. It has to be ensured that the store issues exactly what has been approved by the housekeeper; the items used follow proper procedures of use; the maintenance requests are attended to immediately; there is a system of preventive maintenance for equipment; the staff are properly trained in the use of these assets; and reusable items are carefully stored as prescribed.

Inspections

Daily property inspections are an inherent task of a Housekeeper, who becomes a good exponent of “managing by walk-about”. She may or may not have a checklist of things to observe. A trained Housekeeper has an eye to seek out things not to standards. Her walk would cover guest floors, pantries and guest rooms; recreation areas like swimming pools, spas, tennis courts, etc.; restaurants, bars and lounges; banquets and meeting rooms; offices, locker rooms, stores, landscaped areas, etc. It is a strenuous task that takes hours. However, this is the only way she can ensure standards are kept consistently. During her rounds, she looks for quality standards, gives information, provides coaching tips, listens to personal and professional grievances, facilitates coordination, solves operational problems and disciplines staff.

▲ ORGANISING RESPONSIBILITIES

Employee Scheduling

The scheduling of employees of the Housekeeping Department is very demanding and critical as it has a large workforce and the greatest proportion of employee hours to cover. Moreover, unlike the restaurant and bar, which generate revenues that cover employee costs, housekeeping is a cost centre. Revenue centres can afford to add employees as the potential for revenue increases. Housekeeping does not have this flexibility. Each employee added has to justify the cost of such addition. The Housekeeping Department is very visible to guests and any deficiency in standards of housekeeping is immediately noticed. The Executive Housekeeper is challenged to ensure the right mix of employees that uphold the tasks of keeping a clean house to the highest standards.

The housekeeping department has an elaborate employee structure depending on the size of hotel. (See Lesson 6, “Organisation of the Housekeeping Department” for more details.)

Employee scheduling ensures employee presence and satisfies the following requirements:

1. The type of hotel and guest, e.g. business people require quicker and closer attention than people on holiday.
2. The number of guests staying in the hotel. Fortunately, most people book ahead and the expected occupancy is known. Scheduling ensures that the demands during the business hours are met.
3. It provides a human face.

4. It takes into account employee leaves and the weekly off-day, without affecting service.
5. It rotates employees equitably through shifts and holidays. Hotel business is a 24×7 business and not all employees can get leave on the same day. Guests occupy rooms even on weekends and national holidays. Staff have to be on duty to give the guests their service.
6. It distributes off-days fairly as given in the schedule below.
7. It is planned in advance before it becomes effective to enable employees to plan their personal commitments.

Every schedule is authorised by the Executive Housekeeper and ensures optimal deployment to ensure that peak hours are fully serviced with competent employees. Busy hotels like downtown hotels, business hotels or airport hotels run a 24×7 operation and have morning, afternoon, and night shifts. The simplest way to schedule employees is given below:

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
Judy	1st Floor	1st Floor	1st Floor	1st Floor	1st Floor	1st Floor	off
Room Attendant							
Jane	1st Floor	1st Floor	1st Floor	1st Floor	1st Floor	off	1st Floor
Room Attendant							
Robert	2nd Floor	2nd Floor	2nd Floor	2nd Floor	off	2nd Floor	2nd Floor
Room Attendant							
Singh	2nd Floor	2nd Floor	2nd Floor	off	2nd Floor	2nd Floor	2nd Floor
Room Attendant							
Antonio	3rd Floor	3rd Floor	off	3rd Floor	3rd Floor	3rd Floor	3rd Floor
Room Attendant							
Jamal	3rd Floor	off	3rd Floor	3rd Floor	3rd Floor	3rd Floor	3rd Floor
Room Attendant							
Victoria	off	Relieve	Relieve	Relieve	Relieve	Relieve	Relieve
Reliever		Jamal	Antonio	Singh	Robert	Jane	Judy

One observes that each employee gets a day off in the week. A reliever position is created to substitute the employee on leave on a particular day.

Considerations while Scheduling

Employee scheduling is not that simple in large busy hotels. The following considerations are shown when scheduling employees:

1. **Occupancy** of the hotel. The numbers change appreciably during peak season and off season.
2. **Productivity standards** and whether the staff can meet them. For example, the guest room cleaning standard is 16 rooms to a room attendant in a shift.
3. **Hotel's age.** Scheduling for an existing hotel is easier as past records exist as a guide. New hotels rely on data from competing hotels.

4. **Software** makes scheduling easier. However, they are expensive.
5. **Employee vacations** have to be factored in. This is controlled by an annual leave plan.
6. **Staff turnover** affects scheduling. The responsibility of an employee who has left has to be distributed among others. Past records are a useful guideline.
7. **Absenteeism, sickness, and holidays** have to be considered based on historical data and known future holidays.
8. **Training days** of employees is essential to be built into a schedule as continuous education and training is now a way of life.
9. **Work practice** improvements affect productivity and the number of people required.
10. **Job rotation** to develop employees and reduce boredom through routine.
 - (i) Polishing brassware
 - (ii) Exchanging linen
 - (iii) Collecting supplies from stores
 - (iv) Preparing the Housekeeping Report
 - (v) Checking fire prevention systems
 - (vi) Providing babysitting services (after work hours)
 - (vii) Manning the Control Desk
 - (viii) Cleaning the floor pantry
11. **Equitable workloads** so that everyone gets exactly the right number of hours of work at the least cost to the hotel.
12. **Assignment of duties** must be fair and equitable. No employee must be overburdened to an extent that his or her productivity is affected.

Performance Appraisal

It is the responsibility of the Executive Housekeeper to introduce, train and monitor the performance management programme in the housekeeping department. She may take the help of the Human Resources Department to train the staff into the scheme. Modern management practices are interested in results rather than activities. Each member of the staff has to think in terms of the positive contributions he or she makes towards the operations of the department. The Executive Housekeeper should identify Key Result Areas (KRAs) for each job position. KRAs make a difference to the operation. It could be in terms of cost savings; customer satisfaction; maintaining housekeeping standards; productivity; teamwork; new ideas to do things better; punctuality and attendance, and so on. Typically, the KRAs are discussed before a budget year and the performance towards them noted for review in every quarter of that year and finally at the end of the year. The KRA objectives must follow the SMART principle (i.e., Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Realistic, Time). The end of the year rewards are linked to the achievement in terms of bonus, increment, and recognition. Normally, the appraisal system cascades down where immediate supervisors first fill the appraisal form after a discussion at an appraisal interview. The completed form is sent to the next higher authority (e.g. Assistant Housekeeper) for a second opinion and finally to the Executive Housekeeper who assesses the rewards to each employee based on her budgets and finally sends it to the HR Department for processing.

▲ STAFFING RESPONSIBILITIES

Staffing: Recruitment and Selection

People are the greatest challenge to the hospitality industry and particularly to the Executive Housekeeper. Her workforce is the largest in the property and, therefore, she needs trained people in her team. The housekeeping team would consist of full-time workers, part-time workers and daily-wage workers. She is forced to look at innovative sources of supply of human resources to keep her work going, including housewives, college students, single mothers and the like. The Executive Housekeeper would have to acquire interviewing skills.

Sources of Supply of Human Resources

An Executive Housekeeper has internal and external sources of supply of human resources. Her ally is the Human Resources Department, which will assist her with the procurement of staff. The **internal sources** are internal promotions, the talent bank, transfers from other departments, transfers from other hotels of a chain; recommendations from employees of friends and relatives they know. The **external sources** would include applicants to job advertisements, recruitment agents, employment exchanges, hotel schools, headhunters, and so on.

Key Terms



Attendance	The process of recording those present
Budget	Forecast of expected revenues and expenses within a given period
Briefing	Two-way communication of mutual expectations before an event
Capital Budget	Forecast of expenses towards the purchase of long-term expenses
Job Analysis	Process that determines the contents of a job
Job Description	Written description of the job
Job Evaluation	Process to determine the worth of a job in relation to others
Job Specification	Written profile of the right person to do a job
Workforce Planning	Planning process to determine the number of people required
Operating Budget	Forecast of recurring expenses
Shift	Legal work period (usually 8 hours)
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
Time Cards	Specially designed cards to record date and time by a time card machine
Time Card Machines	Equipment that records date and time on a time card
“Warm Body”	A person physically present

Review Quiz



Short Notes

1. What are the different types of registers maintained for attendance?
2. Give the difference between attendance registers and time cards.
3. What specific norms must an executive housekeeper follow as regards to attendance?
4. Give the reasons why discipline is important.
5. What are the reasons for indiscipline?
6. What are the guidelines to maintain discipline?
7. How can we reduce costs in a housekeeping department?
8. What are the considerations that must be taken into account when scheduling staff?
9. Give examples of internal and external sources of human resource supply.
10. Write a brief note on Inventory Management.

Part-4

HOUSEKEEPING FLOOR PROCEDURES

9

The Floor Pantry

Learning Objective



To help the reader understand the importance of a floor linen room—its design, its upkeep, and its storage conditions.

INTRODUCTION

The floor pantry (also called the floor **linen room**) is a store that stocks linen and supplies for a given floor. It is normally situated away from guest view, such as the elevator landing or the end of a floor. The room should be a cool and dry place away from steam pipes and dust.



FURNITURE AND FIXTURES

The floor linen room has the following furniture and fixtures:

1. **Cupboard** for guest and cleaning supplies.
2. Racks with shelves for linen, blankets, pillows, newspapers, bottles, etc. These can be wooden or made of aluminium.
3. **Janitors closet** for cleaning equipment such as mops, vacuum cleaners, waste baskets, buckets, squeegees, etc.
4. Wooden or canvas lined **hampers** for soiled linen received from various maid's carts on the floor, before sending the linen to the laundry. The hampers can be fixed or mobile (as shown in the picture) for easy transportation to the laundry.
5. Space for **maid's carts** (pictures given on pg 94), baby cots and roll-away beds.
6. **Sinks** for flower arrangements and disinfecting tumblers.



Hamper



Maid's cart

▲ FLOOR LAYOUT AND BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE FLOOR PANTRY

The pieces of equipment mentioned above are positioned in the Floor Pantry as shown in Fig. 9.1.

Layout Tips

1. The floor pantry must be out of the view of guests, preferably on service landings.
2. The room should be accessible from the service elevator, especially to transport soiled linen to the laundry and supply trolleys from stores.
3. The room must have one door only for security reasons.
4. The furniture is against the walls leaving space in the centre for movement.
5. The sink must have a water connection and a proper drainage.

Storage Tips

While storing there are certain precautions taken for safe storage as given below:

1. Brushes must not rest on bristles.
2. Cleaning sprays must be away from hot areas.
3. Dusters must be dried before storing.
4. Buckets must be emptied of all water and dried before storing.
5. Polishes must be properly sealed to prevent drying.
6. At the end of the shift all used magazines, newspapers and empty bottles are sent to the garbage disposal area where independent bins for each are allocated. These items are recycled by agencies.
7. Used candles and soaps are deposited at the Control Desk for reuse in offices, staff locker rooms, etc.
8. Garbage must be examined by the Floor Supervisor for any “lost and found” articles before sending it to the garbage disposal areas.
9. The Floor Supervisor is the only authorised person to open and close the floor linen room.

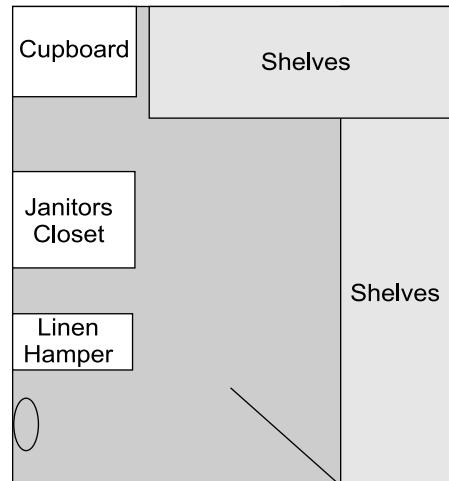


Fig. 9.1 Floor Pantry layout

Basic Principles

The floor pantry should be kept locked at all times as expensive assets like linen, guest supplies, etc. are stored here. The Floor Supervisor is the only one with the key and is the custodian of all the assets in the room. The room should be clean at all times especially when the staff go off duty.

Maintaining Par Stocks

The floor pantry is expected to keep a par stock of linen, guest supplies, and operational supplies to service the guest rooms on a floor. Naturally, the size and storage capacity of the floor pantry will vary according to the number of rooms on that floor. The par stock is based on historical data of occupancy on the floor in various seasons. For example, the floor supervisor maintains a bed sheet turnover of four:

1. One set on the guest bed
2. One set in the Floor Pantry/maid's cart
3. One set in the Laundry
4. One set in the Linen Room
5. One set in the Housekeeping Store

The exact number of sets is based on the anticipated occupancy. Linen stocktaking is done monthly as it is an expensive asset. On the day of stocktaking, all floor supervisors are informed. A suitable time on that day (say, 3.00 pm) is frozen when no exchange of linen is undertaken, either with the laundry or with the linen room. The linen is physically counted at each location and filled in the "Linen Stock Sheet". A sample of Linen Stock Sheet is given in Fig. 9.2.

ABC HOTEL									
DATE:					TIME:				
Item	Linen in Rooms	Linen in Pantry	Linen in Laundry	Linen in Linen Room	Discarded	Total Stock	Original Stock	Discrepancy	
				Used	New				
Single Sheet									
Queen Sheet									
King Sheet									
Pillow Covers									

Fig. 9.2 Linen Stock Sheet

▲ REQUISITIONING PROCEDURES

Procedure for Requisitioning Fresh Linen

1. Soiled linen is sorted by types, counted and recorded in three copies in the Room Linen Control Sheet (Fig. 9.3) by the floor supervisor at the pantry.
2. The houseman takes two copies with the soiled linen to the laundry.
3. The laundry supervisor recounts the items and tallies the numbers with the Room Linen Control Sheet.
4. The laundry supervisor retains one copy after signing the Room Linen Control Sheet
5. The houseman takes the second copy to the Linen Supervisor for fresh supplies of linen.

ROOM LINEN CONTROL SHEET				
Floor No:	Bag No:	Date:	Time:	
Articles	Sent by Floor	Received by Laundry	Sent to Floor	Balance
1. Bed Sheets				
2. Night Spreads				
3. Pillow Slips				
4. Bath Towels				
5. Hand Towels				
6. Face Cloth				
7. Bath Mats				
8. Mattress Protectors				
9. Bed Spreads				
10. Shower Curtains				
11. Blankets				
12. Dusters				
	Signature	Signature	Signature	Signature

Fig. 9.3 Room Linen Control Sheet

Procedure for Requisitioning Guest Supplies and Cleaning Supplies

Basic Principles

- (a) A floor pantry is given a par stock for each item of supplies.
- (b) When supplies at the floor pantry fall below the par stock, the Floor Supervisor prepares a Weekly Stores List (Fig. 9.4). The columns marked "consumed" and "required" are a control measure to ensure that the requisitions do not exceed consumption. The column "received" gives quantities actually issued by the stores. This is particularly useful when items are short to claim in future.

- (c) Requisitioning must be done strictly against consumption.
- (d) Requisitioning is done on a weekly basis.
- (e) Weekly Stores List must be prepared and presented on the day allotted to the floor for requisitioning.

WEEKLY STORES LIST				
DATE:	ITEMS	CONSUMED	REQUIRED	RECEIVED
Room Supplies				
1. Guest Stationery Cover 2. Guest Stationery 3. Guest Envelopes 4. Picture Postcards 5. Guest Comment Forms 6. Ball Pens 7. Scribbling Pads 8. Service Directory 9. Room Service Menu 10. DND Cards 11. Laundry List 12. Laundry Bags 13. Hangers 14. Ashtrays 15. Sewing Kits 16. Vanity Sets 17. Tissues 18. Hygiene Bags 19. Shower Caps 20. Toilet Rolls 21. Shoe Shine Card 22. Bathroom Tumblers				
Cleaning Supplies				
23. Mansion Polish 24. Brasso 25. Vim 26. Sanifresh 27. Dettol 28. Anol 29. Teepol 30. 31.				

Fig. 9.4 Weekly Stores List

Note: The list above is only a representative one. Each hotel will have its list of supplies.

Procedure

- (a) The floor supervisor sends the completed Weekly Stores List to the Executive Housekeeper for approval.

- (b) The Executive Housekeeper thoroughly scrutinises the Weekly Stores List to see that no item is over-ordered. This is where she can exercise cost control as each item requisitioned costs and will be charged to the Housekeeping Department. She signs the Weekly Stores List in approval.
- (c) She hands the List to the Control Desk attendant who fills a Stores Requisition Form (Fig. 9.5) in duplicate. The original is meant for the store while the copy remains in the Requisition Forms Book for record.
- (d) The Executive Housekeeper signs the Store Requisition Forms.
- (e) The Floor Supervisor designates a room attendant or houseman for requisitioning duties from the General Store on the allotted day.
- (f) The floor representative and storekeeper confirm that the items tally with the Requisition Form and both sign in acknowledgement. Sometimes the General Store may not have items in stock and will mention it in the Requisition Form to claim when those items are available.
- (g) The supplies are brought to the floor pantry and the Floor Supervisor checks the items against the Weekly Stores List.
- (h) Weekly Stores Lists are presented at the end of each month to the Executive Housekeeper for control and future planning.

Stores Requisition						
Date:			Department:			
Serial No.	Item	Unit	Units Required	Cost	Bin Card No.	Remark

Authorised by:	Received by:	Issued by:
-----------------------	---------------------	-------------------

Fig. 9.5 Stores Requisition Form

▲ RECORDS KEPT IN A FLOOR LINEN ROOM

1. **Spring Cleaning Register** – for monthly room cleaning cycles
2. **Floor Log Book** – which records:

- (a) The duty roster for the floor
 - (b) List of outstanding maintenances to be followed up in the next shift
 - (c) Record of night cleared rooms and departure rooms
 - (d) Important messages for the next shift supervisor
3. **Guest Supplies Control Register** (Fig. 9.6) – to keep control of guest supplies used in rooms. The consumption pattern helps the housekeeper with future budgeting.
4. **Linen Control Book** – records the movement of linen on a daily basis to and from floors.
5. **Weekly Stores List File** – for record of consumption and requisitioning of cleaning/guest supplies from stores.

Floor/Item	Pens	Shower Caps	Vanity Sets	Etc.
First Floor				
Second Floor				
Third Floor				
Nos. Issued				
No. of Departures				
Consumption-morning				
Balance				
Consumption-evening				
Balance				

Fig. 9.6 Guest Supplies Control Register

Review Quiz

Short Notes



1. What furniture and fixtures are in a floor linen room?
2. Give the tips for storage in a floor linen room.
3. What are the basic principles in requisitioning guest and cleaning supplies?
4. What is the procedure for requisitioning supplies?
5. What records are maintained in a floor linen room?

10

Preparing a Room Report

Learning Objective



To help the reader learn the importance of a Room Report and how it is prepared.

▲ INTRODUCTION

The Room Report (Fig. 10.1) is a document that confirms the occupancy of rooms in a given shift. The procedure to prepare a room report is followed in every shift as a check on unauthorised room occupancies or inadvertent mistakes in recording room occupancies by the front office. This is an essential task to ensure rooms are available for sale. The Floor Supervisor is the best person to physically confirm room occupancy as she has access to all the guest rooms on her allotted floor. She performs this task to enable the front office staff tally her findings with their room rack, which lists registered guests by room number. In case of a discrepancy, the receptionist sends a bell boy to make another physical verification to re-confirm the room status.

▲ THE ROOM REPORT

The floor supervisor prepares the Room Report in triplicate. The original is meant for the front office, the duplicate for the auditor who calculates expected revenues, and the triplicate for the housekeeping records. The Floor Supervisor may delegate this task to a room attendant. She then sends the report to the Housekeeping Control Desk Supervisor who compiles a consolidated list of all floors.

The Room Report is basically a list of room numbers against which the floor supervisor indicates the occupancy status by prescribed occupancy codes (Fig. 10.2). The codes may vary in each hotel but the basic information and intention is the same. The Floor Supervisor physically enters each room on the floor with her master key following the entry procedure discussed later. Once in the

room she ascertains the number of guests by three methods: (1) by noticing the number of beds used; (2) by seeing the number of bath towels used; and (3) by observing the types of guest clothes hung in the wardrobe. The first check normally confirms occupancy. She will obviously not enter rooms with a 'Do-not-Disturb' sign.

Room Report					
Floor: _____	Date: _____	Shift: AM/PM/Night			
Room Number	No. of Guests	Code	Room Number	No. of Guests	Code
101			116		
102			117		
103			118		
104			119		
105			120		
106			121		
107			122		
108			123		
109			124		
110			125		
111			126		
112			127		
113			128		
114			129		
115			130		

Fig. 10.1 Room Report

CODE	STATUS
O	Occupied
V	Vacant
DND	Do-Not-Disturb
L	Luggage in room but bed unused
UR	Under Repair
N	Occupied but no luggage
SB	Scanty Baggage
OOO	Out of Order
DL	Double Lock
NC	Not cleared though departure has taken place

Fig. 10.2 Occupancy Codes

▲ OCCUPANCY CODES

An explanation of the codes (Fig. 10.2) will be useful here:

Occupied: This status shows that a guest has checked into the room and is staying in the hotel. The signs of occupancy are beds that have been used, baggage on the baggage rack, clothes in the wardrobe, room service trays that are not cleared, bath towels that have been used and personal effects in the room and bathroom.

Vacant: This room is empty and ready for sale.

DND: This is a sign displayed either by a door knob card or a lit DND light beside the door facing the corridor. Obviously the guest cannot be disturbed and therefore, one is not able to verify the occupancy status of the room.

Luggage in Room but not Used: This code may seem odd. There are guests who may lease a room but stay with friends and relatives in the city. The luggage is not opened and the bed is not used. The danger is that the guest may have skipped without paying the room bill and has left the baggage as a decoy.

Under Repair: Indicates that the room is declared unsuitable for occupancy till repairs in the room are set right. This is a temporary situation where the room can be released in a short time.

Occupied, but no Luggage: These rooms show that the beds and bath linen have been used in spite of no guest luggage. There are several possibilities in such rooms:

1. It is a departure room.
2. The night manager may have used the room to rest.
3. Staff may have used the room without permission.
4. A guest with light luggage may have checked out without paying the bill.

Scanty Baggage: A room with light luggage. This can be a potential skipper (a person who may depart without paying the bill).

Out-of-Order: A room on a long-term maintenance requirement and therefore, unsuitable for sale.

Double Lock: A double lock is a security feature that cannot be opened with a master key. The room certainly shows occupancy but not the number of people inside.

Not Cleared: A departure room unprepared for sale.

▲ IMMEDIATE REPORTABLE MATTERS

In addition to the routine report, the floor supervisor immediately reports certain unusual observations to her superiors who will alert the Lobby Manager, Security Officer or even the General Manager based on the seriousness. Such reportable matters are discussed below:

Pets: Hotels usually do not permit pets in guest rooms. They have arrangements with kennels for the safekeeping of pets of guests. But the situation becomes critical when there are unusual pets like a boa constrictor (a species of snake), crocodile or a monkey!

Drugs: Illegal items like drugs in rooms are a serious criminal matter. Tell-tale signs of drugs are syringes, odd smell in the room, small burners, pouches of white powder, and so on.

Arms: In a world engulfed with terrorism, the presence of arms, bombs and explosive materials is dangerous. Such matters need to be reported immediately.

Gambling: Generally, gambling is an illegal pursuit unless establishments like casinos have licences for such activities. Rooms showing evidence of gambling is a reportable matter and requires security interventions.

Theft: Housekeeping personnel are additional ‘security eyes’ of the property. Housekeeping personnel on floors come into contact with the private aspects of a guest’s stay. Floor supervisors and room attendants are trained to look out for missing hotel property in rooms. Normal things that go missing are wall pictures, bathrobes, towels, bathroom slippers and clothes hangers. Hotels permit guests often to take away vanity sets in bathrooms, soaps, stationery, matchboxes, and laundry bags. However, floor personnel should remain aware of missing items in a room and should report the matter to the control desk.

Damage: The above-mentioned principles would also apply to damaged hotel property. The hotel authority has the right to recover amounts for damages to hotel property.

Medical Emergency: Medical emergencies of guests are another serious issue which is to be attended. Guests can be threatened by medical conditions any time such as heart attack, allergic attacks, and so on. The hotel personnel must take into consideration such things and provide aid when such medical emergencies arise.

Children: Kids left unattended in a guest room sometimes pose as a risk. A room attendant does not leave the room till the parent or guardian is located and brought back.

Key Terms



Discrepancy	An occupancy discrepancy between the floor supervisor’s findings and the front office room rack
DND	Room sign that denotes “Do-not-Disturb”
Occupancy	Presence in a room
Room Rack	A rack at the reception that displays room numbers along with their occupancy status
Room Report	A document that confirms room occupancy
Room Status	Occupancy status of a room
Scanty Baggage	A person with light luggage and can be a potential skipper
Skipper	A person who departs without paying his bills

Review Quiz



Short Notes

1. Explain the importance of the Housekeeping Room Report.
2. Explain the meaning of the various occupancy codes.
3. What are the immediate reportable matters on a guest floor?

Other Floor Procedures

Learning Objective



To help the reader understand other duties of a Floor Supervisor.

▲ INTRODUCTION

In addition to routine functions explained in the earlier lesson, the Floor Supervisor has other periodic duties to accomplish. This may be done weekly, monthly, or biannually.

▲ PERIODIC DUTIES OF A FLOOR SUPERVISOR

Weekly Cleaning Procedure

The Floor Supervisor rotates room attendants and housemen to accomplish certain cleaning chores that are time-consuming and labour intensive. These tasks may not be daily routine tasks but are done at least once a week:

1. Polishing brassware in rooms
2. Scrubbing bathroom tiles that have stubborn stains
3. Pest control
4. Unhooking translucent day curtains that may gather dust over time and sending them for laundering. The curtains brought down will require a replacement to be hooked on
5. Polishing wooden furniture
6. Scrubbing shower curtains that have stubborn stains
7. Cleaning window panes and window sills. A special crew will clean window panes from outside on a biannual or annual basis
8. Scrubbing balconies and terraces



9. Vacuuming carpets under heavy furniture
10. Vacuuming upholstered furniture
11. Changing paper underliners in guest closets and drawers
12. Recycling potted plants with those in the nursery
13. Grouting bathroom tiles
14. Dusting ceiling vents and louvres

Rooms Under Repair

The Executive Housekeeper has a preventive maintenance cycle for all rooms such as painting, masonry work, etc. executed by the Maintenance Department. The Floor Supervisor follows certain procedures as follows:

1. Inform the Housekeeping Control Desk to advise front office not to sell rooms taken under major repair.
2. Call the tailor from the linen room to dismantle the curtains and send them for storage at the linen room.
3. Send lampshades, bed covers, skirting, linen, guest supplies, etc. to the floor linen room for storage.
4. Cover the telephone instrument/s with polythene and disconnect it.
5. Close inlet valves of taps and water closets.
6. Call the audio-visual technician to disconnect the televisions/radios/music systems and store them in the music room.
7. Send upholstered furniture to the upholstery yard for mending or shampoo.
8. Call the horticulturist to collect indoor plants for storage at the nursery.
9. Remove all dresser and wardrobe drawers and store them in the floor linen room.
10. Roll up carpets and send them to the upholstery yard for shampooing.
11. Cover remaining furniture and fixtures with polythene sheets or condemned bed sheets.



Note: All items must be labelled with the room number for identification when it is time to replace them.

Guest Loan Items

The Floor Supervisor will periodically loan items to guests on request, as the extra service provided by the hotel. Some hotels may charge for these items. Such items are hand iron, hairdryer, ironing board, cribs, sewing kits, rollaway beds, voltage adaptors, hot water bottles, extra pillows, orthopaedic mattress, extra blankets, vanity sets, Qibla (compass for direction to Mecca for Muslim prayers), and so on.

These items need to be controlled carefully as they cost and the supervisor will be held accountable for them. Each Floor Supervisor is issued a stock of these items stored in the floor linen room. The par stock is based on historical demand for these items. The hazards associated with loaning these items are:

- Theft
- Damage
- Misplacement
- Misuse

The Floor Supervisor will maintain a Guest Loan Register (Fig. 11.1) as a control measure.

Date	Room No.	Name of Guest	Call Time	Delivery Time	Recovery Time	Person Receiving Request	Person Recovering	Comments

Fig. 11.1 Guest Loan Register

The supervisor controls the movement of these items and ensures their recovery before she ends her shift. Should the guest wish to retain the item beyond the shift, the supervisor mentions this in the log book for the next shift supervisor to recover. The control features in the register has the date, guest name and the room number. The call and delivery times are there to ascertain how promptly the guest request was serviced. The persons receiving and recovering the items are held responsible for the safe return of the item to the floor linen room. The last column “Comments” gives the status of the item. If damaged, the floor supervisor can advise the Control Desk who may charge the damage to the guest folio. For hotels who charge for this service, the period of usage delivery is informed to the front office cashier who will enter the charge in the guest folio. Some hotels charge by the hour and some levy a fixed charge. These services require close co-ordination with the Control Desk who advises the front office cashier of such charges.

▲ INVENTORY OF GUEST SUPPLIES

Another important concern for a floor supervisor is the control of guest supplies. Every guest room has a standard number of items and therefore, it is easy to calculate the demand for such items on a daily basis. Figure 11.2 gives the standard list of guest supplies in a luxury hotel:

Room	Bathroom
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 12 letterheads and 6 envelopes ➤ 2 postcards usually of the hotel or the city landmarks ➤ Folders for stationery ➤ Sewing kit ➤ Notepad and ball pen at the telephone ➤ Bible/Koran/Gita (provided free by religious associations) ➤ Telephone directories (provided free by the telephone department) ➤ 2 ashtrays (in smoking-rooms) one on the coffee table and the other in the bathroom. ➤ Bathrobe ➤ Bath slippers ➤ Shoeshine place mat ➤ Room Service Menu ➤ Candle stand with candles and matches ➤ Guest comment card ➤ Do-not-Disturb Cards ➤ TV listings (provided free by television companies) ➤ Breakfast door knob card ➤ 6 hangers per person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Shoe mitt ➤ 2 cakes of soap (one for bath and the other for hand wash) ➤ Hairdryer ➤ Razor dispenser ➤ 2 sanitary bags ➤ Vanity set (shampoo, bath foam, hand lotion, moisturizer, toothpaste, disposable tooth brush, disposable razor, shaving cream and a hair brush). These are take-away items that need replacement for each departure room) ➤ Shower cap ➤ 2 glass tumblers per guest

Fig. 11.2 List of Guest Supplies

The variable element is occupancy. The supervisor will need to establish a par stock of each item based on historical occupancy in various seasons. Peak seasons will need higher par stocks while low seasons will need less. The supervisor may realise that some items like ashtrays, room service menus, do-not-disturb signs, directories, etc. have a longer room life than other consumables. She must maintain appropriate par stocks in the floor linen room and a par on each maid's cart. She would know exactly the consumption of each cart on a daily basis. She maintains these records in a Guest Supplies Consumption Register (Fig. 11.3).

Guest Supplies Consumption							
Date:.....		Week: From:..... To:.....		Floor:.....			
Item	Par Stock Floor Pantry	Issued Maid's Cart 1	Issued Maid's Cart 2	Consumption Maid's Cart 1	Consumption Maid's Cart 2	Balance	
Letterheads							
Envelopes							
Post Cards							
Folders							
Sewing Kit							
Notepad							
Ball Pen							
Telephone Directory							
Ashtray							
Bathrobe							
Bath Slipper							
Candles Stand							
Candles							
Matches							
Shoeshine							
Guest Com- ment form							
Do-not- Disturb card							
TV Listing							
Breakfast Card							
Hangers							
Shoe Mitt							
Soap							
Vanity Set							
Hairdryer							
xxx							
xxx							

Fig. 11.3 Guest Supplies Consumption Register

The Floor Supervisor requisitions supplies from the general stores.

▲ SPRING CLEANING PROCEDURE

Spring cleaning is a term used for the complete cleaning of a room not usually carried out as part of daily routine. It is done at a time when occupancies are low since it is time-consuming. The procedure is explained below.

1. The Front Office is notified to declare the rooms ‘not for sale’. They negotiate a date for the release of the rooms which must be honoured by housekeeping as it involves revenue generation.

2. The room is 'stripped' of linen, guest amenities and decorative items.
3. Curtains are unhooked and sent to the laundry for dry-cleaning.
4. The room service is directed to empty the mini-bar and tea stations.
5. Carpets are rolled or covered with dust sheet.
6. Broken or damaged furniture is sent to the furniture yard for re-upholstery, carpentry work, shampooing of upholstery or lacquering.
7. The room is handed to the maintenance department for tasks like painting, carpentry work, electrical work and any other engineering work.
8. Once the maintenance department completes the work and hands over the room to housekeeping, the first step is to air the room for any residual smells of paints and polishes.
9. The carpet is re-laid and shampooed.
10. Permanent fixtures are cleaned/polished.
11. Furniture is re-installed.
12. The bathroom is cleaned and the grouting is cleaned or steamed.
13. Curtains are fixed.
14. Beds are made with fresh sheets.
15. Accessories and guest amenities are put back.
16. The room service is called to restock the mini-bar, glassware and tea station.
17. The floor supervisor makes a final check before releasing the room to front office for sale.

▲ GUEST ROOM INSPECTION

One of the key responsibilities of a floor supervisor is to conduct an inspection of each guest room cleaned by a room attendant. This task ensures the standards of quality in cleanliness, maintenance and presentation of the hotel. A room is ready for sale after it has been inspected by the supervisor. There are some scientific principles applied to ensure that the inspection is thorough:

1. The supervisor is aided by a checklist. (Figure 11.4 shows an Inspection Checklist.)
2. The supervisor starts in a clockwise direction (or anticlockwise as per the policy of the hotel).
3. She goes from ceiling to floor direction.
4. She makes a final look around after the inspection.
5. She inspects the bedroom first and then the bathroom following the same principles of inspection for the bathroom as for the bedroom given above.

In addition, housekeepers over years of experience have certain pet areas that act as a 'litmus test' for the standard of cleanliness undertaken. Housekeeping has devised its own system of running white cloth in the difficult areas to capture dust tell-tales. These areas gather dust over time for a lack of cleaning. They are listed below:

Bedrooms

- Top of clothes hangers
- Interiors of cupboards
- Interiors of drawers
- Top of picture frames
- Grills of air conditioners and radiators

- Corners of ceilings for cobwebs
- Carpet area behind free standing furniture
- Area between the bed and side-table
- Under table lamps
- Under beds
- Top of door frames
- Window sills hidden by curtains
- Balcony furniture and railing

Bathrooms

- Behind the toilet bowl
- Under the sink
- Faucet filters
- Air vents
- Exhaust vents

VIP rooms are often inspected by the Assistant Housekeeper or the Executive Housekeeper.

Hotel ABC	Room Number	Date: _____ Time _____
ENTRANCE	REMARKS	ACTION REQUIRED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Door frame ➤ Door hinges ➤ Lock/Double lock ➤ Door chain ➤ Peep hole ➤ DND card ➤ Make my room card ➤ Breakfast card 		
FOYER		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Foyer ceiling ➤ Foyer lights ➤ Key card holder ➤ Foyer carpet ➤ Wardrobe door ➤ Shelf under liners ➤ Extra pillows ➤ Laundry bags ➤ Hangers ➤ Shoeshine card ➤ Wardrobe light 		

Fig. 11.4

Sample Inspection Checklist

▲ HANDLING ARRIVAL OF VIP GUESTS

The acronym VIP stands for “Very Important Person”. Each hotel has its own list of VIPs, which can include Heads of State, Ambassadors, Ministers, Corporate CEOs and Presidents or Vice Presidents of Companies, famous sports personalities, film celebrities, frequent guests, travel agents, travel writers, tour leaders, travel or trade senior executive, senior executives of reputed companies, and so on. In case of arrival of a VIP, the following procedure should be followed:

- Front Office informs Housekeeping about VIP arrival and rooms allotted, which are displayed on the Housekeeping Control Desk Board. These rooms are mentioned at the shift briefing.
- The Executive Housekeeper or Assistant Housekeeper personally checks the VIP rooms.
- The room service installs a full or partial bar of alcoholic drinks and fruit juices.
- The room service also places fruit baskets and cookies, chocolates and petits fours.
- The flower shop arranges for a bouquet.
- Bathrooms are equipped with vanity sets (shampoos, body lotion, Eau de Toilette, disposable shaving razor, shaving cream, comb, bath salts, disposable toothbrush and toothpaste, herbal soaps, etc.); towelled bathrobes, bath slippers, extra pillows and blankets.
- Personalised stationery, notepads and matchboxes.
- Some hotels give a small gift as a memento.

▲ CLOSING DOWN THE SHIFT

The Floor Supervisor is responsible for closing the shift. For this, she has to ensure the following from the room attendants and housemen:

- Empty the garbage bags of the housekeeping carts into a garbage receptacle.
- Empty the bags of used linen of the housekeeping cart into the linen hamper and ensure that they are sent to the laundry (either by the laundry chute or shuttled by the mobile hamper).
- Remove the maid's carts and damp wipe it.
- Empty the vacuum cleaner bags and replace.
- Clean the machine using a damp cloth and remove residual fluff from the vacuum brushes.
- Wash toilet brushes weekly for ten minutes in hot water and flush daily in toilet flush.
- Rinse mops in hot water and neutral detergent and hang to dry.
- Cleanse mop buckets regularly.
- Remove mop threads from rollers and clean them.
- Tidy the pantry by stacking items in their appropriate places.
- Mop the floor.
- Lock the Floor Pantry and hand over the keys to the control desk for the next shift.
- Sign off the shift.

Key Terms



Day Curtains

Sheer curtains that let light in but cannot be looked through

Grouting

Filling gaps between tiles

Mop Wringer	Machine that rinses mops
Preventive Maintenance	A programme to prevent malfunctions
Cribs	Baby cots
Par Stock	Minimum supply necessary for daily operations

Review Quiz

Short Notes

Give a brief description of the following:

1. Procedure for weekly cleaning.
2. Procedure for under-repair rooms.
3. Procedure for guest loan items.



Part-5

GUEST ROOM CLEANING PROCEDURES

12

Layout of a Guest Room

Learning Objective



To introduce the reader to a typical guest room and help him/her understand its layout, features, and supplies.

▲ INTRODUCTION

The purpose of a hotel, since the early inns, is to provide accommodation to travellers, or as clichéd is “a home away from home”. It is important that a future housekeeping professional is thoroughly familiar with the guest room as its maintenance and cleanliness is one of his/her major responsibilities. Guest rooms generate over 50 per cent revenue for the hotel, and in some cases, it is the only source of revenue for the hotel without food and beverage operations.



Investors, therefore, put in a great deal of money into creating rooms. The common belief is that the more rooms are there in a hotel, the better it is for business economics. It is for this reason that we find some hotels that have over 6000 rooms. The future indicates either mega hotels with thousands of rooms or small boutique hotels with a maximum of 100 rooms.

▲ TYPES OF GUEST ROOM

We have seen the different types of rooms in hotels and available to the traveller in Part 1 of Lesson 4, “Types of Rooms.” The most sensible type of rooms are the twin rooms (having two single beds), because the two rooms can be used as single, double or triple rooms with an additional rollaway bed. Luxury hotels prefer to provide two queen-sized double beds. It however, does not give the flexibility to be used as two single beds for two unrelated travellers in a group. Luxury hotels provide

two queen-sized beds to make each person's stay more comfortable (as shown in the picture alongside).

Another type of room is the suite which is a composite of two rooms, one room acting as a living-cum-dining room while the other as the bedroom. Residential suites also provide kitchenettes (as shown below).

The room attendant will possibly have a few suites in his/her charge to clean along with twin or double rooms. This brings with it the complexities of cleaning and productivity.



▲ FEATURES IN A TYPICAL ROOM

Beds

As shown in the schematic diagram below (not drawn to scale but representative only), a typical room will have a bed or beds that have two elements:

- (i) Separate 1" by 4" mattresses depending on the type of luxury the hotel wishes to provide.
- (ii) The cot which is the form on which mattresses are set.

This gives the room attendant flexibility to move the bed around especially when preparing it and cleaning beneath it. It is prudent to fix the headboard to the wall enabling the room attendant to reach the head side of the bed as well as the headboard for cleaning purposes. The owner of the hotel can change the headboard during major renovations without having to change the bed.

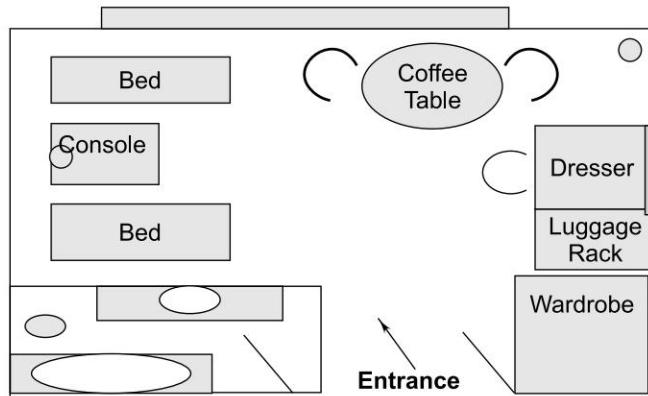


Fig. 12.1 Layout of a Typical Guest Room

Bedside Table

The bedside table has a table lamp for reading; a bedside telephone; a shelf which has a copy of Bible, Koran or Gita; a bedstead lamp; directories; and other amenities like alarm clocks, etc. The bedside table often has a console atop it with electrical connections to control all the lights in a room and the power to the television set. Modern technology has provided electronic remote controls doing away with electrical connection to the console, leaving this piece of furniture as bedside tables only.



Lighting System

It is important at this stage to be familiar with the **lighting system** in a typical room. The room will have an entrance light in the passage as one enters the room; table lamps on either side of the bed, (wall or headboard mounted behind the bed); one standing lamp at the corner of the room; mirror light for the dresser; wall mounted lights especially in large rooms and suites; and floor night lamps for those who do not like to sleep in the dark. The standard bulb power for bedside tables is 60 watts while the standard lamp and dresser light has a bulb of 100 watts. Bathrooms have a neon mirror light and a ceiling spot light with a normal bulb.



Luggage Rack

The luggage rack comes in two types. The fixed wooden feature that has brass strips (see picture) so as not to damage the wood, and the foldable rack that can be stored in the wardrobe when not in use. The wooden rack is sturdier and preferred by hotels that have international travellers with heavy baggage. The housekeeping can keep a few foldable ones in the floor linen room in case a guest requires additional storage.



Wardrobe

The wardrobe is usually found at the entrance passage way (see schematic layout). The wardrobe is the prime storage space in the room for guest belongings, and additional blankets and pillows. It has a section to hang long clothes like dresses and gowns; shelves for extra pillows and blankets and drawers for clothing accessories. Superior hotels provide room safety boxes that are installed in the wardrobe for additional security. The wardrobe normally has a full length mirror for guests to use just as they leave the room. The guest will find the following amenities inside the wardrobe: laundry lists; bath slippers, shoeshine tag; hangers; bathrobe; extra pillows and blankets. Some wardrobes have internal lighting so that the articles in the cupboard can be seen clearly.



Dresser

The dresser is a multipurpose piece of furniture. It has a base that acts as a dresser as well as the writing desk. Above it is mounted a mirror or a three-panelled one (in picture). The dresser has drawers where the guest will find guest stationery and sewing kits. On the top, the dresser will display menu cards, guest comment forms and other internal advertisement material.



Coffee Table and Chairs

The room is complete with a coffee table and two chairs. This is where magazines are displayed and where the guest can eat his/her meals ordered from the room service. It is the place where the guest can entertain his/her visitors.



Garden Furniture

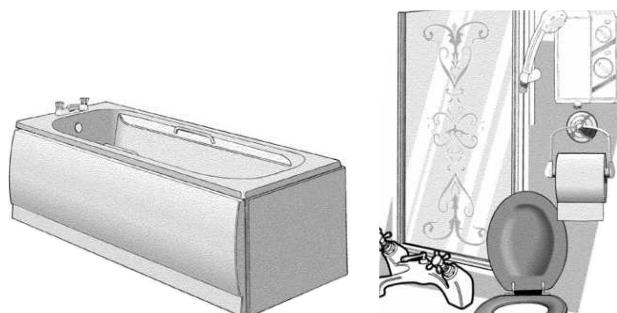
Many hotels have balconies, terrace gardens and patios. They provide garden furniture for these areas that can resist external temperatures and rain. A room attendant will have to maintain them as well. Chalet type of structures may provide verandas that will have seating appropriate for outdoor purposes. In hotels, with this feature, guests may want to eat their room service meals outdoors and enjoy the views and ambience that is provided.



▲ BATHROOM

The room attendant has to be familiar with the bathroom as it is an intimate part of a guest room. The bathroom will be normally found off the entrance passageway. A typical bathroom of a luxury hotel will have a bathtub with a shower curtain; counter where the sink is mounted that serves the place to display vanity sets, guest toiletries, merchandising material and perhaps a flower arrangement; a water closet; and rods for bath towels, face towels and hand towels.

Deluxe hotels may provide shower trays as well, while economy hotels will do away with bath tubs due to space restrictions and provide shower trays instead. Some budget hotels may just provide a shower with a shower curtain.



At this point it is important for the room attendant to know the difference between various terms used for bathing: a “**bath**” provides a bath tub to immerse the body, whereas a “**shower**” is

an alcove where a person bathes standing under a shower fountain. A “**shower tray**” is an enclosed cubicle with a shower fountain. Modern luxury hotels provide a “**Jacuzzi**” which is a tub with water-massage jets.

This completes the guest room which is a composite of a bedroom and bathroom with perhaps balconies, patios, terraces and verandas based on the design of the property. A shower tray is also the responsibility of the room attendant.



▲ GUEST AMENITIES

Now that we know the facilities which should be there in a guest room, let's glance at the complete checklists of guest amenities, equipment and supplies required for a room:

Room	Bathroom
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bed Linen ➤ Mini-Fridge ➤ Safety Deposit Locker ➤ Shoe Shine ➤ Room Service ➤ Television ➤ Music Channel ➤ Security ➤ Fire Safety ➤ Pourrie ➤ Coffee Maker ➤ Iron 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Hairdryer ➤ Hot & Cold Water ➤ Bathroom Linen ➤ Soaps ➤ Vanity Sets ➤ Shoe Mitts ➤ Sanitary Disposal



Guest Supplies in a Room

- Stationery with Pen
- Sewing Kit
- Bible/Koran/Gita
- Telephone Directory
- Service Directory
- Ashtrays
- Bedside Telephone Notepad with Pen
- Clothes Hangers
- Candles & Matchbox
- Laundry Bags
- “Do Not Disturb” Cards
- Breakfast Card
- Laundry Forms and Bags
- Guest Comment Forms
- Room Service Menu and Tent Cards

Guest Supplies in a Bathroom

- Shoe Mitts
- Soaps/Soup Dish
- Toilet Rolls
- Toilet Tissues
- Blade Dispenser
- Shower Cap
- Vanity Kit
- Disposal Bags



GUIDELINES TO SELECT GUEST ROOM FURNITURE

Ease of Maintenance

Furniture should be easy to clean and kept spotless. The attendant should be able to reach all the corners and gaps in furniture joints where dust and debris can accumulate. This factor becomes especially critical in a quick turnaround hotel.

Lightweight

Most furniture must be easy to move around so that one can clean the surfaces below and around it. Some heavyweight furniture are unavoidable like cots or TV cabinets in which case it is better to buy them with castors for easy manoeuverability.

Replaceability

Like everything else, furniture is bound to deplete with the passage of time. It is recommended to buy such furniture that can be easily substituted.

Multipurpose

It is best to buy furniture that can have many uses like the writing table that can double up as a dresser. Hence, it can be positioned in front of the mirror. The wardrobe can have multi-sections and shelves to hang clothes or store folded clothes, place to store blankets and counterpanes, a shelf to house the safety deposit box and drawers for small items.

Cost

This factor is paramount as furniture is bought in volume resulting in high capital cost to the investors. Furniture must be elegant yet cost efficient.

Durability

Naturally we would like the furniture to last long since it is expensive. It should be able to withstand daily use. Durability depends on the type of wood used; the number of joints infused; the kind of adhesive used; long-lasting hinges, locks, handles, draw railings, etc.; protective varnishing; and cushions with washable covers.

Guest Comfort

It is every hotelier's desire to provide his or her guest a safe and comfortable stay. Special care is taken in selecting mattresses, pillows, ergo-friendly furniture with rounded edges to prevent any kind of damage.

An executive housekeeper is usually trained in the sources from where to get good furniture. She is able to identify good construction and check the attributes from the point of her staff servicing them.

Key Terms



Bath	A bathroom with a bath tub
Guest Room	A composite space of a bedroom and bathroom
Guest Amenities	Facilities in a room for a guest
Guest Supplies	Consumable guest conveniences
Jacuzzi	A tub with water massage jets
Luggage rack	A furniture to hold baggage
Shower	A bathroom with an overhead shower fountain
Shower tray	An enclosed shower area in a bathroom
Suite	A two-room set
Wardrobe	A cupboard

Review Quiz



Short Notes

List the Following

1. Room furniture and fixtures
2. Guest amenities in a guest room
3. Guest supplies in a guest room
4. Bathroom supplies

13

Rules on a Guest Floor

Learning Objective



To familiarise the reader with the rules on a guest floor in a hotel.

▲ INTRODUCTION

Room attendants must follow some floor rules that project professionalism and efficiency ensuring least inconvenience to guests. The floor and rooms are quite private and personal for guests and so they are concerned about the people who frequent these places. The guests trust the room attendants who are *privy* to their rooms and belongings. The room attendant is issued the master keys by the Desk Control Supervisor. He/She signs for this facility and therefore, becomes responsible for its safekeeping. The issuing of the master key to the room attendant also signifies the fact that trust has been placed on him/her by both the management and guest to access guest floors and rooms.

▲ RULES ON A GUEST FLOOR

To uphold this trust, the following rules must be strictly observed on the floor:

1. Room Attendants must always be in uniform and should appear properly groomed when entering the floor as this reflects on the image of the property.
2. They should reach the floor by the service elevator and enter the floor through the service entrance. The guest elevators are meant for guests only.
3. Speech among the floor staff must be restricted to the minimum. In case communication is necessary, this must be done in low tones even when guests are not in sight. It is possible some guests are asleep and want no disturbance.



4. Unnecessary movements like running or jumping should be avoided. Such movements can disturb guests in the room.
5. The passageway must be kept free of equipment, trays or trolleys. Maid's carts are kept along the wall (as shown in the picture). Used room service trays are stored along the wall outside the door for pick-up by room service staff.
6. Room attendants may enter only those rooms that are allotted to them. They are not permitted to enter other rooms as a precaution towards security and accountability.
7. Guest room doors must be kept wide open when servicing a room. This notifies the supervisor as to which room is being cleaned and where to find the room attendant. It is also a protection of the room attendant from undesirable guests.
8. When speaking to a guest in the room for any reason, the room attendant should stand at the doorway and not inside the room, which is viewed as an infringement of the guest's privacy.
9. The floor telephone must be attended to promptly. Continuous ringing of a phone can be irksome to guests in the neighbouring rooms.
10. Room attendants must greet all guests with a smile, according to the time of the day. It is a professional courtesy and creates a friendly environment on the floor.
11. Staff must be helpful and should readily give information about hotel services, when requested. Misinformation can lead to dissatisfaction of the guests.
12. Housekeeping staff must be alert to guest movements and report anybody suspicious on the floor, to the floor supervisor and ultimately the security.
13. The guest is always right. Arguing with a guest is prohibited. Unreasonable guests may be referred to the floor supervisor.
14. It is prohibited to enter rooms with a "Do-not-Disturb" (DND) sign. The DND feature is provided by the hotels worldwide to permit guests to choose to rest without disturbance. Guests may have checked in late or getting over jet lag. This particularly applies to airline crews who check in at odd hours especially when they have been on international flights.
15. If a DND sign is on for a long time, this may be reported to the floor supervisor who will take further decisions and actions. Long DND signs, especially those that span over two shifts, are unusual. A guest could be sick and in need of medical help. There have been many cases of death.
16. If the guest returns when the room is being cleaned, the room attendant may ask the guest if he/she could continue or come later.
17. In spite of following the room entry procedure, if the guest is found asleep or awake, one should apologise and quickly withdraw and shut the door softly. Sometimes the room attendant may hear the sound of the shower in the bathroom indicating the reason for the guest not attending to the door knock.
18. Attendants must always follow the procedure of entering a room even if the room is declared vacant. The procedure includes knocking the door and announcing "Housekeeping" which is to be repeated after 15 seconds if there is no reply. This is required, especially in busy hotels that have frequent check-ins. The status of an arrival is known to the room attendant much later than the event.

19. Attendants must always accompany the room service staff when they are clearing trays, and maintenance staff when they are attending to repairs in the room. The room attendant is the custodian of the rooms allotted to him/her and that he/she will be held accountable for any property of the guest or hotel missing from the room.
20. Attendants should not open the room for any unauthorised personnel. Resident guests are expected to have their own keys. Other guests should not enter at any cost.
21. It is important to report any suspicious articles like arms and drugs to the floor supervisor who may call the security for further inspection.
22. Housekeeping personnel cannot make external calls from guest rooms or the floor telephone.
23. It is important for security reasons for the room attendants to try and familiarise themselves with the faces of resident guests as a control measure. While this may always not be possible, it is a good practice.
24. Garbage and soiled linen must be dumped in the designated hampers of the maid's cart. Such items must be away from the guest view.
25. Caution guests of wet floors in the corridors (if uncarpeted) or in the room. The correct practice is to put 'Wet Floor' signs as a precaution.
26. Guest belongings found in departure rooms should be immediately reported to the floor supervisor. He/she will check if the guests have checked out or are still paying their bills with the front office cashier. If the guests have checked out, then the floor supervisor will follow the Lost and Found procedure.
27. The room attendant must return the master key to the Desk Control Supervisor at the end of the shift.
28. Room attendants are generally not supposed to accept gifts or tips from guests. However, sometimes a guest may be offended with a refusal in which case the gift must be mentioned to the floor supervisor who will sign off a gate pass to permit an employee to take it out of the hotel.

Key Terms



DND

"Do not Disturb" sign

Master Key

The key that accesses all doors

Room Service

The department that provides food and beverage to guests in their respective rooms

Review Quiz



True or False

1. A room attendant has the master key.
2. A room attendant may enter the floor in casual wear as formal clothes get dirty.
3. A room attendant is authorised to use the guest elevators.
4. Room attendants may enter the rooms on other floors.

5. During cleaning procedures, the doors of the guest room must be kept closed so that other guests cannot see.
6. Room attendants are responsible for security on the floor.
7. When speaking to the guest of an occupied room, always enter the room to keep the discussion confidential.
8. Knock on the door even if it is declared vacant.
9. The room attendant must accompany all other legitimate staff into a guest room.
10. A room attendant must report Lost and Found items to the front desk to catch the guest before he/she leaves the premises.

The Maid's Cart

Learning Objective



To familiarise the reader with the maid's cart which is the single most important equipment for a room attendant.

▲ INTRODUCTION

The maid's cart is a trolley meant to stock a given number of linen, supplies and equipment to service an allotted number of rooms. Each maid, after receiving her room assignment, should check her supplies against a standard checklist to avoid needless trips. The maid is responsible for the condition, cleanliness and appearance of her cart.



▲ DESIGN OF A MAID'S CART

The lower shelf of the cart is used to carry heavier items like mattress protectors, bed sheets and night spreads. The middle and top shelves stock pillow slips and bath linen. **Linen** will include:

Linen Items	Stocking Standards	Standard Dimensions
Night spreads	1 each per bed	24" × 108"
Bed sheets	2 each per bed	24" × 108"
Pillow cases	2 each per bed	24" × 32"
Bath towels	1 for each guest	25" × 45"
Face towels	1 for each guest	9½" × 10½"
Hand towels	1 for each guest	6" × 7 ½ "
Bath mats	1 for each bathroom	24" × 42"
Mattress protectors	Few to replace as necessary	

These items should be arranged in neat stacks. The top tray should be arranged with the following **guest supplies** as given in Table 14.1.

Table 14.1 List of Guest Supplies

Room	Bathroom
➤ Water tumblers	➤ Gargle tumblers
➤ Service directory	➤ Shoe mitts
➤ “Do-not-Disturb” cards	➤ Soaps/Soup dish
➤ Guest stationery	➤ Toilet rolls
➤ Ball point pens	➤ Toilet tissues
➤ Bibles/Gita/Koran	➤ Shower caps
➤ Ashtrays	➤ Soap suds
➤ Match boxes	➤ Shampoo bottles
➤ Laundry forms	➤ Disposable bags
➤ Laundry bags	➤ Vanity kits
➤ Clothes hangers	➤ Vanity display
➤ Candle stands	➤ Baskets
➤ Scribble pads	➤ Water tumblers
➤ Guesthouse rules	➤ Tent cards for the bathroom
➤ Guest comment forms	
➤ Sewing kits	
➤ Breakfast knob cards	
➤ Plastic shirt bags	
➤ “Polish-my-shoe” cards	
➤ Yellow pages directory	
➤ Telephone directory	
➤ Tent cards for promotions	
➤ Room service menus	
➤ Room service beverage list	

In addition, the maid's cart stores the following **cleaning equipment** placed below the trash bag of the cart:

- Feather Brush
- Dustpan
- Mop
- Sponges
- Clothes Duster



- Carpet Brushes
- Vacuum Cleaner
- Clean Scrub Bucket
- Scrub Brush

Following **cleaning agents** are kept on the top tray for easy access:

- Disinfectants
- Dettol
- Deodoriser
- Room Freshener
- Vim
- Sanifresh
- Liquid Soap
- Naphthalene Balls
- Anol



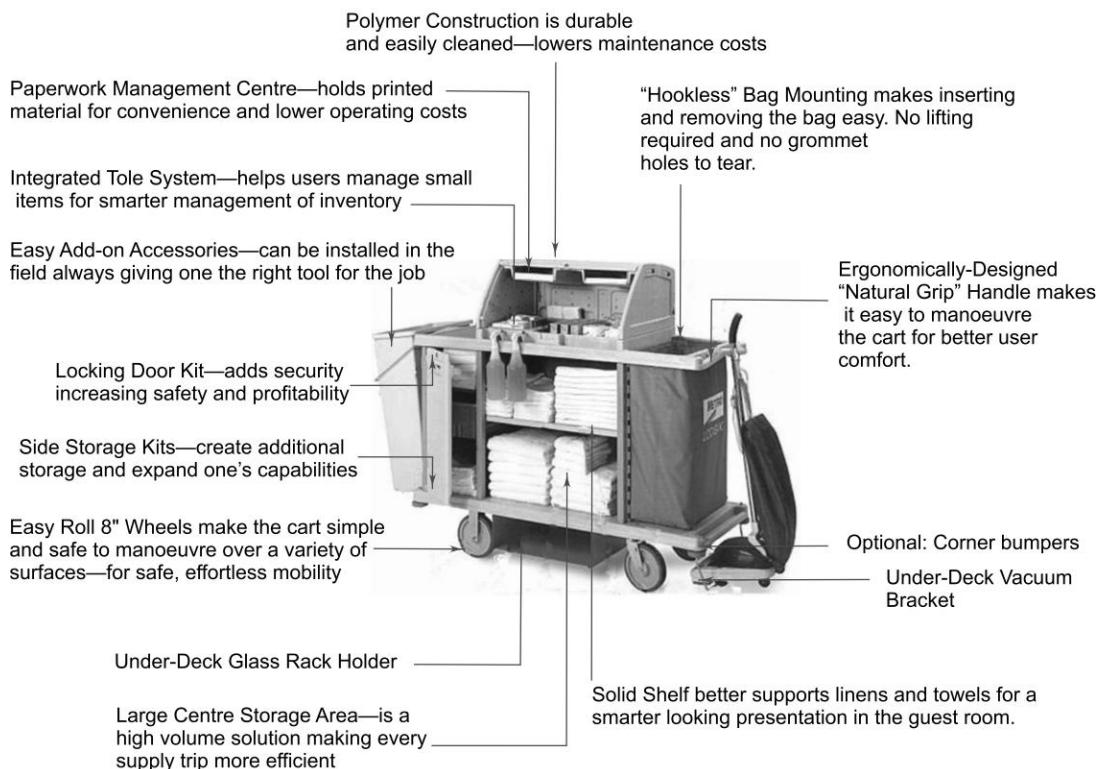
These supplies are procured by the room attendant from the floor linen room. After stocking the cart, the room attendant proceeds to the section of rooms on the floor that are assigned to her. Maid's carts are placed along the wall of the corridor on the side of the room to be serviced. The cart should be positioned so as to service a minimum of two rooms to minimise trips to the cart and thereby reduce the fatigue factor of room attendants.

Maid's carts come in different materials—wood, metal, plastic and rubber. When selecting maid's carts, consideration is given to it being lightweight to ensure easy mobility by the maid. Heavy carts also pucker corridor carpets. In fact, when purchasing the cart, due consideration is given to the built of the housekeeping staff in a country. The wheels of the cart must be of sturdy construction and should be oiled well periodically to ensure smooth movement. The average size of wheels for good manoeuverability is 8 inches. The carts can range in dimensions as given in Table 14.2.

Table 14.2 Types of Maid's Cart

Feature	Dimension	Alternatives
Shelves	2–4	
Bags	1–4	Cloth, Poly-Vinyl, Nylon, Slim Jim
Wheels	8"	
Length	55"-65"	
Width	19"-22"	
Height	47"-53"	
Cabinet width	30"	
Cabinet depth	18"-19"	
Cabinet height	36"-42"	

The diagram below gives some of the considerations shown by the designers to make the room attendant's job easier.



Pictures below give the type of carts of different material:



Wooden Cart with one bag



Plastic Cart with 4 bags



Metal Cart with two bags



Rubbermaid Cart

Slim Jim Waste Container
to substitute for Bags

Key Terms

Maid's Cart

A housekeeping trolley equipped to service several rooms



Review Quiz

1. List the linen typically stocked in a maid's cart.
2. List the guest supplies stocked in the maid's cart.
3. What are the cleaning agents stocked in a maid's cart?



Cleaning a Room



Learning Objective

To help the reader learn the procedure of cleaning a guest room as per the international standards.

◀ INTRODUCTION

Prior to reporting on a floor, the room attendant is allotted a list of rooms with the status of each given by the front-office receptionist. This is given to her at the time of briefing by the floor supervisor. The floor supervisor controls the output with the Daily Work Report as given in Fig. 15.1.

✓ Check for completed rooms:

Status Code: **V** = Vacant, **OOO** = Out of order, **EA** = Early arrival, **CO** = Check out room, **DND** = Do not Disturb, **O** = Occupied

Fig. 15.1 Daily Work Report

The room attendant checks the status of rooms allotted to her on a checklist. She prioritises the rooms to be attended to according to occupancy codes. First she should attend to checkout rooms to prepare them for sale. This would also apply to vacant rooms which are clean but need a quick top-up service to prepare for sale. She would next attend to those rooms with the tag “Clean my Room” left by resident guests when they leave the room for the day. She would attend to the occupied rooms and stayover rooms last. She must avoid the rooms with a “Do-not-Disturb” or “Privacy Please” sign displayed.

► PROCEDURE FOR CHECKING A ROOM

Given below is a step-by-step procedure for checking a room:

Entering the Room

1. Knock on the door with the knuckles and not with an object, announcing “Housekeeping.”
2. If there is no answer, after ten seconds knock the door the second time announcing “Housekeeping.”
3. If there is still no answer, use the master key to open the door announcing “Housekeeping” and knocking the door when ajar. If someone is sleeping, quietly withdraw noting the room as DND on the checklist. If the guest is awake politely ask if she can clean the room or come later. When relatively sure that there is no occupant, open the door wide and hang the door sign “Housekeeping Cleaning Room” on the door knob/handle.
4. Position the maid’s cart along the corridor wall adjacent to the room being serviced to keep the passage free.
5. Switch off the room air conditioner or heating. Draw all curtains and open all windows to air the room.
6. Switch all the lights in the room to ascertain if any bulbs are fused.

Guest Belonging Check

7. Check departure rooms for Guest Lost and Found items and report them immediately to the Control Desk.
8. Pick guest clothes and hang them in the wardrobe in occupied rooms.
9. Empty all ashtrays into a wastepaper basket in the room. Collect other loose trash on tables and floors and throw them in the wastepaper basket checking for guest belongings.
10. Check wastepaper baskets for guest’s belongings before emptying them into the trash bag of the maid’s cart.
11. Collect all loose papers and magazines and stack them neatly on the desk.
12. Contact the laundry for pick-up in case laundry bags with guest laundry are noticed.

Maintenance Check

The room attendant has to check the room for maintenance requirements and report the same to the Control Desk. He will enter such maintenance requirements in the room checklist. The checks included in maintenance check are given in Fig. 15.2.

Electrical	Boiler	Mechanical	Plumbing	Civil	Carpentry	Electronic
Faulty air-conditioning or heating	Supply of hot water in guest bathrooms	Safety boxes	Faulty taps and showers	Any masonry work	Broken or shaky furniture	T.V. not working
Fused bulbs		Door and window locks	Blocked drains and water closets	Seepages, chipped painting	Broken glass panes and mirrors	
Non-working lights and lamps			WC flushing systems		Wardrobe doors	
Defective plugs and plug points			Wall leakage			
Short-circuits						
Faulty geysers						
Mini-bars						
Microwave ovens						
Kettles and hairdryers						

Fig. 15.2 List of Maintenance Check

▲ MAKING THE BED

Bed making requires technical expertise in a hotel because of the sheer volume of beds to be made in a given shift. If a room attendant has to prepare 16–20 rooms, as per the prevalent standards, in a shift, he has potentially 32–40 beds to make. This is in addition to cleaning the rooms and bathrooms. It is here that his productivity is determined. Given below are the detailed steps for making a bed:

1. Pull the bed away from the headboard by tugging the bed from the foot of the bed. All the beds in hotels are mounted on wheels for easy manoeuvrability. Check under the cot for trash or guest belongings.
2. Remove all soiled linen from the bed. Shake them out for any guest articles that may be misplaced in the folds.
3. Deposit the soiled linen in the linen hamper of the maid's cart.



4. Check the mattress protector for any stains or spoilage. If so, change with a fresh one. If not, invert mattresses over-side and end-to-end to ensure even use, every alternate day. Adjust the skirting so that they fall evenly on the floor.
5. Shake out the mattress protector and spread it again on the mattress. Change the protector if soiled or smelling.
6. Clean the headboard with a feather duster.



7. Open out a fresh lower sheet ensuring it is centred for even distribution on either side and tuck it securely at the head, sides and at the foot of the bed.
8. Mitre the corners following the sequence shown in the pictures below.



9. Open out the fresh top sheet wrong-side up and distribute it evenly on the lower sheet. Ensure that the laundry crease is in the same line as the inner sheet for even distribution. The sheet hem must be evenly pulled up to the headboard. Tuck this sheet at the footboard.
10. Open out the blanket and distribute it 10 centimetres lower than the top sheet and distribute it evenly on the top sheet using the crease as described earlier for even distribution. Ensure that the blanket labels are at the foot of the bed. Pull the blanket eight inches from the headboard to position the pillows and create a fold for the guest to slide in.



11. Fold the top sheet at the head of the bed, over the blanket and fold the blanket and top sheet once again.



12. The blanket and the top sheet are tucked uniformly under the mattress on both sides and that the corners at the foot of the bed are mitered.



13. Fold the corner of the blanket and top sheet as shown in the picture for the guest to easily slide into the bed. (Some hotels will do this only during turndown service)



14. Cover the pillows with fresh pillow covers. Fluff the pillow and even out pillow covers to look full, neat and tidy. Since pillow slips are usually larger than the pillow, the excess slip should be neatly folded downward. The side of the pillow which has the fold should be away from guest view. In the turn-down service, a breakfast knob is placed on the pillow.



15. Cover the completed bed with a bed spread ensuring it is right side up and falling evenly all around the bed to look appealing. The bedspread corners must fall to the floor in an aesthetic manner.



16. Tuck the bedspread under the pillows to complete the bed.



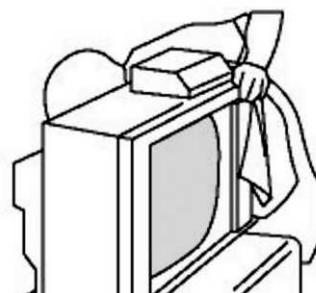
17. Push the bed back towards the headboard ensuring that it is aligned.
 18. Put spare blankets (upon guest's request) in plastic covers and store in the top shelf or lower shelf of the wardrobe in the guest room. The blankets are folded in a manner where the hotel logo is at the top.



► CLEANING

Room Cleaning

1. Place room service trays and trolleys outside along the wall of the corridor wall and call room service from the room telephone to clear them.
2. Commence the dusting of all surfaces in a clockwise direction in the room. Clean all surfaces in a circular motion with a dry duster. Use a hand dustpan to collect any unwanted matter on the surfaces without lifting dust in the



air. Ensure that all surfaces are spotlessly clean. Pay special attention to nooks and corners especially those points that may not be visible to the guest.

3. Use a stiff bristled brush or vacuum cleaner with the appropriate attachment to clean upholstered furniture.
4. Replace stationery as per standard numbers prescribed by management. The normal standard is six letterheads and six envelopes. Some hotels also provide postcards in the stationery kit.
5. Dust and replace each item on dressers, bureaus, and desks. Special attention must be given to the display of publicity materials as prescribed by the management.
6. Clean lampshades with a feather duster. Lift lamps and clean under the base. Replace lamps and adjust the lampshade.
7. Disinfect the telephone mouthpiece with Dettol (or any other disinfectant). Wipe the balance of the telephone with a damp cloth. Check phone for the dial tone.
8. Clean the mirror with a dry cloth first and then spray with a glass cleaner and clean dry to make it sparkling.
9. Dust the wardrobe, shelves, hangers and rods. Brush the wardrobe floor. Supply new laundry bags and replace missing hangers and underliners.
10. Dust both sides of all room doors, baseboards, window sills, inside and out, bottom and centre sashes of window curtains, sash rails, etc.
11. Clean all the picture frames.
12. Clean floor heaters or air-conditioning units.

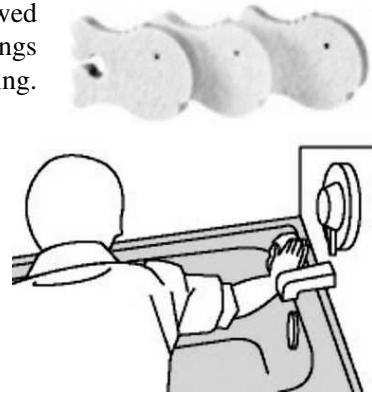


Bathroom Cleaning

1. Open windows (if any) and vents.
2. Shake out all soiled bathroom linen and deposit them in the linen hamper of the maid's cart.
3. Collect trash from the bathroom dustbin and deposit it in the trash bag of the maid's cart.
4. Clean the ceiling and air-conditioning vents for cobwebs.
5. Wipe bulbs and light shades with a dry cloth. Check that all the bulbs are working.
6. Wipe down tile walls using a sponge or damp cloth. Follow with a dry cloth ensuring that tiles are free of water marks.
7. Clean the mirror first with a dry cloth, spray glass cleaner and clean with a dry cloth. Ensure that the mirror is smudge-free. Clean the medicine cabinet.



8. Clean the wash basin counter with a wet sponge first followed by a dry sponge (in occupied rooms, shift guest belongings from one side of the wash basin to the other while cleaning. Replace them as the guest had left it).
9. Wipe dry the shower curtain with a sponge. Scrub and clean dry the bath tub ensuring that the water faucets and shower are sparkling and in working condition.
10. Scrub the toilet bowl and bidet using the special brush or mop and the appropriate sanitiser. The inner rim must be clean, ensuring it is dry and spotless inside. Clean the Water Closet (WC) from the outside with a sponge till it is sparkling and dry. Clean the lid and toilet seat of the toilet bowl dry and close it by placing the disinfectant label.
11. Replenish fresh bath linen and guest supplies as per the number of persons in the room with the following standards:



Linen	Supplies
One bath towel per person	2 toilet rolls
One face towel	1 bath tumbler per person
One hand towel	1 soap dish
One bath mat	2 soap cakes per person (25 gms. each) 1 candle stand with candle 1 ashtray with matchbox (in smoking rooms only)
	1 shoe mitt 1 vanity case 1 shower cap 2 disposable bags 1 blade dispenser (if not built into the wall)
	1 face tissue box 1 waste bin Promotional tent cards

12. Scrub the floor with the prescribed mop and ensure it is dry.
13. Finally close the windows; shut all the lights and close the bathroom door.



Final Cleaning of the Room

1. Close the windows.
2. Vacuum the carpets (or brush it if vacuum cleaners are not available) from the window towards the exit door.
3. Arrange furniture if necessary.

4. Switch on the air-conditioning or heating at the minimum temperature for a departure room and at the same temperature has the guest left it in an occupied room.
5. Have a last look at the room referring to the checklist for the completion of work.

The Dirty Dozen

Certain areas in a room or bathroom elude the room attendant's attention and dust tends to accumulate in these areas. Such areas are normally hidden from a guest's eye. However, the cleanliness of these areas shows the standard of cleaning of the hotel. Experience shows that the following areas are overlooked and appropriately called the "The Dirty Dozen." They are:

1. The top of door edges and the ceiling
2. Air-conditioning ducts and diffuser grills
3. Under bathroom counters and grab bar
4. Areas beneath the dresser table
5. Behind the WC bowl and the S-trap
6. In the toilet roll niche
7. Faucet nozzle filter
8. Toilet vents
9. Top of picture frames
10. Headboard
11. Rear surface of doors
12. Interior surfaces of drawers

Turn-Down Service

Most of the room cleaning is done in the morning and afternoon shift, the exception being rooms with a "Do-not-Disturb" sign. Such rooms are normally occupied by late night/early morning arrivals, especially crews. All occupied rooms, however, require an evening turn-down service to prepare the room for the night. The room attendant will follow the procedure given below:

1. Knock and enter the room as per the procedure given above.
2. Put all light switches on to check that they are working.
3. Draw heavy curtains to give privacy to guests at night.
4. Hang loose guest clothes in the wardrobe.
5. Take off the bed cover, fold it neatly and store it in the wardrobe on the top or lower shelf.
6. Fold one corner of the blanket to enable a guest to slide into the bed easily (picture alongside).
7. Place a breakfast knob card along with a rosette/chocolate, as prescribed, on the pillow (picture alongside).
8. Remove soiled glasses and bottles, if any. Replenish glasses and fill the water flask with drinking water (where applicable).
9. Empty and clean ashtrays and waste bins.

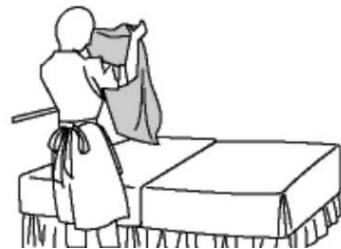


10. Replace soiled bath linen as per the standards given above.
11. Replenish missing toiletries and other supplies.
12. Set the climate control temperature to the minimum.
13. Turn off all lights except the passage lamp/night lamp as prescribed.
14. Shut the door firmly.

Top-up Service

This is a service provided at the specific request of a guest. This normally happens when a guest had a party or meeting in the room and would like the room in order before he/she retires. The room attendant would complete the following tasks:

1. Remove soiled dishes, bottles and glasses.
2. Remove room service trays, if any.
3. Dust the room where necessary.
4. Replace used guest supplies.
5. Empty and clean ashtrays and waste basket.
6. Arrange the bed properly.
7. Replace soiled bathroom linen as per the standards discussed above.
8. Flush the WC.
9. Wipe dry the counter top around the wash basin.
10. Use a room refresher, if necessary.
11. Replace water tumblers and fill water flasks with fresh water.



Review Quiz

True or False



1. A room attendant must knock once before entering a room.
2. In the departure room, a room attendant will first check for maintenance requirements.
3. Broken mirrors are fixed by masons.
4. During cleaning, the windows are kept open.
5. The room attendant cleans the room in clockwise direction.
6. Each guest gets two bath towels, one for the face and the other for the shower.
7. Each bathroom is supplied with one toilet roll.
8. In the evening service, the room attendant places a breakfast card on the pillow.
9. During evening service, used bath linen is exchanged with fresh ones.
10. A second service is provided when a guest requests it.

Part-6

HOUSEKEEPING CONTROL DESK

Housekeeping Control Desk

Learning Objective



To help the reader learn the importance of the Control Desk—its systems and procedures.

▲ ROLE OF THE CONTROL DESK

The Housekeeping Control Desk is the nerve centre of the entire housekeeping department. Its efficiency determines the effectiveness of the housekeeping function. It is a focal point for the dissemination of information and communication to various points in the Housekeeping Department as well as co-ordination with other departments principally the front-office and engineering. The location of the Control Desk is normally adjacent to the Executive Housekeeper's office so that she knows the pulse of her department. This desk is manned 24 hours, to keep the lifeline of housekeeping communication open 24 × 7. To reduce workforce and the introduction of superior telecommunication equipment, modern hotels have created common communication services between departments.

The role of the Housekeeping Control Desk is to facilitate communication to various parts of the hotel. This role is exercised in many forms:

- A large display board provides the following information to housekeeping staff:
 1. Room numbers of groups in the house.
 2. Room numbers of crews in the house.



3. Night cleaning schedule.
 4. VIPs in the house.
 5. Weekly cleaning schedules.
 6. Daily roster of supervisors and staff.
 7. Banquet function lists.
 8. New policy announcements by the management.
 9. Declared national holidays.
 10. Extra items given to guests e.g. blankets, orthopaedic mattresses, etc.
 11. Any other significant information.
- The desk control attendant beeps pagers of floor supervisors, room attendants and housekeeping public area personnel who are issued this communication equipment. The staff is trained to reach the nearest telephone available, for example, the floor telephone located at a mid-point of a corridor (usually the guest lift foyers). With the passage of time, two-way walkie-talkies replaced pagers. Supervisors nowadays may be issued mobile phones for such communication. Recent developments have been palm computers.
- Networked computers with maintenance and front-office have facilitated real-time communication on matters of room co-ordination and maintenance.

The role of the room attendant is to:

- Receive departure room numbers from the front office and transmit them to the appropriate floor supervisor for cleaning. Likewise, the floor supervisor informs the desk attendant once rooms are cleaned and ready for sale. The desk attendant accordingly informs the front office receptionists. This coordination is extremely vital.
- Inform housekeeping floor staff about VIPs in the house. The front office alerts the Control Desk of such arrivals. Room attendants take extra care in VIP rooms as follows: (a) special cleaning of the room; (b) equipping the rooms with additional amenities as per the policy of the management such as bathrobes, bath slippers, extra soaps, hangers, and glass tumblers, vanity sets and flower arrangements.
- Inform floor staff of groups expected and those in the house. Groups arrive and depart together, which means that the rooms are cleaned at the same time and within strict time parameters. Sometimes, the arrival of a group in a busy hotel could overlap with the departure of another. Since check-in and check-out times are the same (i.e. noon), housekeeping staff are under pressure to speedily prepare the vacated departure rooms, to allocate volume rooms to a group.
- Inform floor staff of expected and existing crews in the house. Normally airline crews are allotted rooms on the same floor. Like groups, airline crews arrive and depart at the same time. Very often the arrival of a crew and the departure of another may overlap. In such circumstances, it is important for the allotted rooms to be cleared within a short period of time. Due to the variation in international timings, it is the crew rooms that display the “Do-not-Disturb” sign at the time when other guests are out.
- Co-ordinate with the front office for the handover of clean rooms for sale to guests. After inspection, floor supervisors hand over clean rooms to the control desk. It is imperative for the desk attendant to immediately hand over clean rooms to the front office who are always under pressure to make rooms available for occupation.

- Work as the main point of contact with the resident guests of the hotel. Hotel room directories provide an extension number to guests in case they require housekeeping services. This extension come to the Control Desk (or the common communications services provider). The Control Desk attendant receives the requests of guests such as demands for extra blankets, babysitting services, etc. The Control Desk attendant transmits these requests to the concerned floor supervisor for further action.
- Control keys, including master keys, are required which can open any set of doors on a floor or elsewhere. Following keys are of significance: (a) Room Attendants are issued a bunch of keys for an allotted section of guest rooms on a floor. (b) Floor Supervisors are issued floor keys to open any guest room door on a floor. (c) The Executive Housekeeper is issued a Grand Master Key which can open any lock in the hotel. This is a vital key and carefully guarded. (d) Storeroom keys are issued to Assistant Housekeepers or the Executive Housekeeper only, as the stores usually contain valuable inventories. The department has several stores such as the linen store, uniform store, equipment store, guest supplies store, detergent store, furniture store, floor pantries and the general housekeeping store. Keys, especially master keys, are critical and need to be controlled rigidly lest it fall into the wrong hands opening the possibility of theft. There are several instances where hotels have had to change their locks at great cost because the master key went missing. The keys are kept in a secure cupboard or vault. A Key Control Register (discussed later) is maintained. Modern hotels have replaced it with key cards with digital authorisation to access. To ensure safety, master keys are hung on a large key ring so that the key cannot be misplaced in a pocket. Others have waist belts which are tied around the waists of the supervisors. The issue of master keys is documented in a Master Key Register, which is discussed later.

▲ CO-ORDINATION WITH THE ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

Another vital area of co-ordination for the desk control attendant is with the Engineering Department. All room attendants and public area housemen register maintenance requests with the control desk attendant. The maintenance procedure is as follows:

1. The desk attendant records the maintenance request in maintenance register (Fig. 16.1), mentioning the room number, nature of complaint, and the name of the person who lodged the complaint.
2. She then prepares a Maintenance Slip (Fig. 16.2) in duplicate. She retains the second copy in her book and forwards the first copy to the Engineering Department.
3. The Engineering Department prepares a Work Order Slip (Fig. 16.3) and sends the concerned technician directly to the floor.
4. The room attendant or floor supervisor opens the guest room door and oversees the work till completion.
5. When the work is completed satisfactorily, the room attendant or floor supervisor signs the Work Order Slip to acknowledge the successful completion of the task.
6. The technician hands over the signed Work Order Slip to the desk attendant who enters the same in the maintenance register against the appropriate complaint earlier registered.

MAINTENANCE REGISTER						
Date:						
Room Number	Time Complaint Lodged	Nature of Complaint	Lodged by	Received by	Time of Completion	Signature

Fig. 16.1 Maintenance Register

MAINTENANCE SLIP		
Room Number:	Date:	Time:
Nature of Complaint		
Control Desk Supervisor Signature: _____		

Fig. 16.2 Maintenance Slip

WORK ORDER									
Room Number:		Date:		Time:					
Carpenter	Mason	Mechanic	Plumber	Electrician	A/C - Heating Tech.	AV/Audio Tech.	IT	Other	
Nature of Complaint									
Name of Technician assigned:									
Date of Completion: _____				Time of Completion: _____					
Housekeeping Supervisor Signature: _____					Technician's Signature: _____				

Fig. 16.3 Work Order Slip

The Engineering or Maintenance Department of modern hotels assigns an all-purpose engineer to handle routine maintenance. He is known as the Ken-Fixit man. He moves on guest floors with a maintenance trolley equipped with essential tools to manage all routine maintenance failures. This system has ensured a speedy attention to maintenance requirements.

The Maintenance Department also employs a preventive maintenance schedule during the year. Preventive maintenance is a programme of equipment upkeep so that breakdowns do not occur. The maintenance will coordinate with housekeeping to withdraw equipment in service to check them and prolong their serviceability. Housekeeping must honour the preventive maintenance schedule for their good. The Maintenance Department maintains a preventive maintenance record of equipment in the hotel.

Modern hotels are hooked through computer networks with the engineering department, which may translate the forms above into digital format. The communication centre may also act as the mode of communication between guests, housekeeping and engineering.



▲ TYPES OF REGISTERS AND FILES MAINTAINED

- 1. Register for guest messages:** The guest message register (Fig. 16.4) keeps all special messages/requests of guests. Messages could be requests for second service, additional blankets, fresh towels, cribs, maintenance requirements, and orthopaedic mattresses. Modern hotels maintain computerised databases of maintenance history for analysis and decision-making. The efficiency of the department is measured by the response times to such requests. Most hotels have supplies in the floor pantry to give immediate service. Today hotels with long corridors have satellite floor pantries on a floor in addition to the main floor pantry. This is to reduce the walking time to and fro the main pantry and also to provide quick service to the guest.

GUEST MESSAGE REGISTER								
Date:								
Room No.	Time of Request	Nature of Request	Received by	Signature	Action Taken	Time	Service Completed	Time

Fig. 16.4 Guest Message Register

2. **Babysitting services:** The Housekeeping Department normally provides babysitters to guests. Sometimes, the room attendants offer to do this service outside their shift, to earn some extra money or qualified babysitters are requisitioned from housekeeping workforce suppliers. Requests for such services are entered into this register (Fig. 16.5) and the appropriate action is taken.

BABYSITTING REGISTER									
Date	Room No.	Name of Guest	Time From	Time To	Received by	Person Assigned	Sitter's signature and Time-in	Sitter's signature and Time out	

Fig. 16.5 Babysitting Register

3. **Master Key Register:** This register controls the issue and receipt back of master keys issued to housekeeping supervisors. The register simply has the date and time of issue; the signature of the person issuing the key and the one receiving it. The recipient of the key has to return the key at the end of the shift as part of signing off procedure at which time it is acknowledged in the register by the signature of the control desk attendant.
4. **Room Checklists file:** A floor supervisor checks each room prepared by the room attendant before the room is handed to the front office for sale. He uses the room checklist (Fig. 16.6) to guide him to look at standards set by the management, during her inspection. He ticks the items found okay and makes comments on things not upto the standards. The deficiencies will have to be rectified by the room attendant immediately. The checklist reflects the performance of the room attendant as well as the supervisor. It is handy to be referred in the event of a complaint from the guest. All room checklists are deposited by the floor Supervisors at the Control Desk and filed for a month. If a complaint about cleaning standards in a room is received, the housekeeper would know exactly which attendant was responsible and whether he checked the particular aspect under complaint.
5. **Carpet Shampoo Register:** The register has the schedule of carpet shampooing and the data indicating whether the schedule is being followed or not.
6. **Room Occupancy Reports File:** All room occupancy reports are filed. The room occupancy reports are important to the Executive Housekeeper to determine the level of workload anticipated so as to provide the necessary staff to meet the exigencies each day.
7. **Duty Roster File:** The duty roster is filed for information if required by any one in the department.
8. **Log Book:** It is the single most important register as it is here that the instructions given to the staff of the next shift are written. This log book is referred to by the supervisors at the beginning of any shift for instructions from the previous shift. The log book will also record room numbers of difficult guests, room numbers where rollaway beds have been provided, distribution of extra supplies, etc. The log book is a ruled register to write any information necessary.

Room Checklist		
Floor.....Room No.....Room Attendant's name.....Floor Supervisor's name.....		
Room Item	Tick OK	Comments
Wardrobe hangers		
Laundry lists		
Laundry bags		
Shoeshine card		
Wardrobe underliners		
Spare pillows		
Bed		
Side table		
Lamp bulb working		
Bible/Koran/Gita		
Pad & Pen		
Telephone directories		
xxxxxxxx		
xxxxxxxx		
Date:		Signature of Floor Supervisor:

Note: The sample form above is an abridged version for the sake of understanding the concept. The checklist is actually very exhaustive.

Fig. 16.6 Room Checklist

9. **Memo-book:** This book has reminder slips to the Maintenance Department for outstanding maintenances due (Fig. 16.7). This information is made in copies so as to alert the concerned housekeeping supervisor that work is incomplete. It is important to ensure that the guest does not face any inconvenience due to a lapse in maintenance or because rooms are not cleared for sale because of some fault in them.

Memo Book						
Work Order No.	Date	Description of Work	Location	Reported by	Date of Completion	Signature

Fig. 16.7 Memo Book

10. **Lost and Found Register:** It records the history of those items that were misplaced by guests and found by hotel staff for safekeeping till it is claimed. The details are given later in the Lost and Found procedure.
11. **Damaged Articles Register:** An account is kept of hotel property in guest rooms that have been damaged by guests or are missing during their stay. The record is created to claim for damages from the guest for replacement of the item, or to write-off from the inventory books. Figure 16.8 shows a damaged and missing register.

Damaged and Missing Register						
Sr. No.	Date & time	Description of Item	Name of Guest	Room No.	Reported by	Name of Room Attendant who serviced Room

Fig. 16.8 Damaged and Missing Register

12. **Store Requisition Book:** It is kept as a record of all the items that were requisitioned from stores for the purpose of inventory management and cost control (Fig. 16.9).

ABC Hotel	Dept.	Date	Stores Requisition
Sr. No.	Description of Item	Quantity Requested	Quantity Issued

Fig. 16.9 Stores Requisition Book

13. **Purchase Order Book:** Purchase Orders are originated by each department for their capital and operational requirements processed by the Purchase Department from the market. A record is kept of such purchases to tally with inventories and budgets.
14. **Departure Register:** The Control Desk Attendant maintains a meticulous account of all departure guest rooms. This acts as a check on the productivity of the room attendants as also as a record of any discrepancy with the front office. The format of the register is given in Fig. 16.10.

Departure Register						
Date:.....						
Room No.	Name of Guest	Time of Departure	Given by	Cleared by	Time	Signature

Fig. 16.10 Departure Register

It may be said that due to computerisation, most offices, including the Housekeeping Office, has gone paperless. Registers may be redundant in the near future, as most data is captured on computer databases.

▲ LOST AND FOUND

'Lost and Found' is a term used in hotels for the articles left or misplaced by guests in a hotel. Such articles can range from jewellery, costly electronic goods, travel documents to garments. The hotel is obliged to protect such items and return them to the guests. The lost and found procedure is:

Procedure

- When a guest article is found, the housekeeping staff, usually room attendants and public area housemen, must immediately report this to their supervisor.
- The supervisor (the floor supervisor or public area supervisor) immediately informs the Control Desk attendant.
- The Control Desk attendant will verify with the front office cashier whether a departing resident guest is still in the process of paying his or her bill or whether he/she has checked out. If the guest is still available, he/she is contacted to hand over the article/s.
- The Lobby Manager is informed about guests who may be visitors to the hotel and not resident ones, in case they contact him or her to lodge a complaint.
- If the guest is not available, the Control Desk attendant fills the Lost and Found Slip (Fig. 16.11) in duplicate giving the date, time, room number, location, guest's name, if found in the room and name of the finder.
- The original of the slip is attached to the article while the duplicate copy is kept in a Lost and Found Register (Fig. 16.12) which again records details as given above, including the description of the article.
- The Executive Housekeeper obtains the forwarding address of the guest from the front office who would have the information in the registration card. If the guest's name is not known, as in the case of items found in public areas, then housekeeping would have to wait for the guest to claim it.
- The Executive Housekeeper will call or write to the guest to either claim it or give further instructions. It is preferable to write to the guest as a record. If there is no immediate response from the guest, the housekeeper will send a written reminder.

Lost and Found Slip	
Legend	Description of Article
Finder's name: Location: Time:	
Name of the Guest: Address of Guest:	
Action Taken: Article claimed in person:	Telephone No: Name of Guest: Signature of Guest: Date:
Article mailed:	Postal address: Dispatch No: Dispatcher's signature: Date:
Article surrendered to finder:	Name of finder: Employee ID No.: Gate Pass No.: Employees
	signature: Date:

Fig. 16.11 Lost and Found Slip

LOST AND FOUND REGISTER						
Date	Time	Name of Finder	Location	Description of Article	Name of Guest	Signature

Fig. 16.12 Lost and Found Register

- If the guest returns to claim it, he/she would have to furnish details of the article before it is handed to him or her. The guest's signature is taken on the Lost and Found Slip in acknowledgement of having received the same.
- If the article has to be mailed to the forwarding address (if instructed by the guest), the article should be sent under registered post or courier with the charges made known to the guest and claimed from him/her as cash on delivery.

11. If the guest does not claim the article in spite of reminders, the article is kept for a specific period as prescribed by the management (usually six months) and either gifted to the finder or auctioned to the housekeeping staff. In such circumstances, the housekeeper will issue a gate pass (Fig. 16.13) to the employee for the security, so that he can take the article out of the hotel. (Employees cannot take out of the hotel any guest or hotel property without a gate pass.)

GATE PASS	
Name of Employee:	
Department:	
Description of Article:	
Approved by:	
Date:	
Time:	

Fig. 16.13 Gate Pass

▲ CO-ORDINATION WITH THE FRONT OFFICE

Co-ordination with the Front Office is perhaps most critical because the sale of rooms depends on it. We are aware that room space is perishable. This means that every day a room is vacant the hotel incurs a loss of revenue. The front office agent's challenge is to lease room space back-to-back to realise its full revenue potential. This is only possible if the room is available to the front office agent to sell. Departure rooms are required to be cleaned for sale at the earliest possible time. The productivity standard ranges from 20 minutes to 40 minutes based on the size of rooms.

Such co-ordination is in the following manner:

1. The Front Desk informs the housekeeping Control Desk the moment a departure takes place.
2. The desk attendant immediately informs the floor supervisor about such departures.
3. The floor supervisor informs the concerned room attendant who gives priority to departure rooms to prepare them immediately for sale.
4. Upon completion of cleaning, the room attendant informs the floor supervisor who checks it.
5. She immediately informs the Housekeeping Control Desk once the room is cleared for sale.
6. The desk attendant informs the Front Office about the room availability.

There is immediacy about this crucial communication on which room revenues are based.

There are other important communications:

1. The Front Desk also advises the Housekeeping Control Desk about group arrivals and crew arrivals. We have already read about the importance of such volume arrivals.
2. The Front Desk also relies on the housekeeping for the Housekeeping Room Report on each shift. This confirms the occupancy status of each room so that the Front Desk can cross-tally their room racks with this information.
3. The control desk attendant also co-ordinates room transfers upon requests from guests. A guest may ask for room transfer for many reasons, including a better view, noise from lifts, a non-smoking room, and so on. The front desk allots another room and informs the control desk. The desk attendant will inform the concerned floor supervisor who will direct the room attendant to assist the guest in packing and transfer of baggage and personal belongings to the new room. The old room will be treated as a departure room for attention by the room attendant.

▲ HOUSEKEEPING SUPPLY STORE

The Housekeeping Supply Store is a support to all supervisors. It is under the direct supervision of the Executive Housekeeper whose office is located in the precincts of the Control Desk. It stores expensive power-driven equipment like floor scrubbing machines, carpet shampooing machines, floor polishing machines, vacuum cleaners and their accessories. The room has emergency supplies also such as guest and cleaning supplies in the event of a need before the allotted issue day given by the General Stores. It, therefore, stores one week's supply of cleaning supplies such as soaps, detergents, polishes, etc.; guest supplies and hand cleaning tools such as mops, brooms, brushes, etc. The store is replenished on a weekly basis from the General Stores using the requisition procedure.

▲ HOUSEKEEPING FURNITURE STORE

Each hotel possesses relatively large quantities of furniture not in immediate use such as banquet tables and chairs, upholstered chairs and sofas, dressers, desks, cribs, etc. Such items are kept with housekeeping for safekeeping. Housekeeping observes a few simple rules with regard to such storage:

1. The store should be protected from weather though it should be well ventilated.
2. Furniture requiring repair should not be stored here but in the furniture yard.
3. Furniture must be thoroughly cleaned before being stored.
4. Furniture must be wrapped in cloth before they are stored.
5. If space limitations require stacking, this should be done with care and with provision of adequate padding or other surface guards to prevent damage to furniture items.
6. Furniture that requires repair or renovation should have a Work Order Slip completed prior to sending it to the furniture yard.
7. No furniture should be stored in stairwells or service landings.
8. Decisions must be made promptly as to whether damaged furniture is repairable or beyond repair. If obsolete, they should be disposed of as soon as possible for two reasons: (a) they occupy valuable space; and (b) they will further depreciate in storage.

▲ STORES REQUISITION

Store requisitions are generated in a Stores Requisition Form (Fig. 9.4 in Lesson 9, “The Floor Pantry”), in triplicate by the following housekeeping personnel:

- The Floor Supervisor to supplement supplies in her floor linen room.
- The Public Area Supervisor for her needs.
- The Desk Control Attendant for the housekeeping store as emergency stocks.

The procedure for store requisition is as follows:

1. Each person prepares the requisition in triplicate:
 - The original copy is retained in the book for follow-up and record.
 - The second copy is sent to the Housekeeper for the storekeeper to keep after issuing the supplies.
 - The third copy is also sent to the Housekeeper but returned by the storekeeper in case of any balance due for recovery later.
2. The control desk attendant consolidates all requisitions and forwards the requisitions to the Executive Housekeeper for approval.
3. The Executive Housekeeper examines the requisitions and approves them or call the concerned supervisor for explanations if she is in doubt. The Housekeeper has to control costs of supplies and keep them within budget.
4. Once approved the concerned supervisor is ready to withdraw the supplies from the general store.
5. The General Store stocks items of daily consumption for the whole hotel. It is manned by a qualified storekeeper, assisted by a helper to draw items from various shelves. Due to the heavy demand on the store, they allot days to each department for their respective withdrawals. On the allotted day, the housekeeping control desk attendant will inform the concerned supervisor to come personally or send a representative to withdraw their supplies.
6. The storekeeper verifies the Executive Housekeeper’s approval on each requisition form before issuing the items. He mentions items that are out of stock on the requisition form to claim on the next issue day. The storekeeper retains the second copy of the requisition form after receiving the signature of the person withdrawing items and returns the third copy with his signature to the withdrawer.

Key Terms



Babysitter	A hired caretaker for minors in the absence of parents
Control Desk	A department that facilitates communication to the housekeeping
Gate Pass	A document authorising employees to remove guest or hotel property from the hotel
Group	15 or more people travelling together
Ken-Fixit	All purpose engineer
Log Book	A register to communicate between shifts
Lost and Found	Guest articles left behind
Master Key	A key which opens multiple doors

Review Quiz

Short Notes

Give a brief description of the following:

1. Role of the Housekeeping Control Desk
2. Files and registers maintained by the Control Desk
3. Lost and Found procedure
4. Maintenance procedure
5. Stores requisition procedure

True or False

1. The role of the Control Desk is to facilitate communication to various parts of the hotel.
2. The Control Desk is manned 24 hours.
3. The housekeeping board displays daily duty rosters.
4. VIP rooms get additional amenities.
5. The Control Desk records maintenance requests on a Work Order Slip.
6. The Engineering Department raises a Maintenance Slip for a maintenance request.
7. A guest's request for service is recorded in the Guest Message Register.
8. A room attendant prepares the Room Checklist.
9. Instructions to the next shift are recorded in the Memo-Book.
10. A room attendant who locates a Lost and Found item reports it immediately to the Control Desk.

Part-7

THE LINEN AND THE UNIFORM ROOMS

The Linen and the Uniform Rooms

Learning Objective



To help the reader learn the importance of the Linen and the Uniform Rooms—their Systems, Procedures, and Storage conditions.

▲ THE LINEN ROOM

The Linen Room usually serves as the base of all operations for most of the housekeeping departments. It is usually under the control of a Supervisor, who has the responsibilities to issue fresh linen and receive soiled ones. A linen room could also have a dedicated linen store which keeps a stock of new linen to replenish those which are in circulation when they are lost or damaged. The amount of linen maintained is based on the size of the property. For example, linen investment is going to be enormous when one considers the volume of linen to be used in a hotel. The amount of linen is based on the total number of linen required to equip all rooms and restaurants in one time. This is considered as linen in circulation. This par is multiplied keeping in mind the time required to launder the soiled linen. An in-house laundry should take about 24 hours to launder a set of linen while outsourced laundries may take upto 48 hours. Keeping this in mind large hotels will have to maintain a turnaround par stock of five:

- 1 round in use (circulation in guest rooms)
- 1 round in the floor linen room and maid's cart
- 1 round in the laundry
- 1 round in the linen room
- 1 round in the linen store (optional)

It is quite normal for a small hotel to have a round of four. Anything less may pose a challenge for the housekeeper.

Every hotel has its own policy regarding the change of bed linen. Deluxe properties may want to change used bed linen everyday. Economy properties may change linen every alternate day or every

three days. Eco-hotels encourage guests to use linen longer to conserve energy and resources. In any case a room cleared for sale to a new guest will always have fresh linen. The Floor Supervisor will ensure that the hotel policy is carefully implemented.

The typical linen requirement for a twin room would translate as 4 single bed sheets, 2 night spreads, 4 pillow covers, 2 blankets, 2 bed covers, 2 bath towels, 2 face towels, 2 hand towels and 1 bath mat.

The challenge for the linen supervisor increases if the property uses different coloured restaurant linen for each restaurant outlet. Each colour will need its own par stocks. While it is prudent for all hotels to use white linen, interior design concepts may insist on coloured linen, especially in specialty restaurants.

Linen rooms are of two types: (i) centralised ones where all linen is controlled at a central point. Such linen rooms are found at resorts which may have a few rooms only to justify centralisation; (ii) decentralised ones where the main linen room feeds floor pantries which maintain linen par stocks to service a set of rooms. This system is ideal for large buildings, especially high rise ones, which have several floors or such buildings which are too spread out for a centralised linen room e.g. resorts with chalets spread over large acreages that require feeder linen rooms to reach the remote points. These floor pantries are controlled by Floor Supervisors.

Figure 17.1 gives a typical layout of a linen room. It should be observed that the linen room has only one entrance for security reasons and it adjoins the in-house laundry.

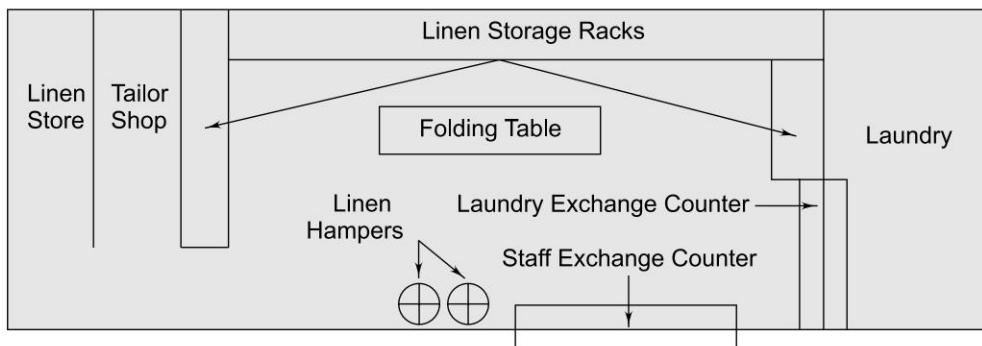


Fig. 17.1 Layout of a Linen Room

▲ STORAGE CONDITIONS

As the Linen and Uniform Room and Stores carry valuable capital investment of the owner, the Stores must follow strict conditions of storage to prolong the life of these assets. The storage conditions are:

1. The floors must be cemented with special grouting along the walls and corners to prevent insects and rodents from creeping in. The walls and ceilings must be easy to keep clean and maintain.
2. The room must be well ventilated, cool and dry. Damp conditions cause mildew—a bacterial growth that damages cloth.

3. Hot water or steam pipes should not run through the linen and uniform rooms. The rooms should also be protected against dampness, sunlight and chemical fumes.
4. Properly designed racks should be used so that rust and white ants do not get to the material. Wood or aluminium racks are sturdy and non-corrosive. The last shelf of the rack should be at least six inches above the floor to prevent dust, water or insects from reaching the material.
5. The room must have only one entry or exit point for security reasons. The door must be large enough to permit the hampers and trolleys to and from the laundry.
6. The room should be accessible to linen/uniform room personnel only.
7. The room should be so located as to be easily accessible to all employees as well as the laundry. The basement or ground floor is preferred to the staff entrance and laundry where heavy noisy equipment is installed.
8. The room should have a counter for the exchange of linen/uniforms.
9. The room must be subject to periodic schedules of pest control.
10. The size of the room is in relation to the size of the property in terms of guest rooms, restaurants and bars. The linen/uniform room must be spacious enough to move around.
11. It should be well lit to read sizes of uniforms and record items.

Storage Tips for Linen

1. Restaurant and floor linen should be arranged by size and neatly stacked in shelves.
2. Heavier linen must be stacked in lower shelves while lighter ones on higher shelves.
3. Cotton items like sheets, pillow cases, table cloths, etc. should not be stored for a long time unless they are washed to remove starch. Starch or finishing chemicals attract insects and make fabric dry and brittle which may result in their getting torn quickly.
4. For long-term storage, wrap all linen items in plastic foils or pack in paper-lined cartons after washing. Dark paper is preferred to preserve colour. Wrap loosely to permit air to circulate.

Storage Tips for Uniforms

1. Uniforms of better quality materials should preferably be hung.
2. Uniforms made of cheaper materials (used by back house personnel) should be separated size-wise and stacked in racks.
3. Small items like gloves, caps, ties, bows, etc. should be kept in closed cupboards.
4. Soiled uniforms must be dumped into hampers.
5. Coloured or embroidered materials or those with indelible ink should be laundered before storing to prevent discolourisation.
6. For long-term storage wrap items in plastic foils or pack them in paper-lined cartons after washing. Dark paper is preferred for preserving colour. Wrap loosely to permit air to circulate.

▲ LINEN ROOM EQUIPMENT & ACCESSORIES

Trolleys

To transport fresh linen from the laundry. Modern trolleys are light with reliable wheels to reduce the fatigue of those pushing them.



Multipurpose Trolleys

To transport linen or other goods

**Ladders**

To reach the higher shelves of racks

Cupboards

To store quality linen

Racks

To store fresh linen in circulation. They can be fixed or mobile as shown in the picture.

**Hampers**

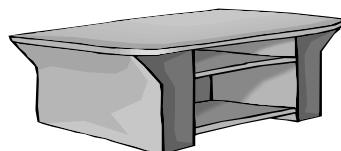
To dump soiled linen.

Linen Bags

To segregate linen being sent to the laundry.

**Folding Tables**

To fold fresh linen.

**Plastic Bags**

To pack linen when it is put in the linen store.

▲ TYPES OF LINEN

The size of linen below is indicative only. Each hotel have their own standards of luxury. The sizes of linen correspond to the policy of the property.

Bathroom Linen		Bedroom Linen		Restaurant Linen	
Bath rug	24" × 42"	Single blanket	72" × 108"	Moultan	72" × 104"
Bath towel	25" × 45"	Double blanket	90" × 100"	Slip cloth	36" × 36"
Extra large towels	40" × 70"	Bed spread	72" × 108"	Table napkins	21" × 21"
Hand towel	22" × 40"	Mattress protector (single bed)	64" × 96"	Tea napkins	12" × 12"
Face towel	9 ½" × 10 ½"	Bed sheet	72" × 108"	Table cloths	90" × 90"
Pillow slips	24" × 32"	Double bed sheet	90" × 108"		45" × 45"
Pool towel	36" × 80"	Dbl. night spreads	92" × 108"		54" × 54"
Staff towel	36" × 62"	Quilt single	33" × 50"		58" × 62"
		Quilt double	50" × 56"		62" × 64"
					72" × 78"
					72" × 104"
				Tray cloth	72" × 240"
				Waiter cloth	16" × 27"
				Dusters	18" × 27"
					22" × 22"

▲ EXCHANGE OF LINEN

The exchange process is very critical to the Linen Supervisor as it is here that linen counts can go wrong. Even one piece of linen lost or misplaced a day adds to quite a number in the month. It is for this reason that the Linen Supervisor must maintain a strict exchange process. He coordinates closely with the Laundry Manager or Supervisor. He must keep a track of movement of linen loads from floors and from the linen room. He must follow the exchange norm of one fresh item for the one soiled meticulously.

Given below is the exchange processes followed by the floor supervisor:

Room Linen

1. Send soiled room linen to the laundry either directly from floors by shutes or by the Room boy who trundles a hamper full of soiled linen to the laundry.
2. Physically count each soiled item on the floor and enter the figures into the Room Linen Control Sheet (Fig. 17.2) in triplicate and one copy is retained by the floor supervisor.
3. Send the second and third copies of the Room Linen Control Sheet with the floor houseman along with the hamper of soiled linen, to the laundry or linen room.

4. Alternatively, send the linen through a linen chute which lands at the laundry floor at specific times given by the laundry staff to avoid mix-ups with the linen of other floors. Send the floor houseman to the laundry floor before dispatching the linen from the chute.
5. The Laundry or Linen Supervisor, where applicable, recounts the soiled linen in the presence of the houseman, and verifies the quantities in the Room Linen Control Sheet. The concerned supervisor then stamps “Received” after the tally and returns the second copy while the third copy is retained by him/her. If the laundry supervisor is directly receiving the laundry, s/he sends the second copy to the Linen Supervisor while retaining one copy.
6. The Linen Supervisor issues fresh linen on a one-to-one basis. In case the linen room is short of fresh linen at that point of time, then he/she enters the balance due on the Room Linen Control Sheet (Fig. 17.2) and issues the shortfall in the next exchange.

Articles	Sent by Floor	Received by Laundry	Sent to Floor	Balance
Bed Linen Bed Sheets Pillow Slips Night Spreads Mattress Protectors				
Bath Linen Bath Towels Face Towels Bath Mats Hand Towels				
Others Blankets Cushion Covers Sofa Covers Shower Curtains				
	Signature of Floor Supervisor:	Signature of Laundry Supervisor:	Signature of Linen Supervisor:	Signature of Linen Supervisor:

Fig. 17.2 Room Linen Control Sheet

Restaurant Linen

Each restaurant is given a specific time by the linen room to exchange linen. The Linen Supervisor makes sure that the restaurant representative comes at the stipulated time. The Linen Supervisor observes the following procedure:

1. Check the soiled linen received for damages.
2. Count every item and tally it with the Food and Beverage Linen Exchange Form (Fig. 17.3) filled by the Restaurant Supervisor.
3. Enter the figures into the Linen Exchange Register (Fig. 17.4) especially maintained for food and beverage outlets.

4. Issue the same number of fresh linen on a one-to-one basis and enter the figures in the Linen Exchange Register.
5. Forward the soiled linen to laundry for washing after physically counting each item in front of the Laundry Supervisor.
6. Tally fresh restaurant linen from the laundry against the Linen Exchange Register.

FOOD & BEVERAGE LINEN EXCHANGE FORM				
Restaurant Name: _____		Date: _____	Time: _____	
Description of Linen	Par Stock	Soiled Linen received	Fresh Linen issued	Balance Due
Linen Supervisor's Signature:_____		Restaurant Supervisor's Signature:_____		

Fig. 17.3 Food and Beverage Linen Exchange Form

LINEN EXCHANGE REGISTER					
Date: _____					
Department/section	Linen Description	Linen Room Par Stock	Soiled Linen Received	Fresh Linen Issued	Balance in Stock

Fig. 17.4 Linen Exchange Register

▲ DISCARDED LINEN

An important part of linen keeping is the use of discarded linen. Discarded linen are the ones that cannot be used in operations anymore. Discards occur due to irretrievable stains, tears, discolouration, etc. The Linen Room maintains a discard bin where such items are collected. After the Executive Housekeeper or Deputy Housekeeper ascertains that they are irretrievable, they are to be shown to the inventory ledger accountant who has to declare the item as discards and delete it from his inventory register. The linen keeper also maintains a Discard Register which gives the date, description and numbers of all such discards, which have to be replaced through purchase or from the Housekeeping Store. All condemned items are stamped as condemned.

The Linen Supervisor has many uses for discards:

- As cleaning cloths for the cleaning crew.
- For covering furniture stored in the furniture yard.
- To wrap carpets kept in storage.
- To cover carpets in rooms when other maintenances are in progress.
- Torn into rags for polishing purposes.
- To wrap long-stored linen and uniforms.

▲ HIRING OF LINEN

Outsourcing has become a common practice, especially in housekeeping. Most medium to small hotels in Europe and the US outsource the housekeeping function. This means that another agency, specialised in housekeeping services, provides the workforce and expertise to hotels. Hotels then pay a consulting fee and do away with maintaining a Housekeeping Department. The same goes for linen supply. Since linen is expensive, hotels are moving towards hiring of linen from specialised housekeeping companies. The benefits from such a strategy are:

1. The owner does not have to invest in expensive linen.
2. The owner can demand good linen quality.
3. Laundry services are not required resulting in cost savings.
4. It involves lower housekeeping inventory costs.
5. Less space is required in linen rooms and stores.
6. Cost-effective during off season as linen inventories do not have to be maintained.
7. The wear and tear costs of the linen are not the owner's responsibility.

The greatest disadvantage is that the owner and housekeeper do not have total control of linen quality and the supply of fresh linen at the right time.

▲ THE UNIFORM ROOM

Large properties may have an independent uniform room that is because of the sheer volume of uniforms, rendering this investment in space as unavoidable. Medium to small hotels will combine the Linen and Uniform Room to be space efficient. The conditions for storage of Uniform Rooms are similar to those in Linen Rooms mentioned earlier. Figure 17.5 gives a typical Uniform Room layout.

We will note that the Uniform Room also has separate exchange counters for employees and the laundry. The Uniform Room must be located where all employees can have access to it. The corridor in front of the room must be wide enough, for several employees who may be able to form a queue during morning rush hours, in order to avoid congestion.

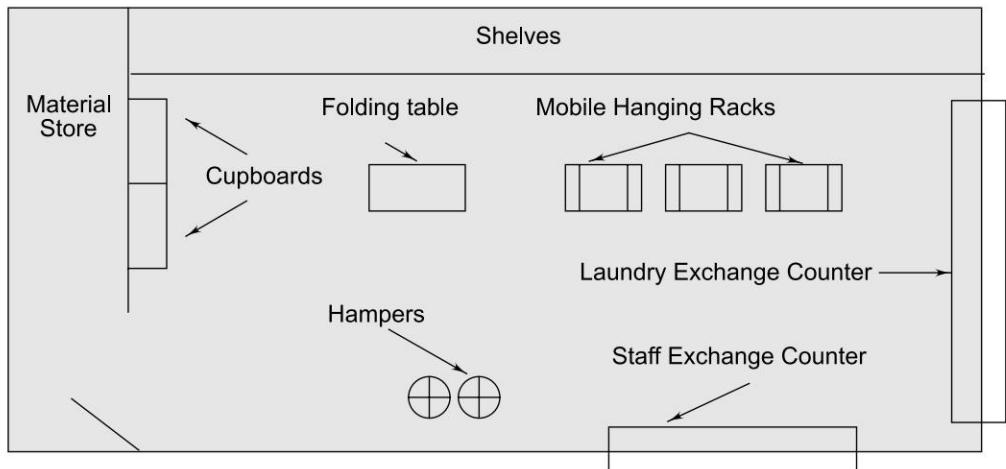


Fig. 17.5 Layout of a Uniform Room

▲ UNIFORM ROOM EQUIPMENT AND ACCESSORIES

Ladders	To reach the higher shelves of racks (same as in linen room)
Cupboards	To store quality uniforms (same as in linen room)
Racks	To store fresh heavy uniforms in circulation e.g. dungarees, cooks' jackets and trousers, kitchen stewarding wear, etc.
Hampers	To dump soiled uniforms (same as in linen room)
Linen Bags	To segregate uniforms being sent to the laundry (same as in linen room)
Plastic Bags	To pack uniforms when put in the uniform store
Table	To fold fresh uniforms (same as in linen room)
Mobile Trolleys	To transport fresh uniforms hung on hangers
Hanging Racks	To hang uniforms that cannot be folded during storage.
Hangers	To hang uniforms
Coat Brushes	To brush dust off coats



▲ TYPES OF UNIFORMS

Doormen & Parking Attendants

- Top Hats
- Ethnic Headwear
- Bush Shirt (A)
- Jacket (B)
- Trousers (A + B)
- Overcoat
- Belt
- Umbrella



Receptionists & Restaurant Hostesses

- Blouses
- Trousers
- Skirts
- Ethnic dresses



Kitchens

- Aprons
- Chef's Scarves
- Chef's Jackets
- Chef's Trousers
- Cook's Jackets
- Cook's Trousers
- Chef's Caps
- Cook Caps



Food & Beverage Service

Formal Restaurant

- Captains' Jackets
- Trousers
- Tunics
- Skirts
- Ethnic Wear
- Gloves
- Bows
- Ties



Uniformed Services

- Senior Bell Captain Jackets
- Bell Captain Jackets
- Bell Boy Jackets
- Trousers
- Belts
- Headwear



Engineering

- Dungarees



Kitchen Stewarding

- Gumboots
- Stewarding Short Sleeved Shirts
- Stewarding Coats
- Steward Trousers
- Leather/Cloth
- Long Aprons

Coffee Shop

Tunics
Trousers
Skirts
Shirts
Blouses

**Grill Room**

Shirts
Trousers
Long Length Aprons
Bows
Ties
Tunics

**Security**

Jackets
Shirts
Trousers
Pullovers
Belts
Umbrellas
Woollen Overcoat

**Management**

(A) Women's Black Jackets
Women's Jackets for
Other Departments
White Blouses
Tie/Bow
Trouser/Skirt



(B) Men's Black Coats
Men's Jackets for Other
Departments
Trousers
Ties

**Bars**

Trousers
Shirts
Bartender Apron
Barmaid Dress
Barmaid Apron
Bows
Gloves

**Business Lounge/Cocktail Lounge**

Tunics
Bows
Shirts
Skirts
Trousers

**Health Club, Recreation, Laundry,
Pool Staff, Gardeners**

Bush Shirts
Trousers
Gumboots
Coach Jackets
Coach Shorts
Coach Caps

**Housekeeping**

Supervisor's Dress
Houseman's Shirts
Trousers
Blouses
Loafers



Head Bands
Butler Tunics (A + B)
Butler Ties/bows (B)
Butler Shirts (A+ B)
Long-sleeved
Maids' dress



▲ UNIFORM EXCHANGE PROCEDURE

New employees are issued uniforms authorised by the Personnel Department. Employees are measured for sizes and either given standard uniforms like dungarees, stewarding trousers, etc. or tailor-made for specific styles, e.g. Front Office Receptionists, Lobby Managers, Concierge, etc. Once issued, the employee keeps his/her uniform in locker rooms provided by the hotel separately for men and women, with showers and toilets. Employees of various departments are given specific times to exchange their uniforms. When the employee returns for exchange of a new set, the Uniform Room Supervisor will:

1. Ensure that the staff has arrived at the stipulated time.
2. Check the uniforms for damages.
3. Issue fresh uniforms strictly on a one-to-one basis ensuring that the uniform is of correct size. Tailor-made uniforms will have name tags sewn inside the collar or trouser flap in indelible ink. The Supervisor will make sure that the uniform with the correct name is issued to the right person.

Note: If the soiled uniform is damaged and can be mended, the Supervisor will warn the employee. If the uniform cannot be mended, she should report the matter to the Human Resources Department who will deduct the cost from the employee's salary based on the circumstances of damage.

▲ EXCHANGE PROCEDURE WITH THE LAUNDRY

Handing Over Procedure for Linen and Uniforms to the Laundry

1. Sort uniform/linen as per size, department, quality, and type.
2. Count physically the uniforms in the presence of the laundry supervisor before handing them over to him.
3. Submit uniforms for dry cleaning along with a Daily Delivery of Uniforms Form (Fig. 17.6).
4. Submit room linen against the Room Linen Control Sheet (Fig. 17.2).
5. The Restaurant submits linen against the Food and Beverage Exchange Form.
6. In all cases, take the Laundry Supervisor's signature in acknowledgement.

Receiving Fresh Linen and Uniforms

1. Receive guest room linen from the laundry against figures shown in the copy of the Room Linen Control Sheet received and stamped by the Laundry Supervisor.
2. Receive restaurant linen against figures in the Linen Exchange Register earlier filled in when exchanging linen with the restaurant staff.
3. Receive uniforms for dry-cleaning against figures shown in the Daily Delivery of Uniforms Forms filled in earlier when submitting uniforms to the laundry for dry-cleaning.
4. Receive linen from the laundry in lots as and when it is ready.

5. Total each type of linen and fill in the Inventory of Room Linen Form.
6. Establish the difference in items due from the laundry by comparing the total of the above from the total in the second copy of the Linen Control Sheet (for room linen). These two figures (i.e. Soiled delivered to the laundry and the Fresh received from the laundry) are noted down in a register for every item everyday.
7. Calculate the total shortage from the laundry at the end of the month.
8. Segregate and store the linen and uniforms in the respective places.

Items	Balance B/F	To Laundry	From Laundry	Balance	To Laundry	From Laundry	Balance	Remarks
House-keeping								
Blouses								
Skirts								
Trousers								
Dungarees								
Shirts								
Coats								
Xxxx								
Xxxx								
Xxxx								
F&B								
Cook's coats								
Cook's trousers								
Cook's caps								
Cook's aprons								
Cook's scarf								
Utility worker's coats								
Utility worker's trousers								
Utility worker's caps								
Xxxx								
Xxxx								
xxxx								

Fig. 17.6 Daily Delivery of Uniforms Form

Note: The list above is only representative. The list of uniforms is much larger.

▲ PAR STOCKS

Definition

Par stock is the minimum level of supplies required to meet daily demands to ensure smooth operations.

Importance of Par Stocks

1. **To make correct and efficient investment of capital.** The investor does not want to put in extra money than what is necessary for smooth operations.
2. **To prevent overstocking** and thereby avoid chances of spoilage during storage. Oversupply is not only a cost but also idle utilisation leading to deterioration, misuse, theft and loss.
3. **To make optimum use of space.** Excess linen would have to be stored when not in use, thus increasing storage space costs. The owner could gainfully use that space for other activities.
4. **To ensure proper supply at all times.** Rooms can only be ready for sale if there is adequate supply of fresh linen to replace soiled ones. Similarly, employees cannot report on duty if they do not have uniforms.
5. **To help in effective budgeting.** The Executive Housekeeper can budget annual capital investments in linen and uniforms, based on par stock standards. He can also calculate par stock deficiencies due to discards.
6. **To simplify inventory taking.** Audits are conducted periodically to safeguard the owner's investment in this capital item. It becomes easy for auditors to tally the par stock because the standards are known.
7. **To bring about control.** Par stocks enable the linen keeper to maintain control on the numbers needed each day. He can chase the laundry for additional washing cycles in case of deficiencies.

How to Establish Par Stock

The sections below give a simple way to establish par stock figures.

Linen

Determine the requirement of each guest room and restaurant per shift. This is established by the linen per bed in a guest room and table in a restaurant. This is multiplied five times as per the following cycle:

- One change in circulation
- One change in the floor linen rooms
- One change in the laundry
- One change in the linen room
- One change in the housekeeping store (optional)

Uniforms

The par stock of uniforms is determined on the basis of (a) cloth material, (b) job positions, and (c) the nature of jobs. Four changes are kept for uniforms which are changed daily, such as, waiter coats, utility worker uniforms, etc. The cycle of par stock is as follows:

- One change in the laundry
- One change in the Uniform room
- One change in the housekeeping store
- One change in use

More specialised uniforms like ethnic dresses and suits may have a turnover of three times only, in view of cost—in use, in the laundry and store. Items like aprons, dungarees, Chef scarves and caps may have unspecified number to keep the supply constant.

▲ INVENTORY CONTROL

Since uniforms and linen are heavy investments, it is necessary to keep a close control on this very important asset. Effective control is possible through the following practices:

- (a) Control on misuse, shortages, and mix-ups
- (b) Proper storage
- (c) Regular stock-taking
- (d) Spot checks
- (e) Proper supervision

To prevent damage to linen and uniforms, the following tips need to be kept in mind.

1. Check for faulty linen chutes, carts, baskets, washers, etc. which might tear cloth.
2. Keep mesh bags at strategic points to prevent loss of small items.
3. Inspect employee locker rooms for theft and fine for misuse of linen.
4. Laundry should be careful not to put excessive amount of bleach powder. The usual amount is 1% bleach per 100 lbs of linen. Also bleach powder could be damaging at washing temperatures higher than 150° F.
5. Linen should be exchanged strictly on a one-to-one basis.
6. Damp white linen or uniforms should not lie on concrete or iron. Concrete stains are almost impossible to remove while iron rust causes holes after washing.
7. Employees must not wipe spilt food, medicines or chemicals with linen but use dusters instead.
8. Laundry should load washing machines properly. Under loading could “beat up” the linen.
9. Hydro-extractors on high speed operations could tear fabrics; their speed should hence be monitored.
10. Laundry tumblers should be checked regularly for pins, paper clips, etc. that could prick holes into the fabric.
11. Put proper pressure and heat on all irons to prevent burn stains.

▲ STOCK-TAKING

Definition

Stock-taking is the physical verification of all linen and uniforms in the cycle at periodic intervals or when accounting books are closed at the end of the year. Overages or shortages can be determined by variances in physical counts and the balances in the inventory ledger.

Principles of Stock-taking

1. Segregate and group all items (including discards).
2. Count items physically every three months known as quarterly inventory.
3. Count items in circulation and in store separately and total.

4. Stamp discards “Condemned” and keep aside.
5. Tally totals counted with the last inventory figures plus new issues.
6. Be present when the inventory clerk and auditor are counting.
7. Conduct stock-taking on three separate days, each for
 - (a) Uniforms
 - (b) Room linen
 - (c) Restaurant linen

Figure 17.7 gives the Room Linen Inventory form in which stock figures are taken.

Room Linen Inventory Form											
Floor No: Floor Supervisor:											
Room No.	Sheets	Pillow Slips	Bed Spreads	Mattress Protectors	Bath Towels	Face Towels	Hand Towels	Bath Mats	Bath Rugs	Blankets	
101											
102											
103											
104											
105											
106											
107											
108											
109											
110											
Xxx											
Xxx											
Xxx											

Fig. 17.7 Room Linen Inventory Form

Procedure of Stock-taking

1. Identify all locations of linen. These locations will be:
 - Beds in the guest rooms
 - Floor linen pantries
 - End of chutes receiving soiled linen from floors at the laundry stop
 - Linen in the laundry—in wash, in hampers, at the presses, in storage shelves and in trolleys laden with laundered linen ready for delivery to the linen room
 - Linen room
 - Linen stores
2. Conduce linen stock-taking at the end of the morning shift when guest rooms have been made for the day.
3. Seal all floor linen rooms and shutes.
4. Freeze laundry delivery carts for dispatch.
5. Seal the linen room.
6. Seal the linen store.

The stock-taking team consists of the Auditor, Ledger Accountant, Linen Supervisor and the Housekeeper. They will complete an Inventory Count Sheet—Rooms (Fig. 17.8) on each floor.

INVENTORY COUNT SHEET—ROOMS										
Floor:		Name of Floor Supervisor.....								
Location	Single sheets	Queen-size sheets	King-size sheets	Pillow slips	Mattress Protectors	Counter-panes	Bath towels	Face towels	Hand towels	Bath mats
Room no.										
101										
102										
103										
104										
105										
xxx										
xxx										
Maid Cart 1										
Maid Cart 2										
Maid Cart 3										
Floor Linen Room Shelf										
Soiled Linen Hamper										
Total										
Date:	Auditor's Sign.			Housekeeper's Sign.						

Fig. 17.8 Inventory Count Sheet—Rooms

7. Transcribe the information of all floors onto a Master Inventory Sheet—Rooms (Fig. 17.9)

MASTER INVENTORY SHEET—ROOMS									
Item	Floor No.	Guest Beds	Floor Linen Room	Laundry Chute Stop	Laundry In Process	Linen Room	Linen Store	Total	
Single Sheets									
Queen-size Sheets									
King-size Sheets									
Pillow Slips									
Mattress Protectors									
Counterpanes									
Bath Towels									
Face Towels									
Hand Towels									
Bath Mats									
Date:	Auditor's Sign.			Housekeeper's Sign.					

Fig. 17.9 Master Inventory Sheet—Rooms

8. Conduct the similar counting exercise done for the Restaurants. Restaurant stock-taking is performed after 3 p.m. when restaurants close after lunch. A 24-hour restaurant like the coffee shop may take its inventory after midnight when the traffic is slow. The locations of restaurant linen are:

- Table tops
- Side-station shelves for fresh linen
- Soiled linen hampers
- On trays

The Housekeeper has a separate Inventory Count Sheet—Restaurants (Fig. 17.10).

INVENTORY COUNT SHEET—RESTAURANTS										
Restaurant Name:					Name of Restaurant Manager.....					
Location	Table Cloth—Oval	Table Cloth—Square	Table Cloth—Rectangle	Table Napkins	Waiter Cloths	Tray Cloth—Large	Tray Cloth—Small	Tray Cloth—Oval	Tea Napkins	Duster Cloth
On Tables										
At Side Station 1										
At Side Station 2										
At Side Station 3										
Soiled Linen Hamper										
Others										
Total										
Date:			Auditor's Sign.			Housekeeper's Sign.				

Fig. 17.10 Inventory Count Sheet—Restaurants

9. Transcribe the information onto the Master Inventory Count Sheet—F&B (Fig. 17.11). In the given example, the linen sizes are generic. In actual reality there will be several sizes of table cloths and tray cloths. The format will fit the exact requirements of the establishment.
10. The auditor transcribes all the information onto the Inventory Control Chart—Rooms (Fig. 17.12).
11. The auditor transcribes all the restaurant linen information onto the Inventory Control Chart—F&B (Fig. 17.13).

MASTER INVENTORY SHEET—F&B								
Item	Grill Room	Coffee Shop	Night Club	Cocktail Lounge	Laundry in Process	Linen Room	Linen Store	Total
Table Cloth—Oval								
Table Cloth—Square								
Table Cloth—Rectangle								
Table Napkins								
Waiter Cloths								
Tray Cloth—Large								
Tray Cloth—Small								
Tray Cloth—Oval								
Tea Napkins								
Duster Cloths								

Date: Auditor's Sign: Housekeeper's Sign.

Fig. 17.11 Master Inventory Count Sheet—F&B

INVENTORY CONTROL CHART—ROOMS								
Item	Total Guest Rooms	Floor Linen Rooms	Laundry	Linen Room	Linen Store	Total in—House	Last Inventory Total	Variance (-)
Single Sheets								
Queen-size Sheets								
King-size Sheets								
Pillow Slips								
Mattress Protectors								
Counterpanes								
Bath Towels								
Face Towels								
Hand Towels								
Bath Mats								

Date: Auditor's sign. Fin Controller's Sign.

Fig. 17.12 Inventory Control Chart—Rooms

Fig. 17.13 Inventory Control Chart—F&B

12. The statements are further consolidated by the auditor and financial controller into a Master Inventory Sheet (Fig. 17.14).

MASTER INVENTORY SHEET	
Inventory Rooms	
Less Discards	
Inventory Restaurants	
Less Discards	
Total Inventory on hand	
Total Inventory Rooms & Restaurants	
Last Inventory Rooms & Restaurant	
Balance	
Plus inventories in Purchase	
Balance to be Purchased	
Cost of Purchase	

Fig. 17.14 Inventory Sheet

13. Show the Master Inventory Sheet to the General Manager for his comments and sign off before it is shown to the owner.

Key Terms



Turnaround Stock	The number of times linen and uniforms is stored above what is in use
Par Stock	Minimum level of supplies required to meet daily demands
Stock-taking	Physical verification of stocks by counting to tally with accounting records

Review Quiz



True or False

1. A large hotel will have a linen turnaround of 4–5 times.
2. Uniforms of better quality must be wrapped and stored in cupboards.
3. Kitchen stewards wear short aprons.
4. Staff can come at any time for the exchange of uniforms.
5. Uniform rooms must have broad corridors opposite the staff exchange counter.
6. We find centralised linen rooms in tower city hotels.
7. Linen and uniform rooms must have one entry and exit point each.
8. Concrete stains are impossible to remove.
9. Excessive bleach damages linen.
10. Audits are conducted to safeguard the owner's investment.

Fill in the Blanks

1. A small hotel will have a linen turnaround of _____.
2. Linen bags are used in linen rooms to _____.
3. The exchange norm for linen and uniforms is _____.
4. Soiled linen from floor linen rooms come directly to the laundry by _____.
5. The document that the Floor Supervisor completes before sending soiled linen from her floor is called _____.
6. The document that the Restaurant Supervisor fills for the exchange of restaurant linen is called _____.
7. The document that accompanies the uniforms for dry-cleaning to the laundry is called _____.
8. Restaurant linen is received from the laundry on the basis of a document called _____.
9. The process of physical verification of stocks is called _____.
10. The minimum level of supplies required to meet daily demands is called _____.

Short Notes

Give a brief description of the following:

1. The importance of par stocks.
2. Basis for establishing par stocks for linen and uniforms.
3. Practices required for effective inventory control.
4. Steps to prevent damage to linen.
5. Methods and principles of stock-taking.

Part-8

PUBLIC AREA CLEANING

Introduction to Public Areas

Learning Objective



To help the readers understand the meaning of Public Areas in hotel terms and the cleaning and maintenance challenge it poses to housekeeping.

▲ WHAT IS A PUBLIC AREA?

A public area, in hotel parlance, is a common space and facility accessible to resident guests and the local populace to meet, transact business and socialise. Broadly speaking, the public areas would include (a) '*front of the house*' areas such as porches, lobbies, front offices, management offices, and public washrooms; (b) '*revenue areas*' such as restaurants, health club, banquets, beauty salon, shopping arcade, business centre, cyber café, bars, lounges, gymnasium and guest rooms; (c) '*recreation areas*' such as swimming pools, sports courts, beaches, landscaped gardens, etc.; and (d) '*convenience areas*' such as bank, post office, convenience store, travel desk, guest relations, foyers, elevators, corridors, car parks (open air and basements), fire-escapes, public stair wells. All these areas must be well maintained, cleaned and kept in order at all times as they are open to guest view. Such activity has to be done discretely and safely with minimum disturbance and exposure to guests. It is for this reason that most public area cleaning is done at night when there is least public traffic in the hotel.

There are certain considerations, at the outset, by the investor when creating public areas:

1. The financial outlay available.
2. The investor's vision of the number of facilities s/he wishes to provide.



3. The stature of the property in terms of its quality, the market positioning of the product and service (whether budget, mid-priced, luxury or super luxury).
4. Best utilisation of space for revenue.
5. The number of rooms and the proportion of guest traffic expected.
6. The public areas offered by the competition.
7. The volume of arrivals and departures each day.
8. Type and expanse of external areas, e.g. beaches, landscapes, car parks, driveways, porches, etc.
9. Basement areas
10. Utility areas required for airconditioning plants, electrical switchboards, boilers, firefighting plants, etc.
11. Staff facilities, e.g. employee staff quarters, canteens, sports areas, etc.



The local building authorities also insist on a minimum ratio of empty space outside in relation to building space.

The complexity of hotel public areas increases if the hotel has its own private beach or independent chalets spread over large acreages. All surfaces have their own unique properties that need technical understanding to maintain. For example, driveways and car parks are made of tar; beaches of sand; pathways of stones; landscapes with gardens, golf courses and tennis courts with lawn; swimming pools, waterfalls, rockeries and fountains that have their own cleaning challenges with water; and hotel facades that get more difficult as the architecture is complex.

▲ SCOPE OF ACTIVITY

The diagram below gives the scope of activity involved for the public area crew in a typical large downtown hotel.

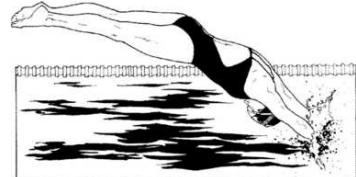


Fig. 18.1 Scope of Activity in Public Areas

Basement: The basement consists of the following:

- car parks,
- support offices as human resources, housekeeping, purchasing and training rooms
- staff cafeteria,
- linen and uniform rooms,
- stores
- laundry
- engineering plants (engineering and heating, firefighting, generators, etc.).

Ground level: The ground level provides easy access to the public and therefore ideal for certain revenue areas. The hotel could have a lower lobby that accesses the revenues areas. Typical facilities at the ground level include:



- health club or spa
- discotheque or night club
- speciality restaurants.
- indoor recreation like squash courts, gymnasiums and swimming pools.
- lower level shopping arcade

Externally, the hotel would have the main landscapes with walkways leading to beaches and water sports.

Lobby Level: The entrance to the hotel is a floor up. Typical facilities at this level are:



- Main reception and lobby
- Lobby lounge
- Main restaurants (especially the coffee shop and bar)
- The back office of the front office
- Left luggage room
- Telecommunications
- The shopping arcade including the travel agency; beauty salons; barber shops; money exchange; bank; post office; drug store; emporiums and shops, etc
- Function rooms and meeting rooms with foyers, independent driveways and car parks, independent entrances and exits for the large volume of guests that attend banquets

Mezzanine Floor: This has the following facilities:

- Executive offices of the general manager, sales and marketing, accounts, food and beverage manager, etc.
 - Business centre.



Guest Floors: The guest floors rise above the mezzanine floor and relates to the number of rooms the hotel has. Public areas are not found on floors except perhaps for the business lounge which is exclusively for the resident guests who stay on the executive floors.



Rooftop: This obviously offers a panoramic view. The investor would like to have the exclusive night club and cocktail lounge located here. Hotels with limited external space may locate the swimming pool on the rooftop.

The public areas of small hotels like resorts, motels and hostels may be limited to an all-purpose dining room and at the most a bar. These properties may however have large external areas.



By now the reader will realise the enormity of the public area responsibility. The public area will naturally require considerable technical expertise in cleaning and man management to complete the challenges ahead of them.

Figure 18.2 shows cleaning schedules broken into Each Shift, Daily, Weekly and Monthly.

Each Shift	Daily	Weekly	Monthly
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Doormats ➢ Ashtrays ➢ Sand urns ➢ Waste baskets ➢ Elevator carpets ➢ Glass doors ➢ Lobby floors ➢ Lobby/Reception and Guest telephones ➢ Vacuuming of restaurant carpets ➢ Public washrooms ➢ Swimming pool change rooms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Vacuum of carpets ➢ Hard floors ➢ Door handles ➢ Watering of plants ➢ Change of flower arrangements ➢ Porches ➢ Entrances ➢ Clearance of all dustbins ➢ Elevator tracks ➢ Reception computers and counters ➢ Management offices ➢ Corridor carpets ➢ Extinguishers and other fire equipment ➢ Air-conditioning vents ➢ Banquet spaces, furniture and fixtures ➢ Swimming pool decks ➢ Spa saunas, solariums, spa baths, Jacuzzis ➢ Gymnasium 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Light fixtures ➢ Suction cleaning of upholstered furniture ➢ Polishing of wooden furniture ➢ Polishing of brass items ➢ Cleaning of blinds and curtains ➢ Glass panes ➢ Staircases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ High ceilings ➢ External tall glass panes ➢ Carpet shampoo in heavy traffic areas

Fig. 18.2 Cleaning schedules—Each shift, Daily, Weekly and Monthly

▲ TYPES OF SOILAGE

The public area crew will encounter several challenges in cleaning. The types of soil vary as follows:

Dust refers to general particles of loose sand which float in the air and at many times not visible. It is easily cleaned by dusting with dry cloth, feather duster or brush and dust pan.

Dirt refers to clumps of dust caused by moisture, grease or tar. Dirt also includes organic substances like dead foliage, excreta, etc. The feature of dirt is that it sticks to the surface and therefore requires an abrasive movement to dislodge it along with a cleaning agent.

Litter refers to loose rubbish things found in areas where there is human activity, e.g. waste paper in offices, discarded vegetable and meat trimmings in kitchens, empty bottles and cellophane packets in public areas, etc.

Stains on a surface are caused by an external element such as acids, dyes, paints, chemicals, alkali, etc. Fresh stains can be absorbed with powder, or dissolved by the use of apt chemicals such as alkaline cleaners to neutralise stains caused by acids.

Discolouration is caused by exposure to moist air. Metals are prone to this phenomenon, e.g. iron gets rusted, silver and brass darkens and copper gets green. All metals have their respective polishes to bring them to their original sheen.

▲ CLEANING METHODS

Choice of Cleaning Methods

The choice of cleaning method depends on various factors as listed below:

1. The nature of soil
2. The nature of the surface that is soiled
3. The properties of cleaning agents suitable for the surface
4. The best way to clean without dispersing dust to other areas
5. Cost effectiveness in terms of materials and labour time

The method should restore the surface to its original sheen and colour. While the methods used have to be viewed individually, depending upon the surface, there are some general principles that can be applied to all cleaning:

1. Remove loose dust and litter before starting cleaning procedures, especially for stubborn stains and grime.
2. Use lighter cleaning methods first before attempting stronger methods.
3. Use clean and dry duster cloths and linen.
4. Choose the simplest methods when in doubt.
5. Use abrasives as a last resort as they can damage the surface.
6. Use an agent that is the least offensive in smell, if alternatives are available.
7. Be cautious of spoiling the surrounding areas while cleaning a surface, e.g. fingerprints on walls, grazing other articles.
8. Use methods that pose least inconvenience to guests. Guests can be disturbed by noise, smell or cleaning materials lying loosely in public areas.
9. Be sure that during the process of cleaning, areas do not become accident prone, e.g. wet floors, greasy surfaces, obstacles in the way, etc.
10. Plan cleaning schedules carefully to ensure the least time.
11. Clean regularly to ensure a sparkling house.
12. Train staff to take safety precautions in cleaning methods and the use of cleaning agents, e.g. using of gloves, masks, etc.

One of the crucial items in any cleaning is water. The role of water is:

1. To hold the dirt and remove it away as in rinsing.
2. To react with the dirt and grease, break it down and hold it in suspension. This is done with the aid of detergents.

3. Two emulsify and hold grease in suspension together with the dirt so that it can be removed. The use of alkalis helps in the process.

With these principles in mind, a public area cleaner is ready to tackle the cleaning of various surfaces.

Methods of Cleaning

There are several methods employed by the public area crew to clean various surfaces, e.g. tar, cement, ceramic tiles, granite, marble, terrazzo, stone, wood, carpet, vinyl, asphalt, rubber and linoleum. This is in addition to furniture, artefacts, landscapes, etc. that they have to clean and maintain.

Dusting: A basic dry method, manually using a feather duster or soft lint cloth. A variant is **dust-mopping**, using a dry mop.

Damp-dusting: A wet method, manually using a cloth and neutral solution for dirt.

Sweeping: A dry method for removing dust from floors with brooms. Carpeted areas requiring spot cleaning will need a brush and dust pan.

Spot mopping: It is to remove wet spills of liquid of any type at a local spot as well as to avoid stains developing on the floor surface. A variant is **spot cleaning** which is a manual method to remove isolated stains with an appropriate stain-removal agent. This is used especially removing stains on upholstery, drapery, carpets and other flooring.

Wet mopping: A wet method, using a damp mop on a floor surface done only after the surface has been dry dusted.

Vacuum cleaning: A dry method, especially on carpeted surfaces, using a vacuum cleaner that employs an electro-mechanical suction to remove dust.

Wet vacuum cleaning: A wet method of cleaning large wet surfaces, using the same electro-mechanical suction processes.

Buffing: It is a wet electro-mechanical method where a buffer machine with pads or brushes restores dull floors like granite or marble to its original sheen with friction facilitated by a spray of an appropriate detergent.

Floor polishing: It is a dry electro-mechanical method, using a floor machine with a speed of 175-1500 rpm to floors which are first dusted and applied with the appropriate polish to restore the floor to its original sheen.

Scrubbing: It is a wet method using light or heavy scrubbing machine (based on the floor soilage) that uses pads or brushes to scuff deeply embedded dirt in floors. The machine sprays detergent according to pH potency required to make the process of scrubbing efficient. A variant is **manual scrubbing** for smaller surface areas like mirrors or glass using a detergent spray and a cloth. The surface is dried with a squeegee.

Burnishing: A dry mechanical method, using a high speed burnishing floor machine which uses friction and heat to restore gloss to surfaces like marble, granite and slate.

Stripping: A method of removing old floor finishes like tiles or wood and the seal that binds it to the floor, to reveal the raw floor for refinishing.

Cleaning Supplies

A typical housekeeping department will maintain an inventory of the following cleaning supplies which are consumable and need replenishing. These are:

All-purpose cleaners, disinfectants, germicides, toilet bowl cleaners, window glass cleaners, metal polishes, furniture polishes, and stain removers.

Cleaning Equipment

Public area crew will require small equipment for daily cleaning chores. These are:

- Brooms
- Brushes—hard, soft, scrubbing, upholstery, cobwebs, toothbrush, drain brush, carpet brush, leather brush, fabric brush, bottle brush, toilet bowl brush
- Mops—dry and wet
- Mop wringer buckets
- Buckets
- Feather dusters
- Squeegees
- Spray bottles
- Rubber gloves
- Protective eye goggles
- Cloth-cleaning dusters, swabs, chamois leather, lint cloth

Some examples of such equipment are given below.

Yard Brooms are used for sweeping external surfaces like the driveways, walkways, porch, car parks, employee' entrance, receiving apron, rooftops and all other tarred and cemented floor areas. Public area cleaners use these brooms for removing dead foliage, mud and cigarette butts from these areas.

Flex Neck Broom



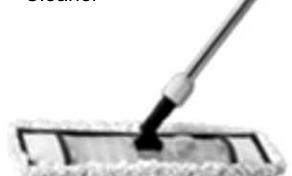
Sweeping Brooms are used for cleaning internal floors prior to subjecting them to water cleaning. The typical surfaces would be found in uncarpeted corridors like in the basements or public corridors found in shopping arcades and lobbies. The brooms remove the grime and mud from the surfaces that are swept into dustpans and deposited to common garbage areas.

Floor Map



Mops are meant to be moistened in pails of water before being applied on the floors. Public floors with tiles, marble, granite, terrazzo and linoleum are best cleaned with this method.

Extendable Microfibre Cleaner



Floor Dusters are used to wipe out dust only. It may not remove difficult stains and spots.



Magnet Mop



Squeegees are used when floors are washed down with water and not mopped. Public cloak rooms, service landings and stairwells are subject to this treatment. Squeegees have rubber endings that collect water with the sweep and diverted to drains.



Cotton Mops are used when adequate drainage is not provided. These mops absorb the water and are then squeezed out into pails.



Floor Scrubbers are used for wiping difficult stains and spots on floors.



Hand Brush and Dustpan is the common tool that all public cleaners will like to have to remove dirt from table tops, carpets or hard floors.



Buckets or pails are essential to any wet cleaning of surfaces.



Sponges are handy for all surfaces to clean and scrub difficult stains and spots. They work well with special detergent spray bottles.



Floor Polishers are expensive equipment used to polish floors especially those with stone finishes (granite, marble, terrazzo, etc.). Polishing is done on a weekly basis and sometimes on monthly basis, depending upon the floors and frequency of use.



Heavy Duty Vacuum Cleaners are used for extensive carpet areas as those found in banquet halls, carpeted corridors, lobbies, executive offices, etc.

Carpet Shampoo Machines are used to shampoo carpets on a weekly or monthly basis depending on use. The machine has a simultaneous process to feed and suck water on the carpet surface. The supervisor has a special schedule for carpet shampooing to maintain them in pristine condition.



Drapery Cleaners are automated to clean extensive upholstery and curtains found in banquets, lobbies and restaurants.

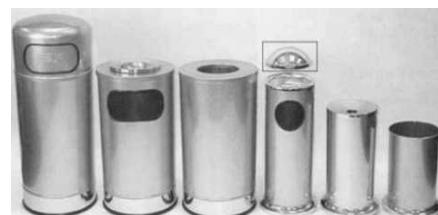


Portable Steamers are used to wrinkle out draperies and upholstery found in public areas.



Trash cans are essential to public area cleaning because it is here that all garbage is deposited to be later emptied into large garbage dumps cleared by the municipality garbage removal crews. Trash cans are kept at strategic points in exteriors to serve given areas.

Litter Bins of chrome are placed at all internal places in the hotel, especially outside elevators for guests to stub there cigarettes; lobbies and foyers; shopping arcade corridors; public bathrooms; and any other place where people are likely to congregate. They come in all shapes and sizes and can be used based on the density of traffic and purpose of use. Many have cigarette disposal facility.



Bulb extractors are handy tools to remove and replace fused bulbs. Though this may be strictly a function of the maintenance department, it has been handed over to the public area cleaners and room attendants because it is a simple task that saves the time of long procedures if the maintenance department were involved.

(For further details see Lesson 21, "Housekeeping Equipment", Part 9)





Key Terms

Buff	Polish with a soft abrasive material
Burnish	To polish metal until it is smooth and shiny
Discolouration	Loss of colour
Guest floors	Those floors exclusively used for guest rooms
Litter	Loose rubbish
Public Area	Spaces open to public
Mezzanine	A floor covering part of the area between two full floors
Shopping Arcade	A covered passage lined with shops
Health Club	A place for physical health rejuvenation
Rockeries	Decorative rock arrangements
Spa	A place where people can relax and improve their health
Vacuum Cleaner	A machine that sucks dirt and dust from surfaces

Review Quiz



True or False

1. The stature of the hotel increases by attracting more local public.
2. Rooftops can be revenue generating areas.
3. Car parks are considered public areas.
4. We can find housekeeping in the basement of a hotel.
5. We can find indoor recreation centres in lower lobbies.
6. The back-office of the front office is found in the basement.
7. The shopping arcade is found off the mezzanine floor.
8. We can find a business lounge on a guest floor.
9. We can find a swimming pool on the rooftop.
10. Executive offices are usually found on the mezzanine floor.

Fill in the Blanks

1. Clumps of dust caused by moisture are called _____
2. A method of cleaning a floor using a dry mop is called _____
3. A machine that sucks dirt and dust is called a _____
4. A method of removing old floor finishes is called _____
5. A half floor between two full floors is called a _____

Role of a Public Area Supervisor

Learning Objective

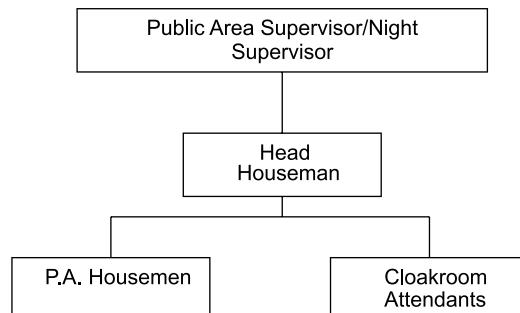


To help the readers understand the role of a Public Area Supervisor along with her duties and responsibilities.

INTRODUCTION

The public area supervisor is a crucial member of the housekeeping team. She supervises the cleanliness, maintenance and the aesthetic upkeep of all the public areas. Her responsibilities extend from the external gate of the hotel to the basements and rooftops. Naturally, she has to be a person who is physically fit and with boundless energy, a competency that is very essential to hold this role. She must be able to lead and motivate a large brigade who has to sometimes work under difficult circumstances. It takes a lot of skill and energy to supervise large areas especially under pressure in a busy hotel. The chart below shows the team that she works with:

Given below are the job descriptions of each:



Job Title	Public Area Supervisor
Reports to:	1. Assistant Housekeeper 2. Executive Housekeeper
Job Summary	Ensures that all public areas are cleaned and maintained to hotel standards and within productivity limits in a shift.
Duties and Responsibilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inspects staff turnout of the team assigned. 2. Leads, trains and motivates a public area team to clean and maintain public areas to hotel standards. 3. Inspects all public areas against a public area checklist ensuring that hotel standards are met. 4. Removes furniture, curtains and other fixtures which require repairs, mending, spotting, washing, etc. 5. Follows an advanced renovation programme of public areas after it is approved by the Executive Housekeeper, in a timely manner. 6. Prepares a chandelier cleaning schedule and have it followed by the cleaning crew. 7. Ensures that staff follow housekeeping systems, procedures and standards. 8. Prepares a carpet shampoo schedule and ensures that it is followed in a timely manner. 9. Ensures the safety and hygiene of the public area crew. 10. Maintains discipline and conducts performance appraisals of PA personnel. 11. Checks all safety systems in public areas and follows-up on faults. 12. Liaises with the security personnel on duty. 13. Accounts for the movement of all furniture and fixtures in public areas. 14. Follows-up on all maintenance orders and signs for work that is completed to her satisfaction. 15. Liaises with the housekeeping control desk on all matters concerning the public areas. 16. Checks and controls all equipment ensuring that they are used correctly and stored appropriately after use. 17. Checks the serviceability of all floor equipment. 18. Supervises the pest control schedules in public areas. 19. Ensures that internal plants and floral arrangements are watered and recycled by the horticulture department. 20. Reports all lost and found items and ensures that the prescribed procedures are followed. 21. Ensures that all cloakroom attendants keep public cloakrooms clean and fresh.
Directly Supervises	P.A. Housemen and Cloakroom Attendants.
Limits of Authority	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evaluates performance of public area housemen and cloakroom attendants 2. Maintains discipline among the staff 3. Can declare a room out-of-order

Coordinates with	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engineering – on matters of maintenance 2. Security – on matters of security in P.A. 3. Control Desk – for coordination 4. Horticulture – for maintenance of indoor plants in public areas 5. Florist – for supply and maintenance of floral arrangements in public areas 6. General Stores – for requisitions
Minimum Educational Qualifications	Diploma in Hotel Management
Experience	Minimum 1 year training in housekeeping.
Skills and Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Knowledge of housekeeping ➢ Training skills ➢ Leadership & motivation skills ➢ Well groomed & physically fit ➢ Eye for detail

Job Title:	Night Supervisor
Reports to:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assistant Housekeeper 2. Executive Housekeeper
Job Summary	Supervises all night cleaning schedules in guest rooms and public areas to hotel standards and within productivity limits.
Duties and Responsibilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inspects staff turnout of the team assigned. 2. Leads, trains and motivates the night crew to accomplish the night cleaning duties to hotel standards. 3. Ensures that housekeeping policies, systems, procedures and standards and are followed by all staff on the floors and in public areas. 4. Ensures the safety and hygiene of the housekeeping staff at night. 5. Maintains discipline and conducts performance appraisals of the personnel under his/her control. 6. Liaises with security personnel on security matters on the floor. 7. Checks the log book and follows-up on any special instructions left by the evening shift. 8. Mans the housekeeping control and coordinates all cleaning activity on the floors and public areas. 9. Records all lost and found items. 10. Manages guest complaints. 11. Manages staff grievances. <p>Guest Rooms</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Inspects VIP rooms and ensures that the room attendant has followed the procedures set in case of VIP arrivals at night. 13. Inspects each room completed by a room attendant with a specified room checklist and ensures that the standards of the establishment in terms of cleanliness, functionality and aesthetic value have been met with. 14. Maintains records of fresh linen and guest amenities issued to floors from each floor pantry. Disposes soiled linen in hampers at the floor pantry.

	<p>15. Prepares the night housekeeping report for the front office.</p> <p>16. Liaises with the room service for the clearance of room service trays and trolleys.</p> <p>Public Areas</p> <p>17. Allots public area night crew to various areas of the hotels.</p> <p>18. Ensures that all night cleaning areas are attended to as per procedures and standards.</p> <p>19. Takes rounds and monitors with checklists.</p> <p>20. Ensures that emergency cleaning requirements are attended to especially in banquets and restaurants.</p>
Directly Supervises	All room attendants and housemen at night
Limits of Authority	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluates performance of room attendants and housemen under her charge. Maintains discipline among the staff. Can declare a room out-of-order. Authorised to enter guest rooms.
Coordinates with	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Front Office – for housekeeping room reports and the cleanliness of rooms as well as making them available for sale. Engineering – on matters of maintenance and safety on the guest floor. Security – on matters of security and safety on the guest floor. Room Service – for clearance of trays and trolleys.
Minimum Educational Qualifications	Diploma in Hotel Management
Experience	Minimum one-year training in housekeeping.
Skills and Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Thorough knowledge of housekeeping systems and procedures & equipment ➢ Training skills ➢ Guest handling skills ➢ Leadership skills ➢ Eye for detail ➢ Physically fit

Job Title:	Head Houseman
Reports to:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Public Area Supervisor Assistant Housekeeper
Job Summary	Executes tasks as assigned by the Public Area Supervisor to hotel standards and guest satisfaction.
Duties and Responsibilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Attends briefing at the beginning of the shift. Notes the assignment of duties to various public area crew members. Assists in the issue of equipment and detergents from the housekeeping store to crew members. Maintains a polite, dignified and helpful attitude towards guests. Hands over lost and found articles to the public area supervisor and help in completing the formalities.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Ensures that P.A. crew are following the right cleaning procedures and to standards. 7. Takes rounds and physically checks the completed works. 8. Reports all maintenance requirements in corridors and notify the control desk for further action. Follows-up that faults are corrected before the shift ends. 9. Ensures that garbage is disposed off in prescribed areas segregating the recycled items. 10. Supervises the swimming pool deck area cleaning. 11. Supervises weekly/monthly cleaning schedules. 12. Checks all safety systems in public areas and reports defects, if any. 13. Liaises with security personnel on security matters on the floor.
Directly Supervises	None
Limits of Authority	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. May enter guest rooms. 2. May deny access of guest rooms to unauthorised hotel personnel and guests.
Coordinates with	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engineering – on matters of maintenance and safety in guest rooms. 2. Security – on matters of security and safety on the guest floor. 3. Control Desk – for receiving instructions and follow-up on maintenance orders. 4. Laundry – for the deposit of soiled linen of a floor. 5. Linen Room – for issue of fresh linen. 6. Horticulture – for maintenance of indoor plants in rooms and corridors. 7. General Stores – for the collection of supplies.
Minimum Educational Qualifications	Junior High School (10 years schooling)
Experience	Minimum 3 months training in housekeeping.
Skills and Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Thorough knowledge of guest room cleaning procedures. ➢ Knowledge of linen exchange procedure. ➢ Basic English language proficiency. ➢ Etiquettes and manners. ➢ Well groomed, hygienic and physically fit. ➢ Skills in the use of cleaning equipment and detergents. ➢ Eye for detail.
Job Title:	Public Area Houseman
Reports to:	Head Houseman Public Area Supervisor
Job Summary	Executes tasks as assigned by the Head Houseman/Public Area Supervisor.
Duties and Responsibilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attends daily briefings at the beginning of a shift. 2. Notes the public area assigned. 3. Collects the equipment and detergents from the housekeeping store. 4. Cleans the area methodically as per standards of the hotel following cleaning procedures set.

	<p>5. Maintains a polite, dignified and helpful attitude towards guests and respects their privacy.</p> <p>6. Hands over lost and found articles to the Head Houseman/Public Area Supervisor</p> <p>7. Vacuums/polishes/mops floor corridors, foyers, stairwells and landings as per procedure.</p> <p>8. Reports all maintenance requirements to the control desk for further action, and ensures that the faults are corrected before the shift ends.</p> <p>9. Disposes garbage in prescribed areas segregating the recycled items.</p> <p>10. Liaises with security personnel on security matters in the assigned areas.</p> <p>11. Uses all safety precautions prescribed while carrying out cleaning duties.</p>
Directly Supervises	None
Limits of Authority	<p>1. May enter allotted public areas.</p> <p>2. May caution guests if there is any hazard to them while cleaning.</p>
Coordinates with	<p>1. Engineering – on matters of maintenance and safety in the allotted public areas.</p> <p>2. Security – on matters of security and safety on the allotted public areas.</p> <p>3. Control Desk – to report maintenance requirements and follow-up on maintenance orders as well as to receive instructions.</p> <p>4. Horticulture – for maintenance of indoor plants in public areas allotted.</p> <p>5. General Stores – for the collection of supplies.</p>
Minimum Educational Qualifications	Junior High School (10 years of schooling)
Experience	Minimum 3 month training in housekeeping.
Skills and Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Thorough knowledge of cleaning procedures ➢ Basic English language proficiency ➢ Etiquettes and manners ➢ Well groomed, hygienic and physically fit ➢ Skills in the use of cleaning equipment and detergents ➢ Eye for detail

Job Title:	Cloak Room Attendant
Reports to:	<p>1. Head Houseman</p> <p>2. Public Area Supervisor</p>
Job Summary	Maintains high sanitation standards of cloak rooms in public areas and ensure the safety of hotel property in the assigned areas.
Duties and Responsibilities	<p>1. Exchanges soiled hand towels for fresh ones at the linen room</p> <p>2. Maintains adequate stocks of soaps, detergents and hand towels to meet demand, especially at peak hours.</p> <p>3. Maintain shoe-shine kit and clean guest shoes if required.</p> <p>4. Maintains all cupboards and fixtures installed in the cloak room by daily cleaning.</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Maintains a polite, dignified and helpful attitude to guests. 6. Reports any plumbing deficiencies to the Head Houseman. 7. Sees that the cloakrooms are clean and sanitised; faucets sparkling, wash basins dry; environment smelling fresh. 8. Supplies guests with towels, soap, comb/hair brush and cologne. 9. Sweeps, washes and scrubs the floors. 10. Maintains the janitor's closet neatly and properly stocked for daily work. 11. Clears soiled linen periodically from linen baskets and stores in janitor's closet. 12. Brushes guest jackets, if required. 13. Replenishes soap dispensers periodically.
Directly Supervises	None
Limits of Authority	May declare a WC booth out-of-order.
Coordinates with	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engineering – on matters of maintenance of cloakroom facilities. 2. General Stores – to collect supplies. 3. Linen Room – for the exchange of hand towels.
Minimum Educational Qualifications	Junior High School (10 years of schooling)
Experience	1 month training adequate.
Skills and Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ability to understand and communicate in basic English. ➤ Etiquette and manners ➤ Well groomed and hygienic ➤ Physically fit ➤ Humility to serve guests. ➤ Willing to work in bathrooms.

Though the chart above may appear simple, the numbers involved are quite large. Each public area cleaner would have the responsibility of 2500 sq. ft. at a minimum. If the hotel has large spaces or public traffic increases, the count increases with each 2500 sq. ft. The public area supervisor and cleaners challenge is to execute cleaning schedules with least disturbance to guests and employees. This means that most internal cleaning is at night when most services shut down. Let us see the areas that come in the night cleaning schedule:

▲ NIGHT CLEANING SCHEDULE

Restaurants and Bars – While most shut by 12 midnight, night clubs and discotheques can stay open till 3.00 am. The coffee shop, though open at night, is less occupied after the dinner service which completes at 12 midnight.

Executive Offices – They close after 6.00 pm. However few like the General Manager's office, reception back-office, accounts, etc. may stay open till late at night for work exigencies.

Business Centre – It is open for 24 hours.

Shopping Arcade – May stay open till eight at night. Some states keep their shopping facilities open till 11.00 pm.

Meeting Rooms – Meetings normally observe business hours and usually close at 6.00 pm.

Banquet Halls – They can keep open till late hours. Award nights may extend till 12 midnight while wedding receptions till past midnight. The banquet halls are left in a mess with such a large traffic of people. If the hall/s is required the next morning, the night crew has a challenge.

Lobbies – All lobbies have to be cleaned at night after 12 midnight. Though there may be a few guests, cleaning has to proceed to be ready for early morning peak traffic.

Elevators/Escalators – These can be shut down one by one for cleaning at night, as guest traffic is less.

Basements – These include car parks, corridors, training rooms, staff locker rooms and support offices like purchasing, housekeeping, laundry, time-office and human resources. The linen/uniform rooms and stores are not accessible to the public area staff at night for security reasons.

Public Cloak rooms – They are relatively free after the restaurants close.

▲ DAY CLEANING SCHEDULE

Day cleaning schedules include driveways, walkways, porch, external car parks, swimming pool areas, beach fronts, gardens (though the gardeners take that responsibility also) patios and terraces, rooftop areas, night club, discotheque and cocktail lounges (because they open at night only), banquet halls, linen rooms and stores when they are under the supervision of the respective keepers.

▲ SUPERVISORY TASKS

The Public Area Supervisor reports to the Assistant Housekeeper/Executive Housekeeper. She has to carry out the objectives set by them in her area of activity. She has to protect the company's valuable assets; she must motivate her crew to give a good guest experience; she must ensure that the equipment are properly handled and preventive maintenance schedules are arranged on time to give a long life to valuable equipment assets; she must control expenses of consumables by ensuring adoption of correct cleaning procedures; she must ensure that key revenue areas are clean and ready to receive guests at their respective allotted time; she must train her staff to high productivity, safety and quality standards; she must monitor the lost and found procedures; and above all she should take efforts to bring pride to the establishment.

The public area supervisor attends the departmental briefing by the executive housekeeper at the start of the day. She is particularly interested to know the special events in the hotel which will need attention. These events can include corporate training programmes, board meetings, food festivals, outdoor galas, weddings, concerts and recitals, supper theatre, fashion shows, corporate promotions, frat parties, etc. These events will indicate her the expected work load in banquet halls, gardens, lobbies, restaurants, etc. She then proceeds to check the log book for any special messages left by the night supervisor before she proceeds to brief her staff.

Briefing

While the principles of briefing as discussed earlier remain the same, she will particularly do the following:

1. Take the attendance of her crew and ascertain the resources available to her.
2. She will check their turnout and confirm that they are to the standards of the hotel.
3. Allot cleaning areas and what has to be accomplished in each.
4. Inform the crew about special events in the hotel that will need additional attention.

Allocation of Equipment

The public area supervisor will equip the crew with the tools required to do their tasks. She opens the housekeeping equipment store to distribute the tools. The equipment (please also see Part 8 Lesson 18 and Part 9 Lesson 22 “*Cleaning Equipment*” for details).



Taking Rounds

The prime responsibilities of a Public Area Supervisor are to:

1. Take rounds of the entire hotel to ensure that the standards of cleanliness.
2. Ensure that cleaning methods used are the right ones.
3. Note all maintenance requirements which she will report to the control desk attendant to raise maintenance orders.
4. Follow-up on maintenance requests till they are complete.
5. Coordinate with the horticulturist and the florist for flower arrangements, internal gardens and potted plants.
6. Clean function rooms for the next event. Often banquet halls need cleaning during an event. She will ensure that this is done as discretely as possible.
7. Meet with her team members individually to resolve their grievances, if any.
8. Provide encouragement and motivation to give their best productivity.
9. Coach team members who require special training.

Appraisals and Training

One of the duties of the public area supervisor is to appraise her team members. She will set productivity standards and objectives against which she will evaluate them. She will give her recommendations to the executive housekeeper for recognition and rewards for good performers. Alongside the appraisals she will identify training needs. She will decide if those needs are fulfilled by coaching by her or will need the training department involved. Some of the training inputs she will seek from external sources are:

1. Use of firefighting equipment by the local fire brigade
2. Use of cleaning equipment by suppliers
3. First-aid and CPR by St John’s Ambulance or similar experts
4. Team-building by the training department
5. Customer service skills by the training department

Key Terms



Aesthetics

Concern for beauty and art

Briefing

A meeting to give instructions or information to a team before an event/operation

Business Centre

A facility for corporate clients to do office work

Cloak- Rooms

Toilets

Horticulture

The practice of growing flowers

Meeting Rooms

Small rooms sold by banquets to hold meetings

Renovation

Restoring something old to new

Review Quiz

True or False



1. The P.A. supervisor's responsibility extends indoors and outdoors.
2. The P.A. supervisor needs to be physically fit.
3. Cloakroom attendants report directly to the P.A. supervisor.
4. All restaurants and bars close at 3.00 a.m.
5. Lobbies are cleaned after midnight.
6. Elevators are cleaned during the day.
7. The head houseman assists in issuing equipment and supplies to P.A. crew members from the housekeeping store.
8. The night supervisor assumes guest room supervision as well.
9. The public area supervisor oversees special cleaning schedules.
10. All public area staff members have to be courteous to guests at all times.

Public Area Cleaning Workflow

Learning Objective



To help readers learn the procedures of cleaning the various components of public areas.

▲ PUBLIC AREAS

There are certain set procedures of cleaning different components of a hotel public area. In this chapter, we shall discuss these procedures for specific areas one by one.

Floor Terraces and Balconies

Housekeeping room attendants do not ordinarily have the responsibility for floor terraces and balconies. Floor terraces are the responsibility of the gardener and/or a floor houseman especially assigned for this purpose.

The gardener takes care of

- condition of plants,
- removing dead leaves

The houseman removes other debris. Cleaning is carried out by the houseman who must ensure that terrace floors, under planters, tables or garden umbrellas are thoroughly cleaned and dried.



Elevators

A public area houseman cleans the interior of elevator cars daily. The volume of traffic may require cleaning of elevator floors every shift. Hotels provide replaceable mats on elevator floors

to accelerate cleaning processes. When cleaning the elevator, the car is taken to the topmost floor and shut in the early hours of the morning when guest traffic is at its lowest. Particular attention is paid to the following:

- walls
- ceilings
- floors
- polishing brass fittings
- recessed lighting troughs,
- ventilation louvers,
- door sills and grooves,
- area around the operators control panel.
- elevator foyers giving particular attention to mirrors, lights, promotional signs, upholstered furniture, door frames and sills.
- sand urns cleared of cigarette stubs.
- foyer carpets

Guest Floor Corridors

A floor houseman is assigned to clean guest floor corridors. This tasks include cleaning the following:

- ceilings
- walls
- corridor carpets or tiled floors
- remove stains
- floor tile edges, corners, baseboards (wooden skirting along the wall to prevent staining the wall when cleaning floors) and the immediate wall area above are inspected for water marks.
- corridor lighting fixtures
- fire extinguishers and fire extinguisher recesses including glass fire doors.

Back-house Corridors

Back-house corridors are swept and mopped. This is an area of heavy staff traffic. The area will also have marks of wheeled trolleys and equipment. Back-house corridors are of concrete to take heavy traffic. Some corridors leading to offices and lounges may be fitted with linoleum or carpet. Linoleum surfaces are mopped while carpets vacuum cleaned.

Floor Pantries

One maid/houseman is assigned daily, on a rotational basis, to clean each floor linen room (floor pantry) to ensure that it is kept clean and tidy at all times. The assignment includes:

- clean the pantry floor
- dust fixtures
- arrange shelves
- dispose old newspapers, empty bottles and garbage from rooms, into respective recycled containers at the exterior of the building
- mop janitor closets including cleaning closet walls, ceiling, floors and light fixtures
- wash, rinse and dry mops before storage

Service Lobbies and Stairways

A houseman is assigned the task of sweeping, mopping and drying these areas on a daily or more frequent schedule depending upon traffic requirements.

Service Elevators

Most hotels give the responsibility of cleaning service elevators to the kitchen stewarding department. However, some hotels may give this responsibility to housekeeping in which case the same cleaning procedure as that established for guest elevators will apply with the additional stipulation that floor cleaning is carried out after every meal service.

Function Rooms

A special team is assigned for daily cleaning of all function rooms. Cleaning will include:

- walls
- ceilings
- windows and window frames
- floors and carpeting
- light fixtures
- draperies
- pictures, lamps and furniture
- legs of all chairs and tables
- bases of floor lamps



Lobby

Lobby cleaning schedules are adapted to the character of the lobby and the volume of traffic. These schedules include:

- walls
- ceilings and floors
- all metal work
- lighting fixtures and lamps
- air-handling outlets
- planters
- windows and draperies
- showcases, display boxes, cigar stands
- bell captains desk
- concierge desk
- cloakrooms
- specialised cleaning of marble, granite, terrazzo floors and aluminium, bronze, stainless steel and cast iron metal work. Cleaning procedures and materials are found in Lesson 22, “Cleaning Methods”, Part 9.



Shopping Arcade

The responsibility to clean shops varies in different hotels based upon the type of rental agreement between the hotel and the lessees. The housekeeper checks with the management to determine the

housekeeping responsibilities for the maintenance of these areas. In instances where the responsibility rests with the shopkeeper, the hotel management has the right to insist that the cleanliness and order of these shops is at least equal to the standard prescribed for others of the hotel. The types of concessions include casinos, barber shops, beauty parlor, gift shop, travel bureau, offices and show rooms. Housekeeping responsibilities in any case include cleaning the corridors and removing trash from public litter bins.

Cabanas

Cabanas located at swimming pools and beach fronts follow the same procedures as normal guest rooms and verandas.

Bars, Soda Fountains and Snack Bars

The cleaning of counters, tables and chairs of these facilities is usually the responsibility of food and beverage service staff. They may take cleaning tips from housekeeping. The common areas around such facilities are the responsibility of housekeeping which includes:

- floor mopping/vacuuming carpets
- clearing litter bins
- window cleaning
- general dusting

Restaurants

The basic cleaning of restaurants rests with the housekeeping department well before the opening of the restaurant. The main cleaning tasks are:

- vacuum carpets,
- water plants
- clear side-station garbage.
- polishing brass appointments,
- dust lighting fixtures.
- bandstands and stages

F&B service staff clean chairs, table legs and bases daily. They also clean soiled dish trolleys, pastry carts and other wheeled equipment should receive thorough daily cleaning with particular attention to castors to ensure that they are free from grease, food or mop strands.

Cleaning of stage lighting fixtures, light troughs, skylights and indirect lighting is the responsibility of the maintenance department who are familiar with the care of such equipment and the inherent danger working with water around electrical equipment.

Offices

The housekeeping department is responsible to clean office receptions, offices and meeting rooms. Such cleaning procedures include desks, chairs and other furniture such as credenzas and filing cabinets. In order to facilitate proper cleaning, the office personnel are required



to remove loose papers, file folders, reports, etc. from the top of desks and filing cabinets at the close of each working day and store them in drawers, cupboards and filing cabinets. Accounting books, records, purchase orders, invoices, payroll materials, etc. are not to be kept loose. Receipts and invoices which will be audited are bundled, labelled and stored in drawers. The accounting department may like to supervise the cleaning of their areas as confidential records are maintained in the department. The cleaning schedule includes the business centre (top picture). The dustbins are cleared and carpets vacuumed.

Linen and Uniform Rooms

These areas are the direct responsibility of linen and uniform room personnel. Uniform racks are kept clean and in order. Cleaning is done after the room is closed for the day.

Tailors keep tailor shops clean at the end of each working day. Sewing machines are covered when not in service. Particular attention is paid to the floor to prevent the accumulation of scraps, lint and thread.

Upholstery Yard

The upholsterer is responsible for the maintenance, cleanliness and safety in the yard. The entire yard is cleaned and in order at the end of each working day. Upholstery fabrics are kept in closed cartons. Scraps waste and discarded materials are kept in covered metal containers and removed from the yard at the close of each working day.

Store Rooms

All store rooms are constantly maintained in a clear and orderly manner. The storekeeper is responsible for cleaning shelves and the condition of stored merchandise. The cleaning of floors and walls is performed by housekeeping employees on a regular basis, under supervision. Refrigerated store cleaning is the responsibility of kitchen stewarding.

Swimming Pools

The bottom and sides of a swimming pool are cleaned daily by pool personnel using vacuum cleaning equipment (many hotels give this responsibility to the maintenance department). In hotels which do not have filtration and water treatment equipment, pools are emptied once a week. Pool cleaning includes:

- Scrubbing of pool walls and floors using wire brushes.
- Hand-scrubbing tiles and overflow gutters at the edges of the pool every four days.
- Sweep and wet mop daily the outside terraces including those surrounding swimming pools.
- Scrub serrated tiles which have a tendency to accumulate oily films from bathers' feet using strong detergent periodically to retain the original tile colours.
- Apply rock salt periodically in terrace areas to prevent fungus growth between tiles.
- Inspect diving boards, diving platforms and pool stairs daily to ensure that they are clean and safe.
- Dust pool side furniture including chairs, lounge tables, sun mats and garden umbrellas.

Basements

Basements are broomed daily and periodically washed clean. Engineering staff may prefer to keep their areas clean and will know how to deal with oil spills, tar stains, etc. If not, then such care has to be provided by housekeeping cleaners.

External Areas

External areas start from the gate apron; driveways to the porch; the porch itself; car-parks; gardens; walkways; fountains; beaches; etc. Yard brooms are handy equipment for cleaning of these areas. The dirt and dust accumulated is gathered in mobile trash cans and deposited at the municipal dump located in the precincts. Beaches are kept clean with sand rakes. Gardens are normally maintained by the gardeners themselves but take help of housekeeping at times.

Key Terms



Terrace	A raised built area external to a room
Balcony	A covered flat area projecting from a building
Lobby	Entrance hall to a building
Foyer	Small public meeting areas
Baseboard	Wooden skirting along walls to prevent stains while floor cleaning

Review Quiz



Fill in the Blanks

1. Floor terraces and balconies are cleaned by _____
2. The best time to clean elevators is _____
3. Cigarette-stub dispensers in foyers are called _____
4. Wooden skirting along walls to prevent staining of the wall by floor cleaning is called _____
5. Back-house corridors are cleaned by _____ and _____
6. Cleaning of refrigerated stores is the responsibility of _____
7. Metal surfaces are cleaned with _____
8. The standards of cleanliness of shops in the arcade is set by the _____
9. The cleaning of tables and chairs in a restaurant is the responsibility of _____
10. The cleaning of stage lighting is the responsibility of _____

Part-9

CLEANING KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE

Housekeeping Equipment

Learning Objective



To familiarise the reader with the range of cleaning equipment used by housekeeping

► EQUIPMENT SELECTION

Cleaning tools are essential for housekeeping professionals. They help improve productivity and efficiency. As equipment is expensive, their selection is of utmost importance. The correct choice and quality of equipment could save the costs of breakdowns, labour and time. During the purchase of equipment, the following need to be kept in mind:

1. Quality—based on the usage history in other organisations.
2. Performance—it should be tried and tested.
3. Reliability—of the supplier to meet time supply deadlines.
4. Transportation time—to replenish stocks.
5. User friendly—equipment should be light, well balanced and easy to manipulate.
6. Availability—of parts and accessories.
7. Sturdiness—in terms of usage and durability.
8. Inexpensive—cost-effectiveness compared to other alternatives.
9. Easy maintenance—spare parts must be easily available and inexpensive.
10. Warranties—to cover faulty performance during a certain period after purchase.
11. Productivity—in terms of square feet it cleans in one hour.
12. Washing efficiency—of extractors and wet vacuum cleaners in terms of the pressure when injecting fluid. They come with pressures from 11 to 1000 PSI. Similarly, the solution recovery is equally important in terms of time taken to lift solution.
13. Appearance—as the equipment will be in guest view.
14. Ease of handling—it should not physically overload the operators.

▲ STORAGE OF EQUIPMENT

To give equipment a longer life, they have to be stored properly after each use. Given below are some storage tips:

1. Dry and ventilate store—as dampness causes rust and mildew that degenerates equipment.
2. Provide space—to access shelves and to facilitate cleaning.
3. Secure locking—to prevent pilferage.
4. Keep stores accessible—to all cleaning personnel during operations to avoid any hold-up in cleaning schedules.
5. Clean and dry wringer trolleys—before storing them.
6. Overturn brushes—do not rest on their bristles.
7. Seal all detergents and polishes—to prevent evaporation and drying.
8. Wring mops and dry them before storage.
9. Label racks and cupboards for easy identification.
10. Clean equipment thoroughly prior to storing them.
11. Label equipment accessories and keep preferably in locked cupboards.
12. Maintain stock records showing the following:
 - (a) Date of purchase
 - (b) Kind of stock and quality
 - (c) Name of supplier
 - (d) Cost per unit
 - (e) Date of issue into service
 - (f) Remarks on suitability and durability.
13. Follow correct rules before issuing equipment as follows:
 - (a) Issue equipment at definite times.
 - (b) Issue new equipment strictly against worn-out equipment.
 - (c) Label or code equipment to identify from where it has been issued, e.g. floor, public area, etc.
14. Subject the store to regular inspections and audit.
15. Wrap expensive equipment in polythene to protect them from dust during storage.

▲ TYPES OF CLEANING EQUIPMENT

Cleaning equipment can be put into six broad categories:

Electro-Mechanical Equipment

Vacuum cleaners

Vacuum cleaners are the greatest friends of housekeeping cleaning staff. They come with nozzles and attachments for all types of surfaces. They are used for large carpeted areas. They are quick, less laborious and prevent dust from spreading elsewhere in the room. There are many types of vacuum cleaners:

- (a) **Upright models** work on a combined suction and beating process. There are many kinds of upright vacuum cleaners:



- Beater-bar vacuum cleaners agitate carpet piles and loosen dirt;
- Brush vacuums agitate carpets glued to the floor;
- Pile lifter vacuums have strong suction capacity and a separate brush motor that restores crushed carpet piles. There are canister models with tanks that are mounted on castors and some that are held on the operator's back to reach difficult corners and edges.

(b) **Floor models** – Cylindrical or spherical vacuum cleaners that operate solely on suction.

A vacuum cleaner must be checked that it is functioning, before use. Here are some tips in the use of vacuum cleaners.

1. It should move crossways over carpets to ensure that suction draws out the dust. A good suction can be judged by the pull against the carpet.
2. Straighten the wire connecting to the power socket as coiled wire leads to unmanageable knots that trip the vacuum cleaner or operator.
3. Pick small sharp objects like pins and needles by hand to prevent damage to the nozzle or suction tube resulting in ineffective suction.
4. Clean the dust bags of the vacuum cleaner frequently as an empty bag provides greater suction. The bag may be emptied into a newspaper or paper sack and disposed with the rubbish.
5. Keep all brush attachments free from dust, bits of cotton and hair, picked up in the course of cleaning.
6. Never use conventional vacuum cleaners to clean wet floors.

A **dustette** is a small, light vacuum cleaner used for cleaning curtains, upholstery and mattresses. It cleans by brush and suction and is very easy to handle.



Wet Vacuums: This vacuum sucks water from floors or can both suck and spray water to rinse the soiled area. Squeegee attachments on wet vacuums can make floor clean-up, stripping and scrubbing more efficient. Wet vacuums come in a variety of shapes and sizes. Some canister models can be dragged on castors while others can be strapped on the back of the cleaner. These vacuums have collection tanks that store the water that has been sucked up from the floors. This equipment can be used on wet carpets as well. Some wet vacuums may be pushed like a cart and are heavier for large water suction needs off floors.

Wet Extractors: While wet vacuum cleaners have a suction feature, wet extractors have suction and water injection features. With this, they simultaneously rinse and suck water from the surface. They are best for both carpets and floors. The basic principle of operation is that the extractor sprays water and detergent onto the surface and then uses suction to extract the water into tanks built into the wet extractor. Some machines have agitators before spraying to loosen the dirt from the carpet. They have other attachments for draperies and upholstery as well. Wet extractors come in various shapes and sizes. They come in lighter portable tank versions, as well as the heavy duty push-cart variety. They can be used for both floors and carpets. Some extractors can also have a feature for dry pick-up like normal vacuum cleaners.



Rotary Floor Machines

Rotary machines have several applications: shampoo, polish and scrub. They are versatile for both carpets and floors just by the change of an attachment e.g. the bonnet (cover) block can be changed to brush carpets; pads for spin pad cleaning, mist pad cleaning, bonnet pad shampoos, buffing, burnishing, scrubbing, stripping and refinishing floors (see lesson 22); or brushes to perform dry foam cleaning, or brush shampoos. Manufacturers provide a variety of accessories for specific purposes:

- Pads for stripping, scrubbing, polishing, burnishing and spray cleaning.
- Mechanical scrubbers for large uncarpeted floors after they are washed with water and detergent.
- Scrubbers to clean any sticky grit on floors.
- Mechanical polishers for large polished wood or vinyl floors. The floor must be swept clear of dust and mud marks. Polish is lightly rubbed into the floor surface for the best results.

The machine has a feed-in tray for detergent solutions and tanks for water supply and water extraction. Rotary machines come at different speeds ranging from less than 175 rpm for carpets to 1500 rpm for burnishing and buffing of other surfaces.

Use and maintenance

All machines especially rotary machines must be handled by trained and experienced people only. Improper use of the machines can damage carpets such as seam separation, de-lamination of backing material, buckling, shrinking, premature face fibre wear. Such equipment comes with accessories and attachments like hoses and electrical cords. Here are some tips for their care:

- Check hoses for perforation and leaks. They must be rinsed properly after use.
- Check electrical cords for frayed insulation and naked wire.
- Plugs must fit the sockets well.
- Never insert bare wire into sockets as they pose hazards of electrocution and short circuits.
- Remove small objects like pins and needles with a brush and dustpan first, before vacuum cleaning the carpet, as these items tend to puncture the dust bag of the vacuum cleaner.
- Remove large objects from the floor as they could damage the suction process.
- Suction nozzles should face downwards along the face of the carpet when vacuuming as other articles like jewellery, fine garments can be sucked in.

Containers

Containers are required in cleaning operations to carry liquid or dust, to mix detergents and to carry cleaning items. The types of containers include:

- a. Buckets or pails for carrying water primarily. They come in plastic or galvanized metal.
- b. Basins and bowls that are used for removing spots and stains. They usually come in plastic.
- c. Dust pans used for collecting dust by hand brushes. They come in plastic or galvanized metals.
- d. “Housemaid box” or “hand caddy” is a plastic deep carry tray with a handle for various cleaning solutions, brushes and dusters.
- e. Public refuse bins that come in chrome for internal use and galvanized metal for external use. Smaller sani-bins with lids operated with foot pedals are available for toilets.

- f. Waste bins are used in guest rooms and bathrooms, offices and restaurants. They come in plastic. They must be lined with garbage bags to size to easily dispose trash.
- g. Spray bottles with fine nozzles to spray mist on surfaces like mirrors and glass.
- h. Polish applicator trays for mixing floor polishes. They come with an applicator mop.
- i. Mixing buckets for carrying detergent solutions.
- j. Tanks for wet extractors and wet vacuum cleaners that collect water sucked up from floors by the machines.
- k. Vacuum cleaner bags that collect the dust from floors and carpets.

Use and Maintenance

Most containers are made of plastic these days for aesthetic appeal, lightness and easy maintenance.

- Containers must be cleaned everyday by gently rinsing them inside out. They must be dried before stacking.
- Buckets may be piled upside down.
- Tanks of galvanized metal must be cleaned thoroughly before and after use.
- Vacuum cleaner bags must be allowed to fill to 2/3rd capacity. They should be cleaned out at this point. Vacuum bags must be empty before storage.
- Wheels (or casters) must be well oiled for easy carriage and free of dust, tangled strings and hair, etc. Broken wheels must be replaced immediately to give the equipment manoeuvrability.

Brushes

Brushes are manufactured to fulfil a number of objectives.

1. Brushes with soft fibre or nylon bristles that are designed to brush carpets, cane, etc. without damaging the surfaces.
2. Scrub brushes that have short coarse bristles designed for use on surfaces ingrained with dirt and stains.
3. Toilet brush for cleaning WC and bidet bowls.
4. Sink brush that comes in wire for unclogging sink outlets.
5. Bottle brushes with short coarse bristles to reach difficult nooks like overflow channels of sinks and tubs.
6. Scrub brush for cleaning hard grime from floors.
7. Carpet hand brush for cleaning carpets as an alternative to vacuum cleaners.
8. Tapestry brush for cleaning delicate draperies.
9. Cane chair brush which is a soft nylon brush that prevents damage to cane surfaces.
10. Soft hand brush for gathering dust from various surfaces. It goes with a dustpan.
11. Wall brush has long handles to reach the upper reaches of walls. They are soft so as to not damage wall finishes.
12. Feather duster that is soft as a feather to clean delicate surfaces like lampshades, televisions, etc.
13. Nylon nap brush used to restore carpet pile after cleaning.
14. Hand shampoo brush used on stairs and edges.
15. Hearth brush for removing ash from fireplaces. Hearths are found in old palace hotels or colonial style structures.



Nylon Scrub Brush



Soft Bristle Carpet Brush



Nylon Chair Brush



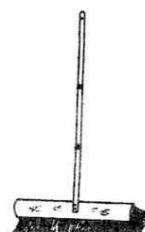
Hard Carpet Hand Brush



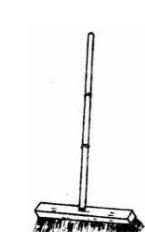
Nylon Tapestry Brush



Soft Nylon Toilet Brush



Yard Broom



Sweeping Broom



Firm Bristle Carpet Brush



Cotton Mop



Cotton Wall Brush



Feather Duster



Hard Bristle Toilet Brush



Yard Broom



Nylon Silk Brush



Dustpan



Soft Hand Brush



Fabric Brush



Upholstery Brush



Electrical Brush



Carpet Brush



Spotting Brush



Mechanical Brush

Use and Maintenance

Brushes must be free of fluff, hair and dust each day. Periodic washing is also recommended. Natural bristles tend to lose some of their stiffness if washed frequently but by giving the brushes a final

rinse in salted cold water, the bristles regain their natural stiffness. Nylon brushes wash more easily and dry quickly. In general, brushes must be washed by working the bristles up and down in warm water and soap lather and rinsed clean with cold water and sunned. Brushes must be replaced that are worn less than 1/8th of an inch. They must be dry when stored and not placed on their bristles.

Mops and Brooms

Mops and brooms are basic tools for cleaning floors. The types are:

- a. Yard brooms with coarse bristles to clean rough floors and garden areas. They come with long handles to reduce fatigue over large areas and hand held shorter ones for small areas.
- b. Wall brooms have long cane handles with soft bristles to clean tall ceilings, ledges and cornices and to remove cobwebs in corners.
- c. Mops are used for dusting floors as well as cleaning the floors with water. They come in various sizes for different purposes.
- d. Soft sweeping broom for internal areas to remove dust from floors and carpets.
- e. Squeegee a tool with a rubber blade, like a windshield wiper used for gathering and channelizing water. There are small hand held ones for window glazes and large ones for floors.



Use and maintenance

In principle, soft bristled brooms are used on smooth floors while coarse-bristled ones are used on coarse surfaces especially outside. Brooms are maintained in the same manner as brushes. Mops must be washed in hot soapy water or detergent (never both together). The use of soapless detergent will prevent the formation of scum. The mop should be tightly squeezed out by hand, shaken well in the open air and left to dry. Coarse cotton mops are used for large stone or cement floors. It takes less time to clean than hand washing but cannot ensure a good standard of cleanliness. New mops must be soaked in clean water for 30 minutes to allow for shrinkage.

Cleaning Cloths and Sponges

Cleaning cloths are also very basic to any cleaning activity. The types of cleaning cloths used are:

- f. Cloth dusters
- g. Rags for applying polish
- h. Flannelette cloth for polishing
- i. Chamois leather
- j. Glass cloth
- k. Floor dusters
- l. Faucet duster
- m. Sponges

Trolleys

The housekeeping department has at its use several types of trolleys to transport large quantities of material that cannot be easily carried by hand. Some examples of these trolleys are:

- a. The maid's cart, which has been discussed in detail earlier in Part V Lesson 14.
- b. Janitor's trolley is a mobile work station for the public area cleaners to carry different mops, brooms and detergents to tackle various surfaces and cleaning changes.
- c. Mop wringer trolley on casters with one or two buckets with a wringer attached. It can have a deep shelf for detergents and a trash bag.
- d. Linen trolleys for the transfer of fresh linen from the laundry to the linen room and floor pantries.

Sundry Equipment and Protective Cloth

Cleaning schedules also use other tools and accessories for efficient work, such as:

- a. Step ladders or stool steps.
- b. Cleaning rubber gloves.
- c. Racks for holding brushes, dustpans, etc.
- d. Airing rack for dry cleaning cloths.
- e. Discarded line for covering furniture and storing materials.
- f. Adjustable ladders for public areas.
- g. Chandelier shampoo tent.
- h. Waterproof tarp used for mixing cleaning solutions.



Scrub Sponge



Faucet Sponge



Strap Faucet Sponge



All-Purpose Gloves



- i. Carpet rake used after cleaning of carpets or to restore crushed carpet piles.
- j. Stirring paddle used to mix cleaning solutions.
- k. Runners used to protect cleaned carpets from foot traffic or to protect floor length draperies from wet carpets during shampooing.
- l. Carpet beaters made of rattan to beat the dust out by beating the back of carpets.
- m. Battery clip-on floodlights used to light dark hallways and stairwells.
- n. Sprayers that are both manual and electric powered used to spray solutions and water onto carpets.
- o. Measuring cups to measure cleaning solutions.
- p. Hand ringers used to squeeze excess moisture out of mop heads and bonnets.
- q. Pick-up pans to gather water collected by squeegees. They are like dustpans.
- r. Furniture guides that are kept under furniture to prevent them from making serious indentations when laying a carpet for a long time.
- s. Pill shear which is a small shaver to crop pills from carpet surfaces.

Key Terms



Bonnet	Hood
Buff	Scrub to a dull smooth finish
Burnish	Polish to a shine
Casters	Wheels
Dry foam cleaning	Cleaning with non-liquid detergent foam
Rotary floor machine	Electro-mechanical cleaner that can shampoo, polish or scrub
Scrub	Rub hard to clean
Vacuum cleaner	Electro-mechanical cleaner that sucks dust from surfaces
Wet extractor	Electro-mechanical cleaner that injects water and sucks it from surfaces
Wet vacuums	Electro-mechanical cleaner that sucks water from surfaces
Wringer	Equipment to remove liquid by squeezing and twisting

Review Quiz



True or False

1. Housekeeping equipment should be light.
2. Housekeeping equipment should have good appearance.
3. Equipment accessories must be labelled.
4. A stock record should show the name of the supplier.
5. Cylindrical or spherical vacuum cleaners operate on suction and beating process.
6. Equipment wires must be coiled properly when in use.
7. Wet extractors have water suction and injection features.
8. Toilet brushes are used for cleaning sinks.

9. Squeegees are used for cleaning rough floors.
10. Waterproof tarp is used for mixing cleaning solutions.

Fill in the blanks

1. Before storing mops, they should be _____
2. Expensive equipment must be covered in _____
3. Cleaning equipment can be put in _____ broad categories.
4. The best vacuum cleaner models for edges and corners are _____
5. _____ models of vacuum cleaners are suitable for suction only.
6. A small light vacuum cleaner used for cleaning curtains, upholstery and mattresses is called a _____
7. Vacuums that suck water from floors are called _____
8. Machines that can shampoo, polish and scrub are called _____
9. A plastic carry case for various cleaning solutions is called a _____
10. The brush used to restore carpet pile after cleaning is called a _____

Write short notes on the following:

1. What are the purchase considerations when buying housekeeping equipment?
2. What are the storage conditions for housekeeping equipment?
3. What are the different containers used in housekeeping operations?
4. Use and maintenance of mops and brooms.
5. Use and maintenance of brushes.

Cleaning Methods

Learning Objective



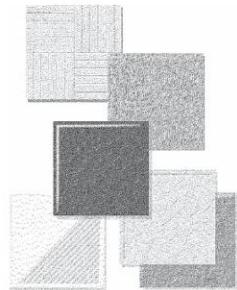
To familiarise readers with different surfaces found in a hotel and the methods to clean them.

▲ INTRODUCTION

One of the main functions of housekeeping is to clean various surfaces in a hotel. The chart below shows the number of surfaces that are used in hotel interiors. Housekeepers have tried and tested various methods of cleaning them over the years. The methods given below are the traditional ones that use items commonly available. These give housekeepers greater freedom when certain modern brands of detergent are not in stock. With the advancement of science and technology, there are now ready-made solutions for cleaning available in the local supermarket. A housekeeper must assess the brands available for her use on a regular basis.

The choice of cleaning method depends on various factors as listed below:

1. The nature of soil.
2. The nature of the surface that is soiled.
3. The properties of cleaning agents suitable for the surface.
4. The best way to clean without dispersing dust to other areas.
5. Cost effectiveness in terms of materials and labour time.
6. The method should restore the surface to its original sheen and colour.



While the methods used have to be viewed individually, depending upon the surface, there are some general principles that can be applied to all cleaning:

1. Remove loose dust and litter before the start of cleaning procedures.
2. Use lighter cleaning methods first before stronger methods.
3. Use clean and dry duster cloths and linen before using them.

4. Choose the simplest methods when in doubt.
5. Use abrasives as a last resort as they can damage the surface.
6. Use an agent that is the least offensive in smell if alternatives are available.
7. Be cautious of spoiling the surrounding areas when cleaning a surface, e.g. fingerprints on walls, grazing other articles.
8. Use methods that pose least inconvenience to guests. Guests are disturbed by noise, smell or cleaning materials lying loosely in public areas.
9. Be sure that during the process of cleaning, areas do not create accident hazards, e.g. wet floors, greasy surfaces, obstacles in the way, etc.
10. Plan cleaning to ensure the least time.
11. Clean periodically to ensure a sparkling house.
12. Train staff in cleaning methods and cleaning agents, e.g. using of gloves, masks, etc.

One of the crucial items in any cleaning is water. The role of water is:

1. To hold and remove dirt as in rinsing.
2. To break down dirt and grease and hold it in suspension, as done with detergents.
3. To emulsify grease and hold in suspension as done alkalis.

With these principles in mind, we are ready to tackle the cleaning of various surfaces given below.

▲ CLEANING METHODS

With these principles in mind, let's discuss them one by one to tackle the cleaning of various surfaces.

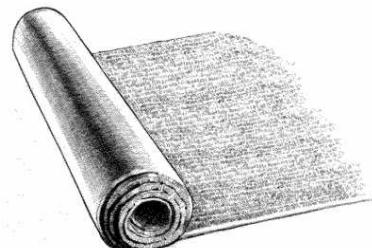
Floors

Floors in this section refer to uncarpeted floors like concrete, linoleum, tiles, etc. which have their advantages and disadvantages over carpets.

Advantages of Non-carpeted Floors:

They are:

- More durable
- Sanitary
- Immune to static electricity
- Ideal for heavy traffic of people, equipment and vehicles
- Less vulnerable to moisture
- Do not breed micro-organisms
- Preferred in moisture prone areas like bathrooms, kitchens and laundries



Disadvantages of Non-carpeted Floors:

They are:

- Noisier and unsuitable for guest rooms or meeting rooms
- Slippery especially when wet and therefore pose a hazard
- Require constant mopping, sweeping and occasionally buffing and waxing

Types of Floors

Basically, there are three types of floors:

Hard Floors

Wood Floors

Resilient Floors

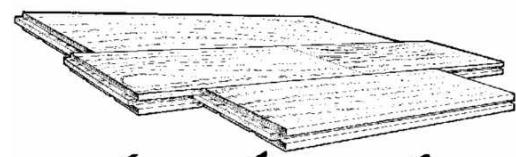
Hard floors are made from stone or clay. They include concrete, marble, granite, terrazzo, ceramic tiles and natural stone. They are the most durable of all floors. Hotels will use concrete in driveways, porches, car parks, stewarding, laundry, etc. where heavy traffic is expected.



- Marble, terrazzo and granite come in many colours and give a grand finish to surfaces. They are therefore preferred for counter tops, decorative walls, and select lobby floors. They come in glossy finish or mat finish to suit the décor style. They need less care to retain their gloss. They are however expensive as they have to be quarried and finished in size and face for commercial use.
- Terrazzo is made from small chips of marble and bound together to give an attractive look. They come in tiles.
- Ceramic tile is made from a combination of marble, clay, slate, glass or flint. It is very durable and easy to maintain. Slate comprises the natural stone and comes in slices. It is used for roofing and heavy flooring.

Wood floors are differentiated between hardwoods and softwoods.

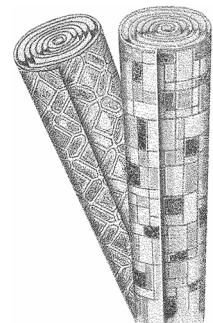
- **Hardwoods** are teak, ebony, and maple and are expensive. They are used for furniture mostly and for exclusive floors. Oak wood is cheaper and therefore chosen for wooden flooring.
- **Softwoods** such as pine and cork give a springy tread but they create dents and scratches.
- **Other variants** of wood flooring are
 - (a) Parquet floors that are wood tiles of maple and oak usually.
 - (b) Wood blocks resemble butcher cutting blocks but come in tiles. They are used where heavy wear and tear is expected.
 - (c) Wooden planks come in varying sizes and can be used for flooring.



The chopping of wood is controlled in many states because of fears of deforestation and therefore difficult to get for large-scale use. Purchases should be legitimate sources. Wood flooring is therefore used only for decorative purposes as in bars, corporate meeting rooms and lounges.

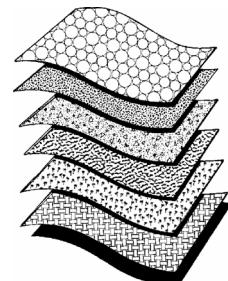
Resilient floors are springy and therefore used extensively. They include vinyl, asphalt, rubber and linoleum.

- **Vinyl** surfaces can be protected with wax for heavy use and therefore used extensively. Since they are non-porous and sound absorbent, they are preferred for flooring. They come in many colours.



- **Asphalt** is resistant to decay and mildew and fire. They are used on driveways and rooftops.
- **Rubber** flooring is used in areas that require sound absorption. They act as good underlay to conference halls and restaurants. Rubber is however expensive and since it is inflammable, is least used.
- **Linoleum** is the most popular in this category. They are cheap in cost and come in many colours. Linoleum is made from linseed oil, ground cork or wood, mineral fillers and resins. They may have a felt backing for extra spring. While linoleum is easy to maintain, it cannot take heavy traffic and wear easily. They are not used in luxury settings.

The chart below gives the cleaning methods employed for each type of surface:



Type of Flooring	Daily Cleaning	Special Cleaning	Special Remarks
Bitumastic, ceramic tiles, marble and granolithic	Sweep, wash, mop or use electric scrubber with hot water and detergent solution.		Avoid use of white spirit and paraffin. Surface can be painted. Granolithic surfaces can be buffed to get a smooth finish and glossy appearance.
Cork/Wood	Sweep, damp mop or vacuum clean. Polish with electric polisher.	Sealed: If polished, re-polish, spray buff or spray cleaned. Unsealed: Re-wax using little polish and much buffering.	Ascertain if the surface is sealed wood or unsealed. Avoid use of excess water and alkalis. It is preferred to seal the surface as unsealed surface absorbs quickly.
Linoleum	Sweep mop or vacuum clean.	Wash by hand or mop with hot water (used sparingly) and detergent. If polished, re-polish, spray buff or spray clean.	Avoid scrubbing, coarse abrasives and alkalis. <i>Sealed:</i> Re-seal where required. <i>Unsealed:</i> Polish using water-based polishes.
Magnetite	Sweep, mop or vacuum clean.		Avoid use of water, alkalis, acids and coarse abrasives.
Seamless Resin, Rubber, Thermo-plastic, Vinyl and Terrazzo	Sweep, wash, mop or use electric scrubber with hot water and detergent solution.	Remove stubborn marks with fine scouring powder.	Avoid use of alkalis, spirits and coarse abrasives. Use water-based polishes. Avoid use of acids and strong alkalis.

Metals

Metals are alloys of different types of metals.

- **Hard metals** like iron and steel are used as building materials to give construction strength.

- **White metals** are more decorative and malleable for special shapes required for hotel use. For example, stainless steel requires the combination of steel, nickel and chromium. Kitchens use stainless steel for table tops and utensils. Their cleaning is under kitchen stewarding and not under the housekeeping.
- **Brassware** is used for decorative purposes like lamps and flowerpots.
- **Chrome** is used for interiors of elevators.
- **Cast iron** is used for banister railings, etc.

Given below are the different types of metals commonly used in hotel interiors that are cleaned by the housekeeping department:

Type of Metal	Items Required	Stain Remover	Method of Cleaning	Rubbing-up	Remarks
Aluminium	Bucket of hot soapy water. Bucket of warm clean water. Steel wool. Net cloth. Nylon soft brush.	Nylon soft brush.	Immerse in water to remove dust. Wash with soapy water using steel wool. Scrub with nylon soft brush for stains. Rinse in clean warm water. Dry with net cloth	Scour with nylon soft brush.	Avoid soda.
Chromium plate Lead	Bucket of warm soapy water.	Flannel or net cloth.	Immerse in water to remove dust.	Scour stains with flannel or net cloth.	
Monel Metal Oxidised Silver	Bucket of warm clean water.	Nylon soft brush.	Wash with warm soapy water.	Use nylon soft brush for stains on lead.	
Pewter	Linen cloth.		Rinse with clean warm water.		
Ornamental stainless steel	Two soft clean dusters.		Dry with linen cloth.		
Staybrite metals					
Ornamental Silver					
Galvanised Iron, Iron.	Bucket of hot soapy water.	Nylon soft brush.	Wash in hot soapy water.	Remove stains with bath-brick or silver sand using nylon soft brush.	Avoid abrasives if iron has any protective coating such as paint, zinc, tin, enamel or black lead.
Zinc	Soda. Net cloth. Clean warm water. Paraffin. Newspaper.	Powdered bath-brick or silver sand.	Add soda if greasy. Rinse in clean warm water. Dry with net cloth. Another method: Wash with soapy water. Apply paraffin with folded newspaper Rinse with warm water. Dry with net cloth.		

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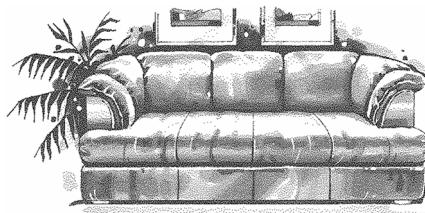
Type of Metal	Items Required	Stain Remover	Method of Cleaning	Rubbing-up	Remarks
Ornamental Steel	Two dusters. Steel wool or Emery paper.		Dust thoroughly to remove surface dust.	Use steel wool to remove stains.	
Unpolished and Polished Tin	Bucket of hot soapy water. Soda. Net cloth. Bucket of clean warm water. Nylon soft brush.	Sand or commercial cleaning powder.	Immerse in hot soapy water and clean using a net cloth. Add soda if greasy. Rinse in clean warm water. Dry with net cloth. Dry in a warm place.	Remove stains with nylon soft brush.	
Brass	Two dusters Brasso.		Wipe out surface dust from the surface with a duster. Apply brasso polish and leave for a while. Polish the surface till it attains a shiny appearance.		Brasso is the best polisher till date for brass surfaces.

Furniture

Furniture consists of beds, tables, chairs, cabinets, etc. It has the following uses and benefits:

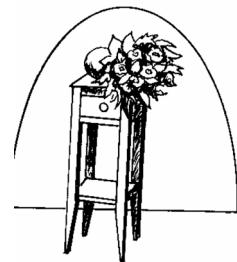
- It is necessary for living comforts and convenience.
- It is a means of beautifying rooms and is an integral part of themes of restaurants, lobbies and rooms.
- It is expensive because they are mostly made of wood and therefore used to enhance decor. There are alternatives nowadays in glass, metal, plastic and other materials shown in the chart below.
- It has a longer life than any other type.

The choice of furniture is made by the interior designer at the inception of the hotel. Furniture can range from the classical Louis XIV furniture to the practical Scandinavian assembled types. Once bought, they have to be maintained so as to prolong the use of this asset. The chart below gives the type of wood and how they are maintained. Lesson 12 “Layout of a Guest Room and Amenities” details the furniture found in a room.



Public areas have an array of furniture:

Lobbies & Foyers: Have lounge sofas and chairs with centre tables; corner tables for flower decorations and artifacts; lobby manager and GRE's desks and chairs; bell and concierge desks; and reception counters.



Restaurants: Have tables and chairs; sideboards; buffet tables; mobile bars; and display counters.

Bars & Cocktail Lounges: Have lounge chairs with centre tables; bottle display cabinets and units; and the main bar counter.

Function Rooms: Have chairs and folding tables; corner tables for displays; bandstand; dais; lecterns; and reception counters.



Offices: Have desks and chairs, cabinets; bureaus; and tables for office equipment.

Patios, Balconies and Terraces: Have outdoor chairs and tables. Patios are inner courtyards open to the sky.

Swimming Pool: Poolside loungers; pool tables and chairs; and wooden hampers for wet towels.

Type of Furniture	Items Required	Daily Cleaning and Polishing	Weekly Cleaning and Polishing	Spring Cleaning and Polishing	Remarks
Cane	Daily/Weekly Two soft dusters or feather duster. Spring Cleaning Two clean soft dusters or feather duster. Bowl of tepid salt water. 1 tsp salt: 1 quart water. Bowl of cold salt water. Flannel cloth. Linen cloth.	Dust with feather duster.	Dust with feather duster.	Dust with feather duster Wash with tepid salt water using flannel cloth. Rinse with cold salt water. Dry with linen cloth. Dry in open-air.	Salt helps to stiffen bleach and remove stains from cane. To tighten limp cane: Dust thoroughly. Dab cane with boiling soda water using flannel cloth and avoiding polished framework. 1 oz. soda: 1 quart water. Use cloth to uphold sagging cane. Dry with linen cloth. Dry in open-air.
Leather & Leather clothes	Daily/Weekly Two soft dusters or feather duster. Spring cleaning Two soft cleaning dusters or feather duster.	Dust with feather duster with proper attention to folds, studs and buttons.	Dust with feather duster.	Remove dust with feather duster or vacuum cleaner. Clean mild stains with warm soapy water. If stubborn stains rub mixture of 2 parts vinegar and 1 part oil.	Furniture polish or cream supplies the leather with wax oil which keeps the material supple and prevents cracking.

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Type of Furniture	Items Required	Daily Cleaning and Polishing	Weekly Cleaning and Polishing	Spring Cleaning and Polishing	Remarks
Polished Wood	Daily Vacuum cleaner. Warm soapy water or vinegar and oil. Flannel cloth. Linen cloth. Furniture polish or cream.			Clean with soap water using a flannel cloth. Rinse and dry. Polish with furniture polish or cream.	
	Weekly Two soft duster cloths or feather duster. Small dusting brush.	Dust with feather duster	Dust with feather duster	Hot plate marks Rub with linseed oil, spirits of camphor or dark furniture polish.	Use furniture polish discretely as too much use can damage the surface.
	Two soft duster cloths or feather duster. Bowl of warm vinegar and water. Flannel or chamois leather. Linen cloth. Furniture polish. Rag cloths.	Dust carved surfaces with small dusting brush Rub with flannel cloth to shine	If sticky, wash with vinegar and warm water in ratio 1:1 cleaning with flannel cloth. Dry with clean linen cloth Apply furniture polish with rag cloth and shine with linen cloth.	Perfume marks Wipe immediately. Rub with paraffin and leave for 24 hours. Scratches Paint over scratch with iodine or rub mixture of camphorated oil and turpentine in ratio 1:1. Leave for 24 hours. Polish with furniture polish.	
Upholstered Furniture	Daily/Weekly Two clean soft dusters or feather duster. Spring cleaning Upholstery brush or vacuum cleaner. Bowl of warm soapy water. Ammonia. Vinegar. Salt. Flannel cloth. Linen cloth.	Delicate material cleaned with feather duster.	Same as daily cleaning method	Remove surface dust with feather duster. Vacuum clean. Wash with soapy water and ammonia ½ tsp: 1 quart of water. Give final rinsing with cold water, vinegar to colour the water and salt in ratio 1 tbs: 1 quart of water. Dry with soft cloth. Finish drying open air.	Excess ammonia results in discolouring especially with pink, green and turquoise colours. Cleaning is preferred in open air. Tough stains can be cleaned by rubbing in warm bran; leaving it for an hour; and brushing off thoroughly. Alternatively, mix rub in mixture of bread crumbs with petrol or methylated spirit; leave for an hour; brush thoroughly.
Brown Wicker	Daily/Weekly Same as for cane. Spring cleaning Feather duster. Vacuum cleaner. Bowl of warm soapy water.	Same method as used for cane.	Same method as used for cane.	Remove cushions. Dust off with feather duster. Vacuum clean with appropriate attachment. Wash with warm soapy water using flannel. (Stubborn grit can be wiped with nail cloth)	Use paraffin if soapy water does not clean enough. Avoid furniture cream as it lodges in crevices of wicker.

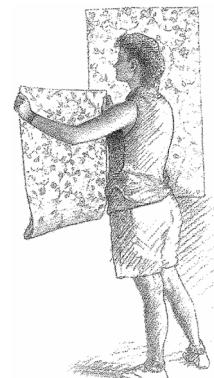
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Type of Furniture	Items Required	Daily Cleaning and Polishing	Weekly Cleaning and Polishing	Spring Cleaning and Polishing	Remarks
White Wicker	Flannel cloth. Soft nail cloth. Clean linen cloth. Liquid furniture polish. Rag. Two dusters.	Daily/Weekly Same items as for cane. Spring cleaning. Feather duster. Bowl of warm salt water; 1 tbs: 1 quart water. Flannel cloth. White furniture polish with rags. Two soft dusters.	Same method as cane.	Rinse thoroughly and dry. Finish drying in open air. Polish with liquid furniture polish.	Avoid making wicker too wet as it can crack. Never dry wicker in front of fire as the wicker will crack.
				Remove cushions. Dust with feather duster. Wash with salt water using flannel cloth. Rinse with cold water. Dry with soft cloth. Dry in open air. Polish with white furniture polish.	

Ceilings & Walls

Nowadays there is a variety of ceiling and wall surface finishes. They include wood, carpet, wall paper, fabric, stone, marble, granite, ceramic tiles and the most common – paint.

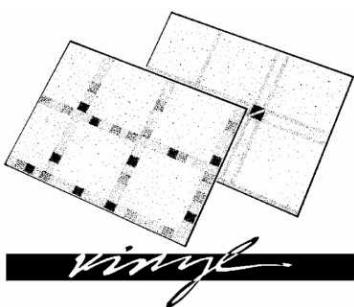
- **Wood** comes in the form of plyboard for partitions and wood panels. This is used for offices, function rooms and wood specific log chalets. Wood gives a cosy and exclusive ambience. Their upkeep is done by polishing the wood; applying varnish when stains arise; or by just plain dusting with a cloth or feather duster.
- **Stone, granite and marble** wall finishes are used by luxury hotels for exterior surfaces and lobbies. They are more durable and give a rich look to a property. They can be washed, mopped and scrubbed to maintain the freshness.
- **Ceramic tiles** are extensively used in bathrooms, kitchens, receiving areas, laundries and pool sides. They are most effective where surfaces are exposed to water. Tiles can be washed with soap solutions and mopped dry.
- **Wallpaper** is used in smaller traditional properties especially the bed and breakfast variety. They come in many designs and colours. Wall paper can be dusted daily with a feather duster. They have the danger of staining or guests leaving soil imprints. Rooms with wallpaper in busy hotels will require constant changing. The challenge is whether the particular design is available all the time.



➤ **Paint** by far is the most popular surface finish. With the advance of technology, there are paints to suit every kind of environment and budget. There is the plastic emulsion paint that can be washed easily and is resistant to wind, air and dust. Most guest rooms and public areas are painted as the cheapest and most durable surface finish. Painted surfaces can be touched up or re-painted whenever the need arises.

➤ **Vinyl** manufacturers have introduced revolutionary ceiling and wall finishes. They come in attractive colours and designs. They are a viable alternative to paint. The product is made by laminating vinyl to a cotton or polycotton backing. Polycotton backing is less flammable

and more durable than cotton is therefore most preferred. Vinyl comes in rolls and pasted onto the wall with a special adhesive. It is mounted on ceilings and walls by specialists. The challenge to housekeepers is the growth of mildew in wet climates. Mildew loosens the vinyl from the adhesive creating ripples in the vinyl. Vinyl can be scrubbed with brushes and soap solutions and even stronger detergents. The manufacturers are the best to suggest the appropriate cleaning agent for the particular vinyl chosen.



➤ **Fabric** surfaces naturally are the most luxurious looking but they are difficult to install, hard to maintain, and easily damaged. They are also very expensive. Fabric surface finishes come in cotton, wool and silks. Sometimes two or more materials are combined to give it a unique appearance. Fabric wall coverings may be paper or acrylic backed. Acrylic backed fabric backing is preferred as it wrinkles less and easier to install. Fabric surfaces are vacuumed regularly and stains and spots removed by conventional methods used on fabrics.

Basic principles of cleaning ceilings and walls are:

1. Check with the manufacturer for the best cleaning solution for the surface.
2. Check cleaning solutions that are multipurpose for a wide variety of surfaces.
3. Choose nontoxic, biodegradable and odourless chemicals that are safe for guests.
4. Choose safe equipment like ladders and scaffolds. It is preferable that they do not have to use them by having mops and sprays with long handles to reach vents and corners.
5. Furniture, carpets and fixtures must be covered with discarded linen before cleaning ceilings and walls.
6. It is preferable to use suction equipment than scrubbing ones to prevent any damage and scrapes to the surfaces.

Windows

Windows are essential features of hotel construction. They come in all shapes and sizes from the small windows of bathrooms to bay-windows in guest rooms. Today there are reliable glass-cleaning detergents found in the supermarket that can be sprayed and cleaned with hand held squeegees.

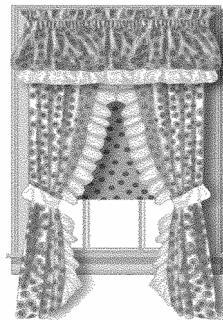


Cleaning Methods

Exterior cleaning of glaze windows is a specialist job often given to contractors. It involves suspending carriages from the roof by cables for cleaners to access the windows from the outside. It is a hazardous job and the specialists know the precautions required for a safe operation.

Windows are incomplete without the shades to give privacy and protect interiors from sunlight. Window shades come in different materials:

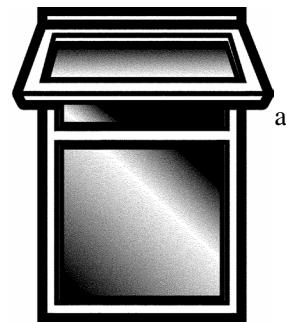
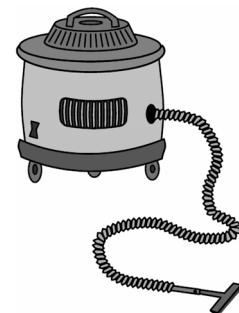
- Vinyl blinds must be dusted daily with a feather duster. They can be also washed with soap solutions. Vinyl blinds are used in offices and low cost guest rooms.
- Drapes (fabric curtains) are preferred in hotels because they are sound absorbent and give a luxurious look. Drapes can be cleaned with special drape vacuum cleaners.



All curtains in the hotel must be sent for periodic dry-cleaning and washing. They pose a challenge for the housekeeper as she has to block those areas from use. If the area is revenue generating, like guest rooms, food outlets and function rooms, the task gets more critical. The housekeeper will either have a spare set of curtains to hang or choose those lean times in a week or year to close down those areas for spring cleaning. The housekeeper must make sure at the time of purchase that the window fabrics can be maintained easily and inexpensively. Some fabrics do not respond well to washing, spotting or vacuuming. These need to be tested before they are subject to such treatment. Drapes can fade, bleed of colour, or shrink. The best fabrics chosen for hotels are those that can be washed. Nowadays windows are lined with cotton fabric to save them from exposure to sunlight resulting in the fabric becoming brittle or losing colour. Linings must be pre-shrunk before they are sewn onto curtains. In case it is prudent to dry-clean such curtains to prevent further shrinkage.

The manner in which window curtains are hung or opened poses a problem to housekeepers. They are either hung on curtain rings along curtain rods or by curtain hooks that move along channels. Daily cleaners need to check these are secure and send maintenance request for defective ones. A window shade that cannot open prevents daily guest room cleaning that requires the room attendant to open it for airing the room.

Upmarket hotels also provide sheer curtains as a back-up to heavy curtains. These curtains are meant to let the sunlight in during the day, while heavy drapery is drawn for the night, mainly to give privacy to the room occupants.



Carpets

Carpets are expensive assets to hotels. They feature in capital budgets as owners treat them as investments that will serve the hotel for long periods. Care is taken in the selection and the laying of carpets in guest rooms and public areas. The decision to purchase carpets is made by a senior committee which includes the general manager, investor, interior decorator and the executive

housekeeper. Decisions on carpets have a longstanding impact; hence it is important that such decisions are correct ones. The main considerations are durability, appearance and ease of maintenance. Since floor coverings, cleaning agents and maintenance equipment keep improving each year, those responsible for their purchase, primarily the executive housekeeper, has to survey the market frequently. For example, they may select equipment that has dual use on carpets and floors. Being valuable assets their care and maintenance have to be regular and follow the correct procedure.



Types of Carpets

Carpets serve many purposes:

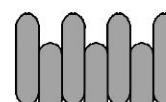
- (a) They give the area a plush look;
- (b) They are sound absorbent, ideal for guest rooms, meeting rooms and offices;
- (c) They keep rooms warm and are valuable in cold climates; and
- (d) They prevent slipping and therefore are preferred in corridors and stairs apart from rooms.



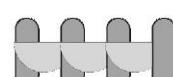
Looped Pile



Cut Pile



Sculptured Pile



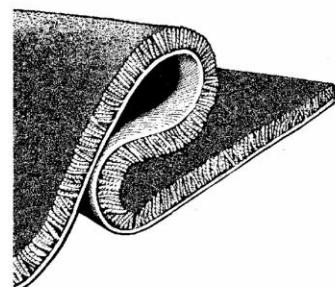
Shaggy Pile

Basically there are four categories of carpets:

Woollen Carpets Woollen carpets have the following advantages and disadvantages:

Advantages

1. They are thicker and therefore give a luxurious feeling.
2. Their colours hold faster.
3. They are water responsive therefore suitable for wet cleaning.
4. They are not highly inflammable.
5. They absorb sound well.
6. They are ideal for guest rooms and luxury hotels in general.



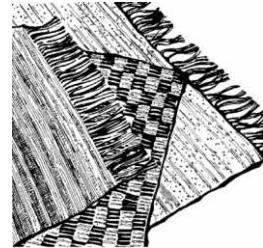
Disadvantages

1. They are expensive.
2. They breed micro-organisms such as moulds, mildew, bacteria and other growths that can spoil the carpet and can cause odours.
3. They are sensitive and cannot clean with strong detergents like ammonia, salts, alkaline soaps and chlorine bleach.

Cotton Carpets Cotton carpets have the following advantages and disadvantages:

Advantages

1. They are inexpensive.
2. Suitable for student hostels and budget hotels.



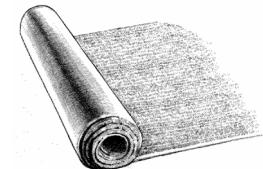
Disadvantages

1. They are not as resistant as woollen carpets.
2. Their colour fades.
3. They do not have that luxurious look.
4. They do not absorb sound well.
5. They are not suitable for superior hotels.

Synthetic Carpets Synthetic carpets are widely used nowadays in hotels. Their advantages and disadvantages are:

Advantages

1. They are durable and flexible in design and construction.
2. They hold their shape and retain colour well.
3. They can be dyed well into other colours.
4. They absorb sound.
5. They are more resistant to stains and soil than wool.
6. They resist micro-organisms and therefore can be treated for moulds, mildew, bacteria, etc.



Disadvantages

1. They are highly inflammable and a hazard in a fire crisis.

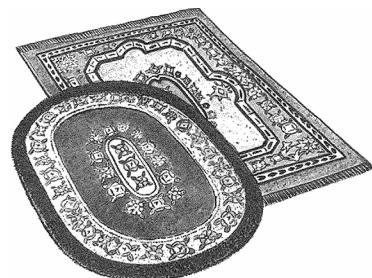
They are different varieties of synthetic carpets:

- (a) **Synthetic** category of carpets include nylon which cleans easily and less expensive;
- (b) **Acrylic** looks like wool but less easy to clean and less resilient;
- (c) **Polypropylene** is more sturdy and resistant to strong cleaning solutions, however they wear easily;
- (d) **Polyesters** look like wool and are durable and clean easily. They come in endless rolls and therefore have the advantage of fitting them to any room size. However, they wear easily;
- (e) **Acetate** is a cost-effective silky fibre that is fast in colour and resistant to mildew, but wear easily and can get damaged with strong detergents;
- (f) **Rayon**, which has poor resistance to soil and abrasion but has colour retention and resistance to mildew.

Silk Carpets Silk carpets are used as throw rugs in suites and deluxe rooms. The best of them are Persian rugs and Cashmere rugs. They have the following advantages and disadvantages:

Advantages

1. They look luxurious.
2. They have fast colours
3. They absorb sound well.



4. They shampoo well.
5. They are resistant to bacteria.

Disadvantages

1. They are very expensive and delicate and therefore used only in premium guest rooms.
2. They do not last long.
3. They have less resistance as the thickness is smaller than those of woollen carpets.

Carpet Cleaning

The main objective of carpet cleaning is to give carpets a long life. Since this one item is so expensive, it is treated as an asset that deserves a special care. Housekeepers are advised to have an annual carpet maintenance programme. Such a programme will have the following elements:

1. **Daily inspection and cleaning:** All carpets are vacuumed or brushed daily especially where there is heavy traffic locating spots and stains that have occurred in the last 24 hours that is attended to immediately so that they do not become permanent.
2. **Weekly cleaning** schedules go beyond just vacuuming. It could include carpet shampooing; spot cleaning and stain removal.
3. **Preventive maintenance:** The best way to give carpets a longer life is by a preventive maintenance programme. It is better to forestall damage than respond to it. Carpets are shampooed periodically; aired to keep them dry to avoid mildew; furniture moved so that they do not create permanent indents; underlay provided to protect carpets from surface water seepage and pests; pest control programmes; using runner and mats in heavy traffic areas; and regular vacuuming of carpets.

Carpet cleaning is done by several methods:

Dry Vacuuming Method: The vacuum cleaner is the principle machine for cleaning carpets as it lifts piles, levels them in one movement, and sucks dust completely. Some modern vacuum cleaners have a “combination floor nozzle” that cleans floors as well as carpets at the drop of a switch. Whenever one uses the nozzle for carpets, move against the pile first and then along with the pile to remove hidden soil lodged inside the carpet piles. Use smooth brisk movements with downward pressure for smoothening and positioning the piles. Take care to empty out the vacuum cleaner dust bag often, avoid dust congestion in the bag. Congestion stops the suction.



Hot Water Extraction: Hot water extraction is sometimes referred to as “steam cleaning”. Actually this is a misnomer as real steam on carpets is too dry and hot to clean the carpet properly. In this method, spray hot cleaning solution under pressure onto the carpet and immediately extract with a vacuum source. Flush the dirty solution, collected in a recovery tank, into the waste water system of the hotel. The advantage of this method is that it has the ability to flush out large amounts of contaminants in the carpet. It is the most preferred method and has the deepest cleaning action most suited to carpets with thick piles.

Shampooing: This method involves wetting the carpet and shampooing it. The equipment used is a motorised circular brush that injects cleaning solution at pressure into carpets that loosen and

seek the dirt out. The resultant dirt solution is sucked from the surface with another equipment. This method relies on vacuuming after the shampoo dries. The method is quick but does not clean all the dirt lodged deep inside piles. It is therefore not recommended for thick piled carpets. It has very good agitation and is best suited for low commercial carpets or low cut pile carpets that are highly soiled.

Carpet Shampooing Procedure

1. Remove carpet from the room and spread it upside down on an open concrete surface.
2. Beat out dust with a carpet beater covering all areas of the carpet at least three times.
3. Roll the carpet and remove loose dust from the surface underneath with a soft broom.
4. Roll out carpet with the correct side up.
5. Apply shampoo with the shampoo machine using slow circular motions. A carpet specialist will prescribe the correct brands suited for the carpet. Readymade shampoos are available in the market.
6. Extra shampoo foam is removed with the carpet brush.
7. The carpet is left in the sun to dry.

Bonnet Method (Dry-Cleaning): This method is another wet cleaning method with a difference. It injects the cleaning solution mist into the carpet in the form of a spray and allowed to soak for a short while. It is then buffed with a rotary machine with absorbent pad that agitates the surface of the pile. Pads are made of synthetic or natural fibres and can be laundered and re-used. The method has the advantage of drying very quickly because of less moisture used. It generally cleans well the top one-third of the carpet visible to the naked eye. But it does very little to the grit and sand lodged deep in the pile that damage the carpet over time. Because there is no flushing action or extraction, there is very little deep cleaning involved. This method may be considered as an interim cleaning between more effective methods.

Dry Foam Method: This method is similar to shampooing where the brushing action is aggressive, with counter rotating cylindrical brushes. The method uses a high foam shampoo detergent with less liquid. It is applied by a rotary machine with a brush that suspends soils and emulsifies oils. The resultant liquid on the carpet is sucked out by a wet vacuum cleaner. Like shampooing it is not a suitable method for thick pile carpets.

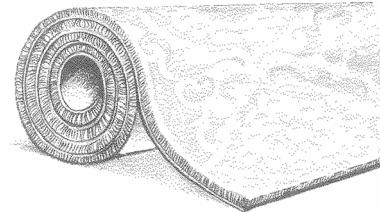
Manual Method: This is a method using the carpet brush and dustpan. It is recommended to brush against the piles to make them stand. This gives a springy feeling when one treads on them. Use brisk movements between piles to scoop out dust. Collect the dust in dustpans and empty it in garbage bags after every room. Carpet brushing is preferred to noisy vacuum cleaners to avoid disturbance to sleeping guests especially in the night and early mornings.



Dry Powder Cleaning Method: In this method dry powder or crystals are sprinkled on the carpet and worked into the pile with a hand brush. The powder absorbs soils which are later removed by vacuuming the carpet surface. This method is ideal for high traffic areas that cannot be obstructed for long.

Special Points for Carpet Cleaning

Carpets can be a housekeeper's nightmare. Firstly, owners expect them to last from 7 to 10 years being expensive assets. Secondly, they are highly visible and therefore have to be as fresh and clean as possible over the years. Thirdly, carpet cleaning requires shutting down those areas for business, leading to a loss of revenue. The task of keeping them clean is challenging by the amount of traffic on them and then the stains, drips and spills that occur daily wherever there is traffic. Then, in wet weathers carpets especially those with natural fibres are breeding grounds for microorganisms like germs, bacteria, moulds, spores, mildew and dust mites. This challenge can be met with some simple tips when cleaning carpets:



1. Pay attention to corners and under edges as dust normally collects there.
2. Install mats at entrances for guests to clear shoes of external dirt before entering carpeted areas.
3. Vacuum daily using the special features of various vacuum machines to serve their range of purposes.
4. Prepare a weekly and monthly preventive maintenance programme for the upkeep of carpets.

Removing Spots and Stains from Carpets

Type of Stain	Cleaning Procedure
Oil based Stains	Remove excess material
Butter	Apply perchloroethylene
Grease	Dry the carpet
Oil	Repeat the use of chemical if necessary
Cream	Brush the pile
Ball pen ink	
Food stuffs and Animal matter	Remove excess material
Tea/Coffee	Absorb fluid or scrape residual solids
Milk	Apply solution of detergent, vinegar and water
Gravy/Sauces	Dry the carpet
Salad dressing	Apply perchloroethylene
Ice creams	Dry and brush the pile
Chocolate	
Egg	
Blood and Vomit	
Starchy Food Stains and others	Absorb fluid or scrape off solids
Candy/Sweets	Apply solution of detergent, vinegar and water
Beverages	Dry and reapply solution if necessary
Fruits	Brush the carpet pile
Washable ink	
Urine	
Excrement	

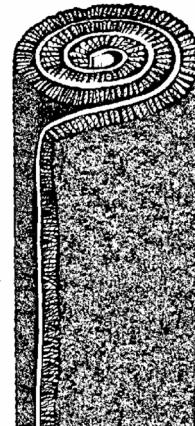
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Type of Stain	Cleaning Procedure
Grease and Gums	Scrape excess material
Paint	Apply perchloroethylene
Tar	Dry carpet
Lipstick	Apply solution of detergent, vinegar and water
Nail polish	Re-apply perchloroethylene
Heavy grease	Dry the carpet
Crayon	Brush the carpet
Shoe polish	

Storage of Carpets

It is recommended that carpets should not be stored. However, due to room renovations; closing a resort facility during off season, etc., the housekeeper has to store carpets. Following procedure may be followed when storing carpets:

1. Pest control the storage area every third day.
2. The storage area should be a dry place.
3. Open out carpets preferably on a flat concrete surface to prevent pests cutting through it.
4. If carpets have to be rolled due to space restrictions, preferably open them every second day for air and to permit the piles to retain their natural flow.
5. Rolled up carpets must be wrapped with discarded linen or polythene sheets.



Carpet Problems

A professional housekeeper has to know the problems she will face while maintaining the several square yards of carpets in the hotel. These problems may be classified as follows:

Pile crushing

Piles which are the visible face of the fibres on the surface can twist, pill, crush, flare or mat, with heavy footfall or equipment. Piles can distort with aggressive cleaning methods. To avoid this, use runners (strips of heavy duty cloth) along the carpet; vacuum regularly; use pile lifters and carpet rakes; to prevent crushing.

Shading

Shading occurs when carpet piles are brushed in two different directions giving the carpet separate colours. Some housekeepers reverse the pile to give the carpet a different colour. However, if at any point of time, it is desired to have a common colour, carpet piles may be vacuumed or brushed in one direction only.

Fading

Colour fades through natural aging; regular exposure to sunlight; or by improper cleaning. Carpets in heavy traffic areas are bound to fade reduced by regular cleaning. To avoid fading, ensure the following:

1. Have regular cleaning schedules.
2. Keep carpets away from direct sunlight.
3. Avoid strong solutions for removing spots and stains.
4. Pre-test them for reactions to cleaning solutions before using them. This is achieved by testing solutions on one corner of the carpet or on cut samples retained for just this purpose.

However, if fading does take place there are professional dyers who refresh the carpet.

Browning

Browning (or wicking) occurs when wet jute backing colour is absorbed by the carpet fibre bringing brown patches to the surface. Browning can be resolved by adding vinegar or synthetic citric acid to cleaning solutions. Check with the manufacturer when using new chemicals and pre-test them.

Mildew

Mildew is a micro-organism that grows in natural fibres exposed to wet and humid conditions. Mildew causes staining, odour and rotting. Carpets must always be kept dry especially after wet treatment like shampooing.

Pilling

Pilling is caused when pieces of face fibre are trapped in the carpet at the time of manufacturing. These pieces surface when the carpet is trod upon. It seems that the carpet is shedding its fibres when in fact it is only residual fibres caught in the pile giving the carpet an unkempt look. Frequent initial vacuuming sucks out these pieces out of the pile. A painstaking method is to pick and cut these loose fibres with a scissors.

Key Terms



Browning	When carpets absorb the colour of wet jute backing
Carpet pile	Main finish of the carpet
Carpet density	Thickness of a carpet
Carpet height	Length of carpet fibres
Fading	Loss of colour by sunlight or improper cleaning
Hard floors	Floors made from stone or clay
Linoleum	Flooring material made from linseed oil, ground cork or wood
Parquet	Wood tiles of maple or oak for flooring
Patio	Inner courtyards open to the sky
Piles	Visible face of fibres

Pilling	Face fibres trapped in the carpet at the time of manufacture
Resilient floors	Floors that is springy
Shading	When carpets change colour when brushed in different directions
Terrazzo	Bound chips of marble for flooring
White metals	Alloys of different metals
Wood floors	Floors made from hard or softwoods

Review Quiz



Fill in the blanks

1. The most crucial element of cleaning is _____
2. The three types of floors are hard floors, wood floors and _____
3. Hard floors are made from _____
4. Resilient floors are made from vinyl, asphalt and _____
5. In a hotel, we can find bottle display cabinets in _____
6. Inner courtyards open to the sky are called _____
7. The main considerations when purchasing carpets are durability, appearance and _____
8. The way carpet fibres are mounted on the primary backing is called _____
9. The method of cleaning carpets by spraying solution under pressure and immediately sucking the solution out is called _____
10. The method of cleaning carpets with a mist and buffing it with a rotary machine is called _____

True or False

1. One must use stronger cleaning methods before lighter ones.
2. Abrasives are used first to remove stains.
3. When in doubt, use the simplest method of cleaning.
4. Water emulsifies and holds grease in suspension.
5. Uncarpeted floors are vulnerable to breed micro-organisms.
6. Marble is a resilient floor.
7. White metals are decorative and malleable.
8. Restaurants have folding tables and chairs.
9. It is beneficial to use wallpaper in busy city hotels.
10. Vinyl blinds are best used in offices.

Short Notes

1. What are the factors in choosing a cleaning method?
2. Give the advantages and disadvantages of uncarpeted floors.

3. What are the basic principles in cleaning ceilings and walls?
4. What are the categories of carpets? Explain each.
5. What are the elements of a carpet maintenance programme?

References

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Housekeeping Management by Margaret M. Kappa, Alita Nitscheke and Paricia B. Schappert

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Carpet Cleaners Guide and Directory

Cleaning Agents

Learning Objective



To familiarise readers with traditional cleaning agents and where they are applied.

▲ INTRODUCTION

Cleaning agents are critical aids to keep a sparkling house. Basically, the cleaning process is to remove dust and dirt. While normal dusting with a cloth or vacuum cleaner removes loose dust; cleaning agents are used for stubborn grit stains and tarnish. The cleaning agent basically holds the dirt or breaks it down to wash away in the rinsing process. Other agents dissolve grease or emulsify it to extract it easily from a surface. Some of the common cleaning agents used are discussed below.

▲ COMMON CLEANING AGENTS

Water

Water is the most common agent used, as it is freely available. It is useful in rinsing and finishing cleaning processes. Water is of two types, hard water and soft water. Soft water is best for cleaning. Hardness in water is caused by the presence of mineral salts—calcium (Ca) and magnesium (Mg), and also iron (Fe) and manganese (Mn) that does not work well with detergents for effective cleaning.

Here are some tips when using water:

1. Replenish dirty water with fresh water because it could leave a film of dirt instead of removing it.
2. Use warm water preferably as it dissolves soap more readily than cold water.

Liquid Cleaning Agents

While water is the king among liquid cleaning agents, we discuss here a few other traditional liquid cleaning agents that are either diluted in a little water or used directly with a dry cloth.

Ammonia is an alkali made up of one part nitrogen and three parts hydrogen. It is highly soluble and forms a solution called ammonium hydroxide (liquid ammonia). It is not too active when dry, but reacts with many chemicals in liquid form. It softens hard water and emulsifies grease.

Acetone is a volatile and inflammable liquid. It can damage most plastics. It is effective in removing paint stains, dyes and cosmetic smudges. It is recommended to do spot testing before full use to ascertain whether the surface will get damaged.

Benzene is a distillate of coal tar. It dissolves grease as well as paint and tar stains. It exudes powerful fumes and, therefore, is harmful for use. Protective masks are necessary.

Methylated spirits are derived from methanol—a type of alcohol used for industrial purposes. It is also called methyl alcohol or wood alcohol. It is flammable and highly poisonous. It has to be handled with extreme care. It reacts with various substances and is effective against grease stains.

Methalene chloride is a volatile liquid with a strong odour. It requires protective clothes and masks when in use. It is ideal for stripping sealants and paints as it possesses a strong solvent.

Paraffin is a white, partly clear, waxy solid that has no odour or taste. Paraffin forms a moisture proof film on surfaces. It is also grease solvent.

Turpentine is a colourless liquid with a strong odour. It is highly inflammable. It is used as a thinner for paints and varnishes. As a cleaning agent it is a grease and paint solvent ideal for removing paint and grease stains.

Vinegar is a sour liquid derived from wine-making. The French call it sour wine. While vinegar's use in food preservation and salads is well known, its commercial use has found its way to housekeeping cleaning chores. It acts as a mild acid unaffected by hard water and useful in removing light stains in baths.

White Spirit and **Tetrachloroethylene** are volatile liquids with the former being inflammable, used for spot cleaning to remove stains of wax, oils, fats, tar and rubber and resins. It cannot be used on PVC, rubber, plastic, thermoplastics and asphalt.

Acids

Hydrochloric acid is useful in removing stubborn stains in bathrooms. Care must be taken in its use as it can burn the skin and destroy fabrics and light bathroom fittings. It is, therefore, diluted to avoid hazards. In any case, the houseman should wear protective clothing like aprons, gloves, goggles and face masks. It is also useful in cleaning metallic based stains like tarnish on silver and copper. It dissolves hard water deposits in drains and gutters.

Phosphoric acid and **Oxalic acid** are powerful mediums that require protective clothing. They are useful in removing rust and lime scale deposits.

Carbon tetrachloride is also excellent grease solvent. Care must be exercised there too as the fumes are harmful.

Acetic acid and Citric acid are milder acids for milder stains, especially in ornamental pieces like expensive branded sinks, baths and Jacuzzis.

Washing Soda

This agent is vastly outdated due to the advent of innovative detergents like vim, etc. However, it is particularly useful for emulsifying grease on drain pipes, gutters or stone surfaces. In a strong concentration, it could be injurious to skin, fabrics, brushes, wood and paint. Washing soda is useful as a water softener.

Soaps, Powders, Flakes

Detergents are found in the form of soaps, powders, flakes or liquid. A detergent is a compound or a combination of compounds that is used for cleaning. Detergents need water as an essential requirement to be effective. They are, therefore, made to be soluble in water. To remove challenging stains, certain other cleaning aids may be used in conjunction with detergents and water such as:

1. Surfactants to remove grease.
2. Abrasives to rub dirt off the surface.
3. The pH substances to stabilise other harder substances used in a compound detergent structure.
4. Caustics to break up dirt particles.
5. Softeners to deal with the harshness of other components being used.
6. Oxidisers for bleaching.
7. Enzymes, a relatively new component, added to destroy any accumulation of proteins, fats or carbohydrates in the form of dirt, especially in fabrics. Manufacturers are enhancing the cleaning experience with softeners, fragrances and foaming agents.

Soaps are used for washing and bathing and come in convenient palm sizes. They have greater lather and aroma and come in different colours for attractiveness.

Flakes are used for delicate fabrics as they dissolve quicker than soaps. They are also perfumed.

Powders also dissolve easily in water but are used mainly for washing machine-based cleaning. Bleach (sodium hypochloride) is commonly used for whitening sinks, tubs, W.C. bowls and fabrics.

Powders and flakes are useful in getting instant lather, but are expensive. When used, care should be taken that they are thoroughly dissolved. Being expensive, one should know exactly how much powder or flake is dissolved to get an optimum benefit as also how long the resultant solution is effective. Good bar soaps are still most economical, but much more strenuous than modern methodologies. They should be stored on open shelves in a dry store.

Synthetic Detergents

Today soaps, powders and flakes are replaced by excellent synthetic soap-less detergents which are unaffected by hard water. They suspend dirt and grit most effectively without leaving a smear. They come with both acidic and alkaline bases for hard and light cleaning. They include glass cleaners

(with ethylene glycol); general purpose cleaners for hard surfaces; aerosol sprays to freeze solid items like gum; deodorants that lend an aroma to stale surroundings; disinfectants that kill micro-organisms; and antiseptics to clean bodily features.

Non-chemical Cleaning Methods

Sunlight kills surface bacteria. It is a good sanitiser.

Sterilisation kills bacteria by heat. It is ideal for sanitising equipment that comes in human contact.

Freezing stunts growth of bacteria.

Filtration removes bacteria like air filters or vacuum filters.

Abrasives

Abrasives are substances used to grind, smoothen, sharpen, and polish various materials. They come in the form of cream, pastes, powders, clay, nylon and steel wool. Common abrasives include alumina, emery, pumice, sand and silicon carbide. They are used in cases of very stubborn stains on various surfaces. Silver, sand, steel wool, glass paper may be used for removing stains on plain wood, stone or cement floors. Emery powder or paper is suitable for removing rust from steel. Pumice powder is used for removing stains from sinks and bath tubs. Whiting is a mild abrasive for cleaning white paint. Nylon scourers are made to have an abrasive effect and yet prove less damaging to surfaces. Primarily, the abrasive used is based on the type of surface and the stubbornness of the dirt or stain. Fine abrasives like jewellers rouge are used for delicate artefacts and equipment; medium abrasives are used for ceramics or china-based items; while stronger hard abrasives like steel wool, emery-paper and sandpaper are used on surfaces that have a higher resistance to getting scratched like stainless steel sinks, metal drainpipes, etc. Abrasives are normally used manually.

Polishes

Polishes are used to bring shine to a surface. They also provide a protective layer to a surface like wood. Polishes fall into three types — liquid polishes, pastes and creams. These fall primarily into three broad categories — *spirit based*, *oil based* and *water based*. Spirit based polishes are used for metal mirrors, window panes and Bakelite. Oil-based polishes are used for stains on wax polish or painted wood, linoleum and synthetic floorings with an oil or resinous base, cork or wood waste, leather and leather substitutes, tiles enamelled and lacquered metals. Water based polishes are used on sealed floors, thermoplastic floors and rubber flooring.

There are some basic principles applied in using polishes. They are:

1. Used only after dirt and dust on surfaces are thoroughly removed.
2. Used in small quantities as excessive polish could smear surfaces.
3. Used as a last resort only.
4. Rubbed off thoroughly as surfaces could then become sticky or greasy and thus show finger marks when touched.
5. Surfaces provided with permanent or semi-permanent polish sheens must be polished very carefully as the original sheen could be destroyed, e.g.
 - (a) Avoid using wax polish on French polished surfaces.
 - (b) Avoid wax polish on a floor treated with a shellac dressing (which is a semi-permanent polish).

- (c) Avoid metal polishes on chromium-plated or lacquered metals.
- (d) Store correctly and control use of polishes as they are expensive.
- (e) Use polish machines on large floor surfaces as they are more economical and quicker than hand polish.

Seals

Seals are meant to provide a flush finish to porous surfaces like wooden floors or concrete. They can either be water or resin based. The resin based ones oleo-resin, one pot plastic or two pot plastic are ideal for wooden surfaces. Pigmented seal are used on concrete.

▲ SELECTION OF CLEANING AGENTS – GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. Use agents that do not damage the surface. For this, spot testing of a surface is recommended before full-scale use, especially in the case of volatile detergents. Often, the manufacturer gives directions to the type of surface the detergent is best for.
2. Use mild rather than strong agents as they are less injurious to surfaces.
3. Issue protective clothing when using volatile agents.
4. Use pure agents. There are cheap substitutes that might show immediate results but on a long run may damage surfaces as they are likely to contain strong chemicals and abrasives.
5. Buy polishes in manageable containers as bulk purchases could cause congestion in stores. The containers must have reliable lids, corks, etc. as defective ones could result in wastage due to evaporation and drying.
6. Use multi-purpose polishes as managing too many polishes requires more supervision.
7. Avoid strong smelling agents (e.g. paraffin) due to the offensive smells they lend to the environment.
8. Purchase cost-effective brands.
9. Follow manufacturer's directions when using a cleaning agent.

Key Terms



Abrasives	Substances used to grind, smoothen, sharpen, and polish various materials
Ammonia	An alkali of one part nitrogen and three parts hydrogen
Hard water	Water that has the presence of mineral salts
Polishes	Cleaning agents that bring a shine to a surface
Methylated spirits	Liquids derived from methanol
Soft water	Water without mineral salts and ideal for cleaning
Vinegar	Sour liquid derived from wine-making

Review Quiz



Fill in the blanks

1. The most common cleaning agent is _____
2. Ammonia in liquid form for cleaning is called _____
3. Methylated spirits are derived from _____
4. A waxy solid cleaning agent that has no odour or taste is called _____
5. A cleaning agent ideal for removing paint and grease stains is _____
6. A cleaning agent derived from wine-making is called _____
7. The cleaning agent that burns skins and destroys fabrics is called _____
8. A sturdy cleaning agent for gutters, drain-pipes and stone surfaces is called _____
9. Bar soaps are best stored in dry stores is on _____
10. Synthetic floorings with oil or resinous bases are kept clean with _____ -based polishes.

True or False

1. Warm water dissolves soap more readily than cold water.
2. Hard water is best for cleaning.
3. Ammonia is active when dry.
4. Methanol is potable.
5. Paraffin is moisture-proof.
6. Vinegar acts as a mild acid.
7. Carbon tetrachloride causes toxic fumes.
8. Polish must be only used as a last resort.
9. Metal polishes are best for chrome and lacquered surfaces.
10. Polishes are expensive.

Write short notes on the following:

1. Basic principles when using polishes.
2. General principles when choosing cleaning agents
3. Advantages of using:
 - Liquid cleaning agents
 - Abrasives
 - Water

Pest Control

Learning Objective



To help the readers understand the process of pest control and various types of pesticides used.

▲ INTRODUCTION

Pest control is a programme of eradicating pests using pesticides. Some of the common pests seen in hotel operations are cockroaches, flies, spiders, moths, termites, bedbugs, mites, ants and rodents. Most pests are attracted to food or water. Termites are attracted to cellulose found in wood and paper, while bedbugs feed on human blood. However, a comprehensive list is given below with solutions to manage them. A pesticide is, therefore, a chemical used to eliminate pests. Insects are probably the major pests that transmit diseases, such as malaria and typhus. Some insects destroy or cause heavy damage to valuable vegetation. Other common pests include bacteria, fungi, and weeds such as poison ivy and ragweed. Manufacturers use various chemicals in making pesticides.

Type of Pest	Varieties	Pest Control Methods
Ants	Fire ants, red ants, carpenter ants, black ants	Ant aerosols, ant baits, ant granules, pesticides, stations
Bats		Wire mesh screens for opening to bat haunts, repellents
Bed bugs (Mattress)		Mattress encasements, mattress protectors
Bed bugs		Bed bug aerosols, bed bug dusts and pesticides, bed bug kits
Bees		Aerosols, concentrates, dusts and traps
Beetles	Carpet beetles, cigarette beetles, flour beetles, merchant grain beetles, powder post beetles	Aerosols, dusts, insecticide concentrates

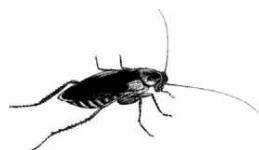
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Type of Pest	Varieties	Pest Control Methods
Birds		Electronic repellents
Centipedes		Reducing temperature and humidity, pest control spray, drione dust, granules
Cricket		Micro-encapsulated insecticide, aerosol and dust
Fleas		Sprays
Flies	Blow or bottle flies, cluster fly, drain fly, fruit flies, gnats, house flies	Sprays, electronic insectocutors, flea glue ribbons
Mosquitoes		Insect foggers
Moths	Clothes moths, flour moths, Indian meal moths	Pellets, insecticides, light traps
Pillbugs		Organic pesticides
Rats/mice		Rat traps, rat baits, pellets, rat glue
Roaches		Roach aerosols, dusts, granules, smart gel, insecticides
Rodents		Same as rats/mice
Scorpions		Micro-encapsulated insecticide, wettable powders circling breeding areas
Snakes		Cut lawns low, seal hollows and cracks, avoid wood and leaf piles, perimeters of snake pits
Spiders		Same as scorpions
Termites	Damp woods, dry woods, Formosans, subterranean,	Anti-termite chemical treatment to concrete and wood
Wasps/hornets		Pest control aerosol, insecticide concentrates, pesticide dust

▲ TYPES OF PESTICIDES

Pesticides are classified according to the pests they control. The four most widely used types of pesticides are:

- Insecticides
- Herbicides
- Fungicides
- Rodenticides



Insecticides

Hotel gardeners use insecticides to protect their plants from insect damage. Public health officials use these chemicals to fight mosquitoes and other insects. Insecticides are used in hotels to control such pests as ants, flies, spiders, moths, cockroaches and termites.

Herbicides

These chemicals are used to control weeds or other unwanted plants. Herbicides are used by hotel gardeners to reduce weeds, crab grass and dandelions among their plants.

Herbicides are also used in recreational areas like gardens, ponds and lakes.

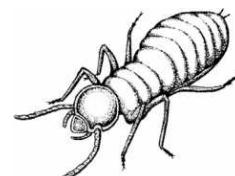


Fungicides

Certain fungus are pathogenic (disease causing) and may infect plants, animals and human beings. Fungicides are sprayed or dusted to kill fungal growths like rusts, mildew, smuts and moulds. Fabrics are treated with fungicides to prevent rotting. Most disinfectants used in hotels use fungicides.

Rodenticides

Rodenticides are chemicals used in areas infested with rats and other rodents which are health hazards. Rats carry diseases such as rabies, rat bite fever, tularemia and typhus. Rats also destroy food and grain in hotel dry stores. Rodenticides help in eliminating such pests in prone areas of the hotel like kitchens and stores.



About Pesticides

Pesticides differ according to their effects on various organisms. Selective pesticides are toxic only to the target pests. These are largely preferred in hotels. They cause little or no harm to other organisms. However, non-selective pesticides can harm or even kill organisms that are not considered pests. Non-selective pesticides should be used only when no other method of control is available.



Over time certain pests like rats and mosquitoes have developed a resistance to pesticides. Manufacturers are producing new chemicals and methods to control them. For example, cockroach eradicators know the exact crevices and cracks where cockroaches breed and are able to inject a smart gel with a syringe in those areas. Smart gel is an odourless cockroach control treatment that does not require vacuation of the premises as done in messy fumigation. Cockroaches get attracted to the gel, eat it and die. Similarly, termi-freeze is a chemical (Imidacloprid) treatment for termites. Contractors bore holes in the junctions of walls and pillars and inject this chemical. Termites which can travel upwards to several floors are trapped by these chemicals.

▲ PEST CONTROL PROGRAMME

The most effective and safe method of executing a pest control programme is by employing well-qualified professional exterminators on a contract basis. The contract is based on the layout of the property, the area to be covered and complexity of the problem. For example, project sites will have greater challenges as large areas are exposed to the elements. The housekeeping department is reposed with the responsibility of ensuring the pest control programme. Pest control schedules have to be carefully planned as those areas are cordoned off for hours to have the desired effect. For

example, guest rooms are fumigated every month while food and beverage areas have their own convenient schedules. Areas that need special attention are floor pantries, non-food stores, linen rooms, locker rooms, cafeteria and garbage areas. The engineering department is co-opted to access drains and gutters. Modern pest control methods include non-pervasive items that do not require the closing down of facilities. Professional pest-control contractors know the habits of various pests and are able to isolate breeding grounds and capture them there.

However, pest control contractors cannot be expected to maintain the premises absolutely insect-free without the supplemental support and assistance of hotel personnel. One of the methods of a pest control programme is *prevention*. By studying the habits of targeted pests, one can ensure adequate measure to avoid attracting them. For example, ants, cockroaches and mice look for food. If food areas are sanitised properly after operations, it is unlikely to attract the pests. Similarly, termites attack wood. Therefore, furniture needs to be treated with anti-termite chemicals to prevent termites from damaging the woodwork.

The residual insecticides necessary for a successful campaign against these insects are relatively toxic and must be handled with great care. It is recommended that they be used only by professional exterminators unless the hotel has in its employment an individual who is trained in their use. They must also be stored in special areas away from human contact and food.

Cleanliness and constant vigilance, particularly in handling food, refuse and garbage is the best defence against rodents. All containers of these items should be clean and tightly covered and should be in metal. Wire enclosures should be used for dry food stuffs in cartons and bags. This procedure plus periodic campaigns by the contract exterminators should keep the hotel free of rats and mice.

Outdoor areas are more susceptible to pests than indoor areas. Therefore, one has to determine the acceptable level pests in outdoor locations. A programme of *suppression* of pests limits the pests as they cannot be completely eradicated.

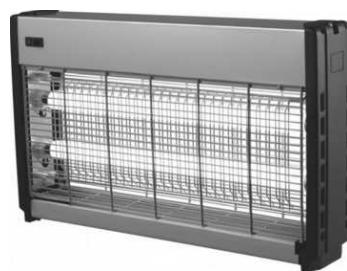
For this reason, it is recommended that all maids carry insecticide sprays on their carts and use them routinely when cleaning guest rooms and terraces. Recommended insecticides are harmless to human beings and animals, but it should be kept away from food stuffs. These insecticides do not have a residual life and are, therefore, effective against a great many crawling insects, cockroaches in particular, on direct contact.

▲ PEST CONTROL EQUIPMENT

Food Operations areas like kitchens use pest control equipment like **insectocutors** in kitchens to attract and eliminate, through electrocution, mosquitoes, moths, wasps, beetles, flies and other photopositive flying insects.



Rodents are snared by mechanical traps, slow poison traps and **glue traps** (using Bromadiolone).



Modern techniques use **rat ultrasonic machines**, which use vibrations to keep rats and mice away. These units are very compact, safe, noiseless, environmental friendly and non-irritating pest repellers.



Air Curtains at doorways help keep flying insects from entering indoor areas like kitchens, pantries, food receiving areas and cafeterias. They also help maintain temperatures indoors from harsh outside temperatures.

Key Terms

Pesticide
Insecticide
Herbicide
Fumigation
Fungicide
Rodenticide

A chemical that eradicates pests
A chemical that kills insects
A chemical that kills weeds and unwanted plants
Eradicating pests with chemical fog
A chemical that kills fungal growth
A chemical that kills rodents

Review Quiz

1. Write short notes on the different types of pesticides.
2. Write short notes on other non-chemical pesticides.



Control of Odours

Learning Objective



To help the readers learn how to control odours in a cleaning operation.

▲ INTRODUCTION

Odours are a great challenge to housekeepers who are responsible to give the hotel a fresh environment. While the term ‘odour’ refers to both pleasant and foul smells, one uses terms such as scent, fragrance and aroma to pleasant odour; and the terms like stink and, stench are used for foul odours. This lesson deals with the control of foul odours. While dirt offends the eye, odours offend the nose. Sometimes the source of odours is far removed from the odour as it is invisible and permeated the air easily. Odour control depends on cleanliness, which is the housekeeping function, and on ventilation which is a maintenance department function.

It has been proposed that there are seven primary odours:

1. Musky—perfumes/aftershave
2. Putrid—rotten eggs
3. Pungent—vinegar
4. Camphoraceous—mothballs
5. Ethereal—dry cleaning fluid
6. Floral—roses
7. Pepperminty—mint gum

▲ CONCEPT OF FOUL ODOUR

Odour is the manipulation of receptors in our nose, by the reactive gaseous molecules present in the air.

An odour becomes foul when a smell is out of context to a situation. Reactions to a foul odour range from a simple irritation to severe sickness and vomiting. Therefore, foul odour is a psychosocial matter. For example, an odour can be accepted as a ‘pleasant’ in a certain situation whereas the

same odour can be perceived as a ‘foul’ in another situation. Some remarkable examples can be explained as follows:

Many non-cheese enthusiasts explain the smell of some kinds of cheese as foul as foot smell. However, the smell of camembert or brie cheese can be found very pleasant by people who are cheese lovers. The remarkable truth is that the same agents that cause the cheese smell and the foot smell.

In another example, rotten fish generates a disgusting odour. In spite of this, many tourists are fond of the far eastern rancid fish sauces.

Odours of onion, garlic, etc. are found to be appetising for anyone who is about to start a meal. However, after taking a full meal, a person finds the same odours unbearable.

▲ CLASSIFICATION OF ODOURS

Only a limited part of an odour molecule stimulates the nose receptors that send odour signal to the brain. Referring to the active material in it, we can classify the foul odours into three types.

Fatty acids: Sour odours, sweat odours, olive oil processing industries odours, etc. can be named in this class. Generally, the source of this kind of an odour is rancidity. This class of odour is least problematic and can be dealt with refresheners.

Sulphur compounds: These odours are generally formed of organic sulphite and mercaptan. They are caused by sources like anaerobic reactions, rotten zucchini and similar plants, decay of dead bodies.

Nitrogen compounds: These odours are generally caused by amines. Practically they are generated from rotten fish, dead bodies, urine and etc. sources.

Besides the above classification of odours, in some rare cases the nitrogen in the reactive part of some of the odour molecules is replaced by phosphorus and the sulphur is replaced by selenium. In such cases the odour is even stronger and irresistible.

The table below describes the chemicals that cause a type of odour.

In practice, a foul odour is formed by a combination of sulphur and nitrogen molecules making the odour complex, requiring multiple treatments to eliminate it.

Molecule	Chemical	Smell
Sulphur Compounds	Methyl Sulphide	Rotten zucchini
	Methyl Disulphide	Onion
	Butyl Mercaptan	Polecat
Nitrogen Compounds	Trimethylamine	Rotten fish
	Indole	Faeces
	Tetramethylene diamine	Rotten meat

▲ PRINCIPLES OF ODOUR ELIMINATION

Neutralisation: The agent used must target the odour molecule in the stinking object. The agent must lock the foul odour molecule and blocks its structure capable of stimulating the receptors in the nose.

Balancing: The fragrances of different refresheners oppose targeted foul odour by certain formula. These fragrances act like a jammer for the foul odour and in a meaning, confuse the message sent to the receptors in nose by the foul odour. This makes a polishing effect by preventing the perception of the foul odour.

Settling: Odour control uses misting systems, the mist created captures the foul odour molecules and slowly settles down. With this effect very similar to the effect of rain in the atmosphere, air is washed by a mixture of water having a fantastic odour control.

Breakdown: Enzymes bacterial and other components in the formula of certain types of odour control formula completely break down the odour molecule.

As the result of three actions and combinations of them, foul odours are degraded below the perceptible level for human being.

▲ COMMON TYPES OF ODOURS IN HOTELS AND MODERN METHODS TO ELIMINATE THEM

The common types of odours in hotels are:

1. Dead rodent odour
2. Urine odour
3. New carpet odour
4. Cigarette smoke odour
5. Musty mildew odours (in basements)
6. Locker room and gym odours
7. Garbage room odour

Modern Odour Elimination Methods

1. **Dead Rodent Odour:** Rodents can die in air-conditioning ducts, under furniture or in drawers. Often the housekeeper is unable to find the carcass to remove it. Today, Odour Remover Bags are used by pest control professionals to remove dead rodent odours, and urine and faeces odours associated with rodents. With these bags, the carcass does not have to be removed to eliminate the odours neither do the bags need to come in contact with them. The bag is simply hung near the odour and in 24 hours the odour disappears. Natural minerals in the bag act like magnets by attracting and neutralising smells. These bags are non-toxic and biodegradable and safe for the environment. It is also safe around children and pets, even if eaten.
2. **Urine Odour:** Urine odour is one of the strongest and toughest odours to get rid of. Most products available in the market are wet products and must come into contact with the urine to remove the odour. Especially, urine soaked into the carpet by children requires one to pull up the carpet and pad and soak the carpet in a detergent. Nowadays, there are Urine Odour Eliminators in the form of granules made from natural minerals. Just sprinkle the granules on

top of the carpet, leave it overnight and vacuum in the morning and the odour is completely eliminated. It works well on all surfaces pulling the odours out of tile and concrete. Urine odours in urinals can use these granules or naphthalene balls.

3. **New Carpet Odour:** Some new carpets contain volatile organic compounds which emit gases called 4-phenylcyclohexene (4-PCH), which is a by-product of the latex binder used to secure the “tufted” fibres to the carpet backing. With this gas, which can linger for a week after installation, people may experience a wide range of symptoms including nose and throat discomfort, headache, allergic skin reaction, nausea, fatigue and dizziness. Today natural mineral granules are available that attract and neutralise the odour. The granules are spread across the carpet and left for 24 hours. It is recommended to have a window opened during this time. The carpet is later vacuumed. To get best results, hang three or four Odour Removal Bags mentioned earlier.
4. **Cigarette Smoke Odours:** Cigarette smoke permeates into furniture, carpets, walls, windows and just about every other nook and cranny in the room, making it particularly difficult to eliminate. Air Odour Eliminators will pull the smoke odours out of carpets, drapes, furniture, clothing and bedding without coming into contact them. The odours are adsorbed, and neutralised without any fragrances.
5. **Mildew Odours:** Mildew odours are found in stores shut for long periods or basements not visited frequently. Hang 1-2 Odour Remover Bags in the basement. One bag covers up to 100 square feet. The Bags will continue to eliminate musty odours for up to 3 months.
6. **Locker Room and Gym Odours:** Locker rooms and gyms are frequently a source of foul odours. These odours range from uniforms and gym bags, sweaty clothes, mould and mildew from the shower rooms, perspiration odours and odours from sports equipment. Odour Remover Bags can easily and economically remove these odours.
7. **Garbage Room Odour:** Wet garbage rooms are usually air-conditioned or air cooled to keep discarded vegetables, fruit peels and leftover food items fresh till the dumpster arrives to remove them away. Odour Remover Bags are easy to use. Just hang them in the dumpster room and they will completely eliminate the odours.



▲ SOME GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Smoke from kitchens, bar odours and food odours can be controlled by adequate ventilation to secure optimum results. The maintenance department must constantly attend to the cleanliness and good operation of ducts and fans. Filters must be changed frequently. Air handling grills and louvres must be kept clean and unobstructed.

Housekeeping staff should be supplied with prescribed air-refresheners which counter musty and stale odours in a room. However, this is only complementary to actual housekeeping practices such as:

- (a) allowing fresh air into a room by opening windows and allowing it to breathe;
- (b) drying wet carpets by sunning them;
- (c) following accepted cleaning methodology especially in bathrooms;
- (d) throwing away residual food (coordination with the room service for the clearance of trays, etc.) is essential as deteriorating food could lend a stink to the immediate environs;
- (e) taking particular care in the cleaning of nooks and crannies and under furniture for it is here that debris can lie for days.

Review Quiz

- 1. What are the seven primary odours?
- 2. How do we classify the odours?
- 3. What are the common types of odours in a hotel and how do we eliminate them?
- 4. What are the principles for eliminating odours?
- 5. What are the general principles of odour elimination?



Part-10

LAUNDRY SERVICES

Organisation of the Laundry Department

Learning Objective



To help the readers understand how a laundry department is organised. This would help them to have a better coordination with the laundry department.

▲ INTRODUCTION

The laundry department is critical to the success of a housekeeping department. It is responsible to wash the tons of soiled linen and uniforms that are generated daily. The supply of fresh linen is crucial to be able to make rooms available for sale or for food and banquet outlets to be ready to sell their food and beverage services. In other words, the revenue generating capacity is greatly enhanced or impaired by the efficiency of the laundry services. A hotel has the following two options when providing laundry service:

- (a) *To have an in-house laundry which is situated in the premises:* Such a decision will require huge investments in equipment, space and technical skills. An in-house laundry is feasible when the hotel is over 300 rooms with large volumes every day of linen and uniforms to process. Another reason can be lack of a quality laundry in the city to outsource work.
- (b) *A commercial laundry in the city which is reliable and professional to handle the volumes of linen and uniform:* The critical issue in such a decision is the ability of the laundry to meet daily replacements of fresh linen and uniform to meet operational needs. A commercial laundry is run by a person qualified in laundry management. It becomes an outsourced service with strict contractual obligations.

Figure 26.1 illustrates the different departments and people that depend on the laundry.

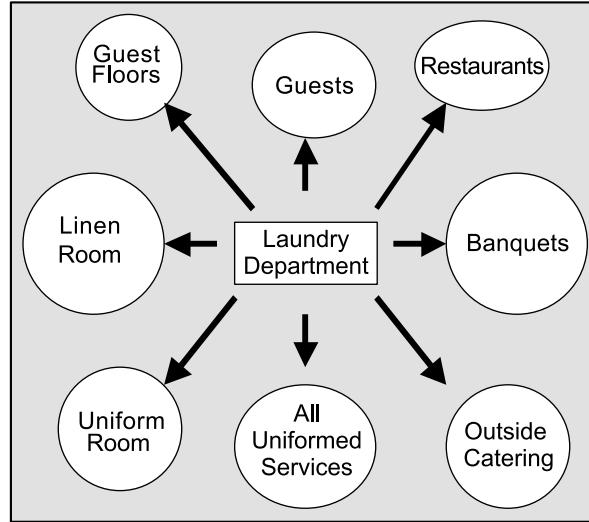


Fig. 26.1 Functions Dependant on the Laundry

▲ ORGANISATION STRUCTURE WITH JOB DESCRIPTIONS

The laundry department reports to the executive housekeeper administratively. For technical purposes it is headed by a laundry manager supported by specialist supervisors. The department has the following specialisations:

Sorting, Marking, Packing Section

This is where guest garments are received and sorted by laundry treatments required:

- (1) Dry cleaning and washing;
- (2) Degree of soil;
- (3) Type of fabric; and
- (4) Urgency of delivery.

They are labelled for identification before laundering and later packed and delivered to guest rooms.

Washing and Dry Cleaning Section

This is the section that washes linen, uniforms and guest garments.

Tumbler Operation Section

This is where linen and clothes are dried. A machine is dedicated to towel-like material to retain their fluffiness. Most washing machines nowadays have drying cycles too.

Ironing Section

This is the area where linen and clothes are ironed. Specialised presses are used for different types of clothes, such as:

Hot-Head Press

This is where two flat surfaces press the garments. The top has a hot metal surface while the bottom is padded to absorb the heat and press.

Steam Press

It adopts the same principle as the hot head press except that the top surface is perforated through which steam passes out.

Shirt Press

These are special presses to give men's shirts their proper contours and creases—especially sleeves, shoulders and collars.

Hand Press

They are like domestic presses used for light garments. Laundries can have heavy duty presses for stubborn creases and materials.

Flat Irons or Calendar Machines

They are used for sheets, pillow cases and towels. A flat iron consists of cylindrical padded rollers through which steam is passed and linen pieces are roll ironed.

Spotting Section

This area specialises in removing spots and stains.

Valet Service Area

In this area, valets attend to phones from guest rooms to collect their laundry. Figure 26.2 gives the organisation chart required to run these services.

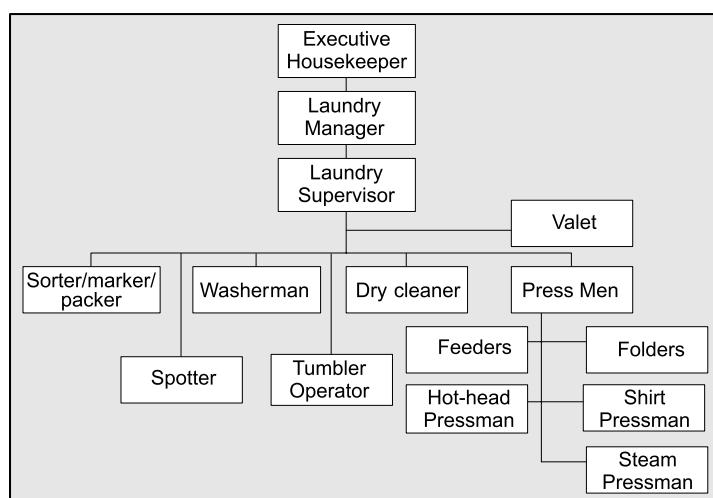


Fig. 26.2 Laundry Organisation Structure

▲ JOB DESCRIPTIONS

In this section, job descriptions of all laundry personnel are described to be able to know their exact duties and responsibilities. It also lists the skills and competencies required by them to perform their duties well.

Job Title:	Laundry Manager
Reports To	1. Executive Housekeeper 2. Accommodations Manager
Job Summary	To ensure that the policies, systems, procedures and standards are understood and implemented by laundry supervisors and translated at the operational levels.
Duties & Responsibilities	1. Conduct morning shift briefings and allot duties for the day. 2. Lead, train and motivate a laundry team. 3. Inspect laundry operations and ensure staff follows correct systems and procedures. 4. Organise and direct the various sub activities of the department. 5. Review the requisitions for supplies keeping a mind cost control. 6. Approve staff rotations and duties. 7. Ensure the safety and hygiene of the laundry staff. 8. Maintain discipline and conduct performance appraisals of the supervisors and staff. 9. Ensure proper coordination with all departments, especially the housekeeping. 10. Ensure that all laundry detergents are stored safely and properly. 11. Conduct market surveys of new suppliers and products. 12. Supervise the periodic pest control schedules. 13. Maintain a preventive maintenance programme of laundry equipment. 14. Ensure that incoming supplies meet. 15. Train supervisors and staff.
Directly Supervises	Laundry Supervisors
Limits of Authority	1. Evaluates performance of supervisory staff. 2. Disciplines staff. 3. Can refuse purchases if not to specs.
Coordinates with	1. Housekeeping – for receipt of soiled linen/uniforms and the issue of fresh ones. 2. Engineering – on matters of maintenance. 3. Purchasing – inspection of incoming supplies.
Minimum Educational Qualifications	Bachelors in Textile Engineering.
Experience	Minimum 8 years as Laundry Manager in a reputed commercial laundry.
Skills and Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Knowledge of laundry operations. ➤ Knowledge of detergents. ➤ Knowledge and use of laundry equipment.

(Contd.)

Job Title:	Laundry Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Knowledge of fabrics and their properties. ➤ Leadership, training and motivation skills. ➤ Physically fit. ➤ Eye for detail. ➤ Ability to work under heat, humidity and noisy conditions.
Job Title:	Laundry Supervisor
Reports To	1. Laundry Manager 2. Executive Housekeeper
Job Summary	To supervise and control all laundry operations in a shift with a view to prompt supply of clean linen and uniforms to the housekeeping department and guest laundry to guest satisfaction.
Duties & Responsibilities	1. Record the attendance of staff. 2. Lead, train and motivate a laundry team to fulfil the objectives of the laundry. 3. Check that machines are in working order. 4. Estimate and programme the work loads to meet delivery requirements. 5. Ensure that washing detergents are in adequate stock and of proper quality. 6. Check the timely delivery of guest laundry and bills are raised for services. 7. Determine daily supply requirements with the linen/uniform keepers. 8. Assist the laundry manager in sanctioning leave, duty rosters and staff appraisals. 9. Deal with guest complaints personally. 10. Ensure that the systems and procedures laid down are followed. 11. Provide such expert advice to staff in difficult laundry cases. 12. Ensure laundry cleanliness. 13. Follow-up on and sign for maintenance work completed. 14. Liaise with the housekeeping floor supervisors to receive soiled linen. 15. Ensure that issues to the linen/uniform rooms are strictly on a one-to-one basis. 16. Ensure that all laundry areas are clean and well maintained. 17. Supervise the issue and storage of detergents and alert the laundry manager for supplies below par stock. 18. Liaise with engineering for the proper supply of water, steam and power for daily operations. 19. Ensure that the valets provide courteous service to guests and that all bills are accounted for. 20. Ensure that the laundry desk services provide the service required.
Directly Supervises	All laundry personnel
Limits of Authority	1. Evaluates performance of laundry personnel and recommends rewards. 2. Can discipline staff. 3. Can refuse substandard detergents. 4. Can speak to guests directly on matters of personal laundry.

(Contd.)

Job Title:	Laundry Supervisor
Coordinates with	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engineering – on maintenance matters. 2. Purchasing – setting specifications and receiving supplies. 3. Housekeeping – to exchange soiled uniforms/linen for fresh ones. 4. Guests – on matters of guest billing and laundry complaints. 5. General Stores – to requisition supplies.
Minimum Educational Qualifications	B. Sc. Chemistry. A qualification in textile technology is preferable.
Experience	Minimum 5-year training in a reputed commercial laundry.
Skills and Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Knowledge of systems and procedures. ➤ Proficiency in the English language. ➤ Supervisory skills. ➤ Guest handling skills. ➤ Physically fit. ➤ Knowledge of laundry equipment. ➤ Eye for detail. ➤ Ability to withstand long hours of heat, humidity and noise.

Job Title:	Sorter/Marker/Packer
Reports To	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Laundry Supervisor 2. Laundry Manager
Job Summary	Sort laundry according to type of treatment required; mark guest laundry accurately; and pack guest laundry attractively to the standards of management.
Duties & Responsibilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sort clothes according to types, textures, degree of soil and urgency. 2. Check whether the guest laundry received tally with those mentioned on the laundry/dry-cleaning lists. 3. Inspect guest clothing for damages to alert the guests prior to washing. 4. Mark guest laundry according to a prescribed code so as to ensure that guests receive their own items correctly. 5. Pack guest laundry attractively after they are washed, pressed and dry-cleaned.
Directly Supervises	None
Limits of Authority	Can reject guest laundry unsuitable for washing or dry-cleaning.
Coordinates with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Valets – for receipt and delivery of guest laundry. ➤ Washerman – for supply and receipt of guest laundry. ➤ Dry cleaner– for supply and receipt of guest laundry.
Minimum Educational Qualifications	High School with craft certification in laundry services.

(Contd.)

Job Title:	Sorter/Marker/Packer
Experience	Minimum 1 year training in the laundry.
Skills and Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Thorough knowledge of fabrics and their properties. ➢ Eye for detail to withstand extreme conditions of heat and humidity. ➢ Multiple skills in presses and tumbler operations.

Job Title:	Washerman
Reports To	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Laundry Supervisor 2. Laundry Manager
Job Summary	Wash all guest laundry according to prescribed formulas, standards of cleanliness and time schedules.
Duties & Responsibilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be knowledgeable of formulas suitable for different fabrics and degree of soil. 2. Maintain all washing machines efficiently and be alert to breakdowns. 3. Schedule work so as to meet delivery timings. 4. Be knowledgeable about fabrics and texture, to apply right formulas. 5. Maintain correct washing procedures.
Directly Supervises	None
Limits of Authority	Can reject guest laundry and house linen and unsuitable for washing.
Coordinates with	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Linen/Uniform room supervisors – for issue of fresh linen and uniforms. 2. Engineering – for machine maintenance and supply of utilities. 3. Dry cleaner – for supply and receipt of guest laundry.
Minimum Educational Qualifications	High School with craft certification in laundry services.
Experience	Minimum 1 year in an industrial laundry.
Skills and Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Thorough knowledge of fabrics and their properties. ➢ Knowledge of washing procedures. ➢ Eye for detail. ➢ Ability to withstand conditions of heat and humidity. ➢ Multiple skills in tumbler and hydro-extraction operations.

Job Title:	Press Operator
Reports To	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Laundry Supervisor 2. Laundry Manager
Job Summary	Press guest clothes and hotel uniforms and linen to acceptable standards with appropriate presses and ensure the equipment maintenance and operational efficiency on a continuous basis.

(Contd.)

Job Title:	Press Operator
Duties & Responsibilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure the proper handling of garments avoiding burns and damages during operations. 2. Be familiar with all fabrics and textures and their capacity to take heat. 3. Schedule work efficiently so as to meet delivery timings.
Directly Supervises	None
Limits of Authority	Can reject guest and house laundry unsuitable for pressing.
Coordinates with	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Washerman – for supply and receipt of guest and house laundry. 2. Engineering – for the upkeep of equipment.
Minimum Educational Qualifications	High School with craft certification in laundry services.
Experience	Minimum 1 year experience in an industrial laundry.
Skills and Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Thorough knowledge of fabrics and their properties. ➢ Eye for detail to withstand extreme conditions of heat and humidity. ➢ Multiple-skills in presses operations.

Job Title:	Dry Cleaner
Reports To	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Laundry Supervisor 2. Laundry Manager
Job Summary	Dry clean all appropriate fabrics of guests and the hotel to standards of cleanliness and without damaging the quality of garments.
Duties & Responsibilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dry clean fabrics to standards of cleanliness. 2. Check the serviceability of washing machines and hydro extractors and report any malfunction with the laundry supervisor. 3. Ensure that the quality of detergents used, are upto the quality standards laid down by management. 4. Check garments for damage before dry cleaning and report to the supervisor.
Directly Supervises	None
Limits of Authority	<p>Can reject guest and house laundry unsuitable for dry cleaning. Can reject substandard detergents.</p>
Coordinates with	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Housekeeping – for receipt and delivery of house laundry. 2. Engineering – for maintenance of equipment. 3. Sorter/marker/packer – for receipt and delivery of guest laundry.
Minimum Educational Qualifications	High School with craft certification in laundry services.
Experience	Minimum 1 year in an industrial laundry.

(Contd.)

Job Title:	Dry Cleaner
Skills and Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Thorough knowledge of fabrics and their properties. ➤ Eye for detail to withstand extreme conditions of heat and humidity. ➤ Multiple-skills in presses and tumbler operations.

Job Title:	Tumbler Operator
Reports To	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Laundry Supervisor 2. Laundry Manager
Job Summary	Operate the tumbler machine and ensure smooth operational flow without damaging the quality of fabrics and maintaining delivery schedules.
Duties & Responsibilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Know the tumbler machine well and ensure its continued operational efficiency. 2. Know the items of cloth that go into the tumbler machine and the time duration of operation so as to prevent damage to the cloth or the machine. 3. Adhere to high standards of dry cleaning when operating the dry cleaning tumbler. 4. Schedule work well so as to meet delivery schedules on time.
Directly Supervises	None
Limits of Authority	Can reject guest and house laundry unsuitable for tumbler operation.
Coordinates with	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Housekeeping – to meet delivery schedules. 2. Washerman – for supply of washed laundry. 3. Engineering – for the maintenance of the tumbler machine
Minimum Educational Qualifications	High School with craft certification in laundry services.
Experience	Minimum 1 year training in the laundry.
Skills and Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Thorough knowledge of fabrics and their properties. ➤ Eye for detail to withstand extreme conditions of heat and humidity. ➤ Multiple-skills in washing and tumbler operations.

Job Title:	Feeders and Folders
Reports To	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Laundry Supervisor 2. Laundry Manager
Job Summary	Operate the flat press and ensure smooth operational flow of work by feeding linen into the machine and folding them as per procedure and standards.
Duties & Responsibilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Know the flat press well and ensure its continued operational efficiency. 2. Feed large and small linen items like bedsheets, pillow cases, etc. into the machine and ensure a creaseless iron. 3. Reject items that are below the desired moisture content. 4. Receive ironed items and fold them to standards ensuring the integrity of creases.

(Contd.)

Job Title:	Feeders and Folders
Directly Supervises	None
Limits of Authority	Can reject items below the desired moisture content.
Coordinates with	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Housekeeping – to meet delivery schedules. 2. Washerman – for supply of washed laundry. 3. Engineering – for the maintenance of the tumbler machine.
Minimum Educational Qualifications	High School with craft certification in laundry services.
Experience	Minimum 1 year training in the laundry.
Skills and Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Thorough knowledge of fabrics and their properties. ➤ Eye for detail. ➤ Ability to withstand extreme conditions of heat and humidity. ➤ Multiple-skills in various press operations.

Job Title:	Valet
Reports To	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Laundry Supervisor 2. Laundry Manager
Job Summary	Receive requests for valet service; help guest in tallying clothes with laundry lists; handing over soiled clothes to laundry; and deliver cleaned clothes to the guest. Execute the function with utmost courtesy.
Duties & Responsibilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assist desk attendant to attend to the laundry telephone. 2. Ensure guests complete the laundry lists correctly and assist them if needed. 3. Be polite and courteous with guests. 4. Ensure desk attendant raises laundry bills. 5. Hand over items to the sorter/marker/packer. 6. Deliver clean clothes to guests and receive payment for the laundry services either by cash or signature. 7. Hand over laundry to bell desk for night deliveries.
Directly Supervises	None
Limits of Authority	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can enter guest rooms
Coordinates with	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Housekeeping – to enter guest rooms. 2. Desk attendant – to receive room numbers and register bills. 3. Lobby – to hand over night laundry deliveries.
Minimum Educational Qualifications	High School with craft certification in laundry services.

(Contd.)

Job Title:	Valet
Experience	Minimum 6 month training in the laundry.
Skills and Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Fluency in spoken and written English. ➤ Personable and well groomed. ➤ Guest service skills.

Job Title:	Laundry Desk Attendant
Reports To	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Laundry Supervisor 2. Laundry Manager
Job Summary	Attend to the laundry telephone and direct valets to guest room numbers. Provide the administrative support required.
Duties & Responsibilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attend to the laundry telephone in a courteous manner. Initiate action where appropriate. 2. Raise guest laundry bills. 3. Type letters and prepare reports as directed by Laundry Manager. 4. Maintain stock records of detergents and raise store requisitions. 5. Raise maintenance slips and keep records
Directly Supervises	None
Limits of Authority	Can raise guest laundry bills.
Coordinates with	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Guests – for laundry services. 2. Housekeeping – for coordination on linen and uniform supply. 3. Engineering – for the maintenance of the equipment.
Minimum Educational Qualifications	High School with craft certification in laundry services.
Experience	Minimum 1 year training in the laundry.
Skills and Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Fluency in written and spoken English. ➤ Basic accounting. ➤ Ability to work extreme conditions of heat and humidity. ➤ Typing skills. ➤ Record keeping skills.

Job Title:	Spotter
Reports To	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Laundry Supervisor 2. Laundry Manager
Job Summary	Complete spotting operations to guest and housekeeping satisfaction.

(Contd.)

Job Title:	Spotter
Duties & Responsibilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Know the properties of fabrics and their response to spotting chemicals. 2. Maintain the spotting machine and see it is operational on a constant basis. 3. Have thorough knowledge of detergents and their effects on fabric. 4. Survey market periodically for new spotting solutions. 5. Spot fabrics ensuring that they are not damaged during spotting operations.
Directly Supervises	None
Limits of Authority	Can reject garments that are likely to get damaged in spotting operations.
Coordinates with	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sorter/marker/packer – for spotting requests. 2. Washerman/Dry cleaner – for spotting requests. 3. Engineering – for the maintenance of the spotting machine.
Minimum Educational Qualifications	High School with craft certification in laundry services.
Experience	Minimum 1 year experience in spotting in a commercial laundry.
Skills and Competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Thorough knowledge of fabrics and detergents and their properties. ➤ Eye for detail. ➤ Ability to withstand extreme conditions of heat and humidity.

Key Terms



Tumbler	Drying machine in the laundry
Flat press	Roller iron that presses flat linen
Valet	Person who collects and returns guest laundry
Hot head press	Iron with a hot metal top surface
Steam press	Iron with a hot perforated metal top surface which feeds steam
Spotter	Person specialized in removing stains

Review Quiz



True or False

1. The decision to have an in-house laundry depends on the availability of reliable professional laundries in the city.
2. Bed sheets are ironed by hand press.
3. Gentlemen's' shirts are ironed on the hot head press.
4. The sorter sorts the different type of linen.
5. The valet answers the laundry telephone.
6. The laundry supervisor schedules the laundry staff.
7. The sorter surveys the market for new spotting solutions.
8. Feeders are found in the washing section.
9. The press operator must be familiar with the different textures and fabrics.
10. The laundry manager maintains a preventive maintenance programme.

Laundry Process Flow

Learning Objective



To help the readers see how the laundry process flows to be able to understand their role and contribution to the end laundered products.

▲ INTRODUCTION

The relationship between housekeeping and laundry is very significant for the smooth functioning of housekeeping services. The laundry supplies housekeeping with clean linen and uniform on a daily basis. It also processes guest laundry ensuring guest satisfaction. It is therefore important for housekeeping personnel to know something of the operations of the laundry to fully understand its importance and contribution. A good laundry fulfils certain basic requirements:

1. It meets on time the operational requirements of linen and uniforms.
2. It ensures that white linen and uniform are indeed kept white.
3. It secures the laundry premises from pilferage.
4. Correct detergents are used for different materials.
5. Guest laundry is properly marked and counted.
6. Equipment are loaded as per manufacturers instructions.
7. Stains and damages are brought to the notice of the housekeeper before the laundry cycle commences.
8. Equipment has a preventive maintenance plan to ensure smooth delivery.
9. Staff hired is qualified and properly trained.
10. There is full accountability of in-house linen and uniforms received and issued.

▲ LAUNDRY PROCESS FLOW

Figure 27.1 gives the reader an understanding of the guest laundry process flow.

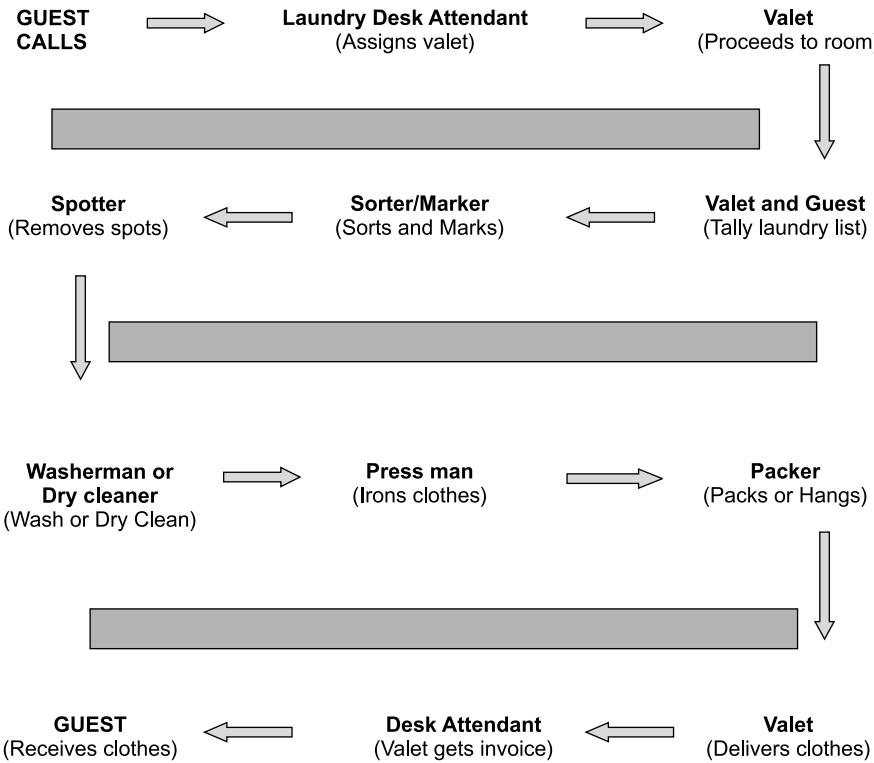


Fig. 27.1 Guest Laundry Cycle

▲ GUEST LAUNDRY PROCEDURE

Let us take each step at a time in the process above:

Guest Calls

The guest laundry process is initiated by a resident guest who desires to have his/her clothes washed, dry cleaned or pressed:

1. The guest chooses the appropriate laundry list (Fig. 27.2) (one is for washing and the other for dry cleaning and pressing).
2. S/he fills the column "Guest Count" mentioning the number of each item and the expected cost of each set of items.
3. S/he puts the soiled garments and laundry list in a laundry bag found in the wardrobe of the room.
4. S/he calls for valet service by dialling the extension number found in the house service directory.

XYZ HOTEL Laundry List					
Guest Name		Room No:		Date:	
To be returned ___ Today ___ Tomorrow ___ Express Service Required on ___ Hanger ___ Folded					
Gentlemen	Guest Count	Hotel Count	Price \$	Total Amount	General Instructions
Shirt Suit (2 Pcs.) Bush shirt Jacket Trouser Vest T-shirt Underwear Socks Handkerchief Pyjama suit Shorts Others::			3.00 8.00 3.00 5.00 5.00 2.00 3.00 2.00 1.00 1.00 3.00 3.00		<p>Please tick the desired service.</p> <p>Normal Service: Laundry collected before 10 a.m. will be returned on the same day after 6 p.m. at no additional charge. Sundays and national holidays will attract a 25% surcharge.</p> <p>Urgent Service: Laundry received between 10 a.m. and 1.00 p.m. for same day return will be charged 50% extra.</p> <p>Express Service: Laundry given between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. to be returned within 3 hours will be charged double.</p>
Ladies					
Dress Blouse Petticoat Brassiere Panty Pyjama Suit Trousers Stockings Skirt Others:			8.00 3.00 3.00 3.00 2.00 3.00 5.00 2.00 3.00		<p>General: In case of discrepancy or an undeclared defect, the order will be executed only after further clarification with the guest.</p> <p>In case of any loss or damage, the hotel will be responsible for a sum not exceeding 5 times the cleaning charges of the garment.</p> <p>In case of any special laundry jobs required, please contact the laundry manager who will be glad to help.</p>
Children					
Shirt Trouser Shorts Underwear Pyjama Suit Jeans Socks Others:			3.00 5.00 2.00 3.00 3.00 5.00 1.00		<p>Please do not pay cash. The amount will be charged to your room account.</p> <p>Kindly check pockets before sending personal laundry. The hotel is not responsible for lost articles.</p> <p>Please keep laundry bags on the bed if leaving the room.</p> <p>Our valet will be happy to assist.</p> <p>Call Valet Service at extension 150.</p>
Total					Guest Signature: _____
Invoice Guest Name:	Room No:	Total No:	Amount	Invoice No:	Guest Signature: _____

Fig. 27.2 Laundry List

The Laundry Desk Attendant

1. Receives the call and notes:
 - the name
 - room number
2. He alerts the valet who collects and delivers laundry to guest rooms.



Valet

A valet is a general runner who collects and returns guest laundry from the rooms.

1. The valet proceeds to the guest room.
2. He announces himself when knocking the door.
3. He tallies the guest count with his own physical count and notes the numbers in the column "House Count".
4. He alerts the guest for any discrepancies.
5. He makes sure that the laundry list has the following:
 - Guest's name
 - Room number
 - Date
 - Urgency of service by when the clothes are required
 - Guest's signature



Sorter/Marker

1. The valet deposits the laundry bag with the sorter/marker.
2. The sorter/marker checks the clothes for spots and stains. He does not want those spots and stains to spread or become permanent in the laundering process. He alerts the guest for any serious stains or damages.
3. Stained clothes are tagged with the room number and sent to the spotter.
4. He tags the other garments with indelible marking ink to identify them in future processes.
5. Sends garments for washing, dry cleaning or pressing.



Modern hotels have automatic stamping machines to identify clothes.

Spotter

The spotter is a specialist who removes spots and stains.

1. The spotter receives stained clothes from the sorter/marker.
2. The spotter will sort the garment by its texture and colour.
3. He treats the stain by its type and the degree of damage.
4. He returns the garments once treated to the Washerman/ Dry Cleaner or Pressman for their necessary attention.



Washerman or Dry Cleaner

1. He sorts the garments by types and puts them in separate batches.
2. He will load the washing machine or dry cleaning machine for washing or dry cleaning and follow procedures. While the washerman uses water as the medium of cleaning, the dry cleaner uses a dry cleaning solvent.



3. Washed garments require water twice their weight.
4. The water is squeezed out in hydro-extractors.
5. The clothes are removed when the cloth has approximately 25% water left. This is recommended for effective ironing.

Pressman

After washing or dry cleaning, the garments go for pressing. Guest laundry meant for pressing only is sent directly to the pressman by the sorter/marker. There are various presses for guest garments such as:

- Hot-head press
- Steam press
- Shirt press
- Suit press
- Hand press



Packers

Once the garments are pressed, they are sent in batches to the packer.

1. He tallies the garment labels with their respective laundry lists.
2. He then proceeds to either pack them or hang them on hangers as requested by the guest.

Valet

1. The valet receives the packed garments with the original laundry list stapled onto the package.
2. The valet proceeds to the desk attendant to raise an invoice.

Desk Attendant

1. He checks the package and contents with the laundry list.
2. He creates an invoice which is often a tear away slip at the end of the laundry list.

Delivery to Guest

1. The valet proceeds to the guest room to deliver the laundry to the guest.
2. He announces himself when knocking the door.
3. He receives the guest's signature on the invoice. Laundry bills are not paid in cash.
4. He hands over the signed invoice to the front office cashier to post in the guest's folio.

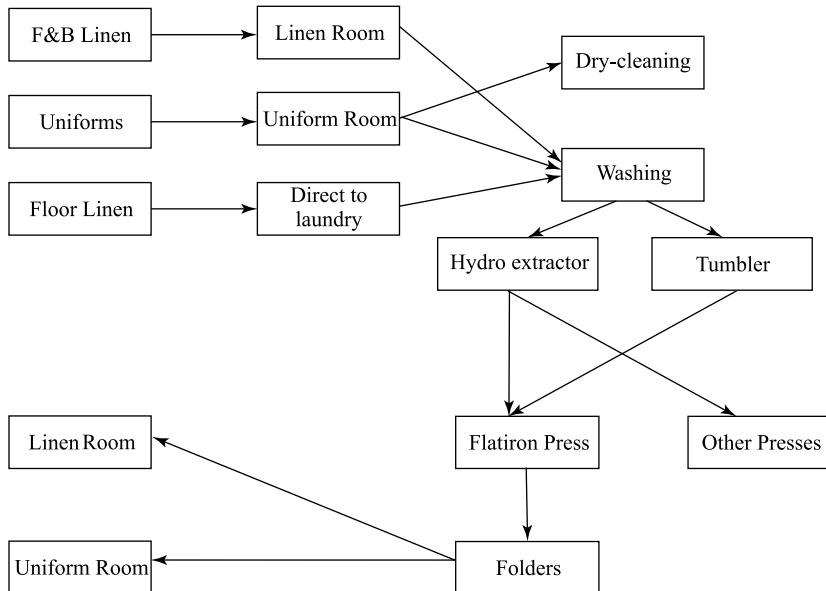
▲ HOUSE LINEN AND UNIFORM CYCLE

Linen/Uniform Room

The linen/uniform room has specific times to exchange linen and uniforms. Soiled ones are sorted by their respective types and sent to the laundry.

Floor Linen

The floor linen is sent either directly by chutes from floor pantries or in linen hampers by floor personnel at specific times. The linen is counted at the laundry floor by both the floor representative and laundry representative.



Washing and Dry Cleaning

The piles of linen and uniform are sorted by the washerman and dry cleaner and placed in batches matching the fabric texture and colour.

Hydro-extractor/Tumbler

After washing, the fabrics are sent to reduce the water content to approximately 25% moisture through these machines, for effective ironing. Tumblers are used for items like towel or similar material where the drying process aerates the fibres and brings about a fluff.



Presses

After the drying process, flat linen like bed sheets, pillow cases, tablecloths, napkins, etc. are sent to the flat iron that suitably irons large flat linen. Other items especially uniforms are sent to other presses already mentioned in the guest laundry process. The press men and women fold the uniforms and linen and assemble them in neat stacks in trolleys for delivery to the linen/uniform room/s.



Linen/Uniform Room

They keep a strict record of items received by the laundry and store them for issue to keep hotel operations going.



Key Terms

Process	Series of actions to achieve an end
Valet	A runner who collects and returns guest laundry
Spotter	Laundry specialist who removes spots and stains from fabrics
Sorter/Marker	Person in laundry who sorts garments and marks them for identification
Packer	Person in laundry who packs laundered guest garments for delivery



Review Quiz

Write short notes on the following:

1. Guest cycle
2. House linen/uniform cycle



Stain Removal

Learning Objective



To help readers identify different types of stains and the methods of removing them.

INTRODUCTION

Stains are one of the greatest challenges to a housekeeper and laundry manager. Stains are inevitable in any operations. A housekeeper's expertise is judged by her ability to remove various stains. The process of removing stains is called "spotting".

EQUIPMENT USED IN SPOTTING

Good spotting equipment (*see picture alongside*) can be obtained at a moderate outlay and will repay its cost in speedy spotting and excellent workmanship. Some essential accessories are:

Steam Gun

The **steam gun** is a device that sprays steam locally on stains. It is supported by a portable steamer (*see picture on right*). The *steam gun* has simplified the spotter's task and removes most food stains, especially those of a sugary nature. The steam gun avoids the use of chemicals.



Brushes

Brushes play an important part in spotting. Brushes with white bristles are ideal for use on white fabric. Brushes for woollens should be long—about 1 1/2 inch. Silk spotting brushes are usually smaller about 1 1/4 inches. The bristles are longer so as to avoid chafing the fabrics. All brushes must have a face which is perfectly flat as uneven bristles give a rough surface and damage the fabric. Brushes should be well rinsed and left for drying each evening.



Chamois

Chamois (soft leather from sheep or goats) is the best for absorbing excess water. It should be large and thick. It should be rinsed in clean water and spread to dry. This will lengthen the life of the leather and prevent it from going old. Always use the chamois with a tamping action.

Absorbent Pads

Absorbent pads are used under stains which are being spotted, to soak up chemicals and solvents and the dissolved matter which they carry out, and so prevent the spreading of the stain.

Drying Cabinet

A drying cabinet is ideal to dry garments after spotting operations.

Magnifying Glass

A magnifying glass is most useful in spotting stains which are difficult to recognize with the naked eye.

▲ CLASSIFICATION OF STAINS

Stains fall under three categories:

Absorbed Stains

Absorbed stains are caused by items which are thin in consistency and penetrate the fabric easily. Such stains are soft and pliable, except where fair amounts of sugar and syrups are present resulting in stiffening. Examples of this type of stains are beverages of all types (beer, tea, coffee, cola, etc.) and medicines such as cough mixtures.

Built-up Stains

Built-up stains are caused by liquids which fail to penetrate the fabric and lie on the fabric surface. Stains of this nature are diverse such as paint, distemper, tar, sealing wax, lacquers, glues and resinous compounds.

Compound Stains

Compound stains are a combination of the previous two types as they both penetrate the fabric and leave a built-up residue on the surface of the material. Such stains are found to be of medium stiffness and never quite hard or soft and pliable. Blood stains are a good example of this type of stain.

▲ HOW TO IDENTIFY STAINS

Sight identifies the stain and therefore the method of spotting to be employed.

Odour is a way to identify perfumes, disinfectants, medicines and chemicals.

Colour like light yellow indicates a medicinal stain while reddish orange shows a rust stain. Blue or black indicate ink stains while brown shows oil stains. Black is for tar, inks, paints and heavy red oil; and green for inks, paints or dye stuff.

Feel helps to establish the origin of stains. Stiffness denotes the presence of oxidised oils, varnish, sugars and starches. Sugar and starch turn white when subjected to the treatment of scratching the stain.

Location helps to pinpoint the cause of the trouble. Perfume stains will usually be located on lapis of garments and in some cases under arms. Sweat stains can be found in under arms and collars.

▲ STAIN-REMOVAL AGENTS

Stains are removed by a solvent. When choosing a solvent, one has to take into account three factors: (1) The agent that caused the stain; (2) the material on which the stain appears; and (3) compound stains like machine oil and metal. Incorrect use of solvent can damage the material on which the stain appears. There are several alternatives for different types of stains, some of which are discussed below.

Absorbents

Absorbents “soak up” stains, especially grease stains. Some good examples are baking soda, corn starch, cornmeal (usually considered the best for lighter colours), white talcum powder, and fuller’s earth (best for use on darker colours, available at pharmacies and garden supply stores). Absorbents are used on light or new stains; they will damage neither fabrics nor other surfaces and they are easy to use.

Acids

These are harmful to skin and breathing. They will need protective gear when handling them. The acids will need dilution before administering them to reduce toxicity. They are good to remove metal stains and rust. Examples of such acids are oxalic acid, boric acid and acetic acid. Oxalic acid is effective in treating ink and rust stains. Oxalic acid crystals may also be specially ordered for this purpose. Crystals must be dissolved in water. Liquid oxalic acid should be pre-tested on a hidden corner before using it on the stain. Moisten the stained area with the solution. Allow to dry, then reapply, keeping the area moist until the stain is removed. Be sure all traces of the solution are rinsed out. Oxalic acid is poisonous and contact with the skin and eyes, is harmful. Wear rubber gloves and other protective clothing when working with it.

A 10% solution of *acetic acid* can be purchased generically at pharmacies. (White vinegar is 5% acetic acid and can be used as a substitute for the stronger solution.) It is a clear fluid that can be used to remove stains on silk and wool. It must be diluted with 2 parts water for use on cotton and linen (a pre-test is recommended). It should not be used on acetate. If acetic acid causes a colour change, it is recommended to sponge the affected area with ammonia.

Alkalies

These are good for removing organic stains like vegetables, tea and coffee. Examples are soda and borax. More potent alkalies are sodium hydroxide and potassium hydroxide used for drain pipes and gutters where grease accumulates.

Lacquer Solvents

A good example of this is acetone, which removes household cement, nail polish, certain glues and grease. Acetone is a colourless liquid that smells like peppermint. Although it will not damage either natural fibres or most synthetics, it should be pretested to make sure that dyed fabrics will not be harmed. It should not be used on fabrics containing acetate. Use only pure acetone on stains.

Oxidising Solvents

Some good examples under this category are bleach and lemon juice. Bleaching is done to remove colour on white fabrics. Popular bleaches are hydrogen peroxide, chlorine bleach and sodium perborate. *Chlorine* bleach can be used as a disinfectant and stain remover. Chlorine is commonly used to bleach white cotton; linen, and synthetic fabrics. Chlorine bleach is potent and can weaken fibres. Even cotton and linen will be weakened, if allowed to soak in a bleach solution for too long. Chlorine bleach should not be used on silk, wool, or fabrics exposed to sunlight (curtains, for example). It is recommended to always pretest bleach on a hidden area and rinse all bleached items thoroughly as a precaution to damaging fabric. Chlorine bleach is poisonous. It causes burns and irritation, if it comes in contact with the skin or eyes. Read all warnings on the label. Never mix chlorine bleach with other cleaning substances, especially ammonia, as this will release chloramine, a highly toxic substance. *Sodium perborate* is sold in crystal form. It is safe for all fabrics and surfaces, although, once again, pretesting is recommended to assure that the fabric is colourfast. This oxygen-type bleach is slower-acting than hydrogen peroxide. When using this bleach, be sure to rinse treated articles thoroughly. *Hydrogen peroxide* at 3% solution is a good bleach, safe for most surfaces and all fibres (though dyed fabrics should be pretested for colourfastness).

Dry-Cleaning Solvents

Dry-cleaning solvents are chemicals, often derived from petroleum or benzene, used to remove dirt and stains from clothing. These are powerful chemicals, and some have been removed from the market due to their effects on humans and the environment.

Others, such as tetrachloroethylene (or perchloroethylene, also known as PERC) are now used mostly by commercial dry cleaners or in automotive or hobby-related cleaners. Some products that contained these solvents have been retired or reformulated.

A dry-cleaning solvent should be used and stored carefully. Their fumes are toxic and should not be inhaled. Not all spot removers/dry-cleaning solvents can be used on all surfaces, nor will all products remove all stains, so be sure to read the labels before using. These solvents are good at dissolving stains of grease, oil, paint, ballpoint ink, lipstick, etc.

Other Solvents

Sodium Thiosulphate is also known as photographic "hypo" or fixer. Although considered safe for all fibres and harmless to dyes, it should be tested on an inconspicuous area of fabric before use. It must be handled carefully, as sodium thiosulphate can cause irritation to the eyes, skin, lungs and digestive tract. *Turpentine* is commonly used as a thinner for oil-based paints. It is effective on paint and grease stains, but it must be used carefully. Turpentine is flammable and poisonous and, therefore, the user must observe all label precautions. *White Vinegar* is used for stain removal. Cider and wine vinegar have colour that can leave a stain. Vinegar should be diluted before use on cotton or linen. Vinegar is safe for all other colourfast fibres but can change the colour of some dyes. It

is recommended to always test its effects on an inconspicuous area first. If a dye changes colour, rinse the affected area with water and add a few drops of ammonia. Rinse thoroughly with water again. *Glycerine* is used in the preparation of the wet spotter, which is used to remove many kinds of stains. *Amyl Acetate* (banana oil) is used in stain removal. It is safe for use on fibres that could be damaged by acetone, but it should not be allowed to come in contact with plastics or furniture finishes. Amyl acetate is poisonous and flammable. Avoid contact with the skin and inhaling the vapours.

Ammonia is used for stain removal. Because ammonia affects some dyes, it is recommended to pre-test on a hidden corner of the stained article. To restore colour changed by ammonia, rinse the affected area with water and apply a few drops of white vinegar. Rinse with clear water again. Ammonia damages silk and wool. If it has to be used for these fibres, dilute ammonia with an equal amount of water and use as sparingly as possible. Ammonia is poisonous. Avoid inhaling its fumes. It will cause burns or irritation, if it comes in contact with the skin or eyes. Observe all label precautions. Never mix ammonia with chlorine bleach, as this will release chloramine, a highly toxic substance. *Alcohol*: The common isopropyl alcohol (70%) is sufficient for most stain-removal jobs that call for alcohol, although the stronger denatured alcohol (90%) can also be used. Alcohol with added colour or fragrance should not be used. Alcohol will fade some dyes, therefore, a pre-test is recommended. Alcohol will damage acetate, tri-acetate, modacrylic, and acrylic fibres. Alcohol is poisonous and flammable. All label precautions must be observed.

Table 28.1 gives a good idea of how to treat different types of stains.

Table 28.1 Treatment for Stains

Type of Stain	Type of Fabric	Method of Removal
Adhesive Tape	All fabrics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sponge or soak the fabric stain with spot stain remover, dry-cleaning solvent or kerosene. 2. Wash in warm soapy water.
Alcohol	All fabrics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sponge several times with warm water first. 2. Pour glycerine on dampened stain, rub lightly between the hands and leave for half hour. 3. Rinse in warm water. 4. Use methylated spirit, ammonia or spot stain remover for stubborn stains. (Test fabric first when using ammonia) 5. Rinse well in warm water. 6. Use bleach as last resort of stain persists.
Alkalies	All fabrics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rinse immediately in white vinegar and water. 2. Rinse well in warm water.
Bleach	All fabrics	Wash immediately with cold water. For chlorine bleach, add 1 Tbsp. vinegar: 600 ml. water.
Baby Oil	Washable fabrics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rub dish wash liquid into stain and leave for 15 minutes. 2. Hot wash using normal laundry detergent.
	Unwashable fabrics	See Butter process

(Contd.)

Type of Stain	Type of Fabric	Method of Removal
Blue	All fabrics	Rinse in cold water. Soak difficult stains in solution of vinegar 1 Tbsp: 1200 ml. water. Wash as usual.
Boot Polish	All fabrics	Sponge with spot stain remover or with dry-cleaning fluid.
Blood and all protein	Washable fabrics Unwashable fabrics	1. Steep in enzyme stain remover 2. Steep in salt and cold water (1 tbs:1 quart water) 3. Rinse with clear water Cover stain with paste of starch and cold water
Chewing gum: As it has a rubber base, it is difficult to remove	All fabrics	A benzene-based dry-cleaning stain remover may have some effect, otherwise treat with turpentine.
Dye	All fabrics	Bleach according to fabric.
Fruit and Wine		
(a) Fresh	White cotton and linen Other fabrics	1. Cover stain with salt 2. Pour boiling water through 3. Boil and wash Steep in warm water
(b) Dry	White cotton and linen All other fabrics	1. Spread borax on stain 2. Pour boiling water through 3. Treat with liquid bleach 1. Steep in warm hydrogen peroxide solution 2. Steep in warm solution of sodium per borate
Furniture polish	All fabrics	1. Wash 2. Treat with a grease solvent or dry-cleaning spray
Grass	All fabrics	1. Steep in glycerine 2. Steep in methylated spirit to remove green colouring (chlorophyll).
Grease		
(a) Solid	Washable fabrics	1. Scrape off as much as possible. 2. Place stain over absorbent paper 3. Place a moderately hot iron on top 4. Work from outside of stain to the centre 5. Continue till the paper has absorbed the stain
(b) Liquid (including fish oils)		Wash with hot water and a detergent. Apply a grease solvent to stubborn stains before washing
Iron rust: caused by the formation of ferric oxide on the fabric. It is removed by the action	White cotton and linen	1. Spread salt or lemon over the stain and pour boiling water through 2. Use commercial rust remover following instructions carefully

(Contd.)

Type of Stain	Type of Fabric	Method of Removal
of an acid which forms a soluble iron salt with the oxide. Iron rust stains should be removed before the fabric is wetted as dampness spreads the stains. Liquid bleach makes fast the stain, so it should never be used.	All other fabrics	1. Steep in warm solution of salts of lemon 2. Use commercial rust remover
Iodine	All fabrics	1. Steep in ethyl alcohol 2. Steep in sodium thiosulphate solution
Ink: writing ink generally contains a metal and a dye. This therefore requires two treatments. Acid is used to work on the iron while an alkaline solution is used to neutralize the acid and remove the dye.	White cotton and linen All other fabrics	1. Wash off as far as possible 2. Spread salt or lemon over the stain 3. Pour boiling water through 4. Wash 5. Treat with borax if washing is not immediate 6. Finish with commercial ink remover followed by borax solution
Black Ink		
(a) Fresh	All fabrics	1. Wash out as far as possible 2. Spread tomato juice over the stain and leave for an hour. 3. Rinse and wash.
(b) Dry	All fabrics	1. Treat alternatively with lemon juice and borax 2. Treat with commercial ink remover
Red ink: washes out easily unless made with a persistent dye	All fabrics	1. Steep in borax solution 2. Steep in ammonia solution 3. Bleach according to fabric
Marketing ink: this stain is difficult to remove and should be treated when fresh	All fabrics	1. Steep in iodine solution 2. Steep in solution of sodium thiosulphate 3. Wash 4. Bleach according to the fabric
Ball Pen ink		Swab the stain with cotton wool steeped in surgical spirit or grease solvent till stain is absorbed
Laundry Blue	All fabrics	Steep in a warm solution of acetic acid or vinegar
Medicine	All fabrics	Steep in ethyl alcohol or surgical spirit

(Contd.)

Type of Stain	Type of Fabric	Method of Removal
Mildew: fungus growth on damp fabric	White cotton and linen All other fabrics	1. Bleach by sunlight 2. Treat with liquid bleach Bleach with hydrogen peroxide
Nail varnish: it contains acetone or amyl acetate	All fabrics except acetate and tri-acetate base	Remove with varnish remover
Paints	All fabrics	1. Paints made with linseed oil should be steeped in linseed oil 2. Cellulose paints should be steeped in a grease solvent 3. Varnish lacquer paints will dissolve in methylated spirits Some paints have special paint removers
Perspiration	White cotton and linen All other fabrics	1. Steep in enzyme stain remover 2. Bleach in sunlight 3. Treat with liquid bleach 4. If stain persists, rinse with diluted hydrogen peroxide (1:9) 1. Steep in enzyme stain remover 2. Wash 3. Bleach according to fabric
Scorch: caused by sunlight burns. Mild scorches can be treated.	All fabrics	Bleach according to fabric
Tea, Coffee, Cocoa		
(a) Fresh	White cotton and linen Other fabrics	Boil in water Wash in warm water
(b) Dry	White cotton and linen Unbleached and coloured cotton and linen Other fabrics	1. Steep in glycerine overnight 2. Spread borax on stain and pour boiling water through 3. Bleach with household bleach 1. Steep in glycerine overnight 2. Steep in hot solution of borax 3. Fast dyed fabrics may be treated carefully with diluted household bleach 1. Steep in warm solution of borax 2. Steep in hydrogen peroxide or sodium perborate solution



Key Terms

Absorbent pad	A pad to suck up chemicals and solvents
Absorbed stains	Stains usually by liquid that penetrate a fabric
Built-up stains	Stains that remain on the fabric surface
Chamois	Soft leather from sheep or goat
Compound stains	Stains that jointly penetrate fabrics as well as leave a surface residue
Portable steamer	A gadget that generates steam
Spotting	The process of removing stains
Steam gun	A device that sprays steam locally on stains

Review Quiz



1. How do you classify stains?
2. How do you identify stains?
3. How do you remove the following stains?
 - Ball pen ink
 - Perspiration
 - Paints

Part-11

OTHER HOUSEKEEPING KNOWLEDGE

Textiles

Learning Objective



To provide readers with a basic knowledge of textiles; how they are manufactured and their types as professional housekeepers may have to select them and definitely maintain them.

▲ INTRODUCTION

It is important for a professional housekeeper to have some basic knowledge of textiles as she is responsible for their selection and upkeep. She purchases linen in volumes that are used in guest rooms, restaurants, banquets, spa, swimming pool, etc. Her next concern is uniforms of various types. Some are rugged like the dungarees of gardeners, kitchen stewarding utility workers and engineering mechanics, while others are dainty for receptionists, restaurant hostesses, waitresses, etc. Without some knowledge of textiles, the housekeeper is handicapped when purchasing and maintaining them. She will have to rely on whatever the manufacturers tell her.

First let us understand some fundamental terms. The words ‘fabric’ and ‘cloth’ are used in textile assembly trades (such as tailoring and dressmaking) as synonymous to ‘textile’. However, the housekeeper must know their subtle differences. ‘Textile’ refers to any material made of interlacing fibres. ‘Fabric’ refers to any material made through weaving, knitting, spreading, crocheting, or bonding (all explained later) that may be used in production of further goods (garments, etc.). Cloth may be used synonymously with fabric, but often refers to a finished piece of fabric used for a specific purpose (e.g. tablecloth). In order to understand textiles, we have to know what makes it. A textile is made up of strands of fibres. Fibres are the raw materials for all textiles. Fibres come from nature through animal, plant and mineral strands. Fibres are collected, sorted and then twisted to form a yarn. Yarns are interlaced (woven) together to form a textile. Most natural fibres used for textile production measure $\frac{1}{2}$ to 8 inches. Such short fibres are called *staple fibres*. Modern technology has developed synthetic fibres that are produced in continuous lengths and are called *filaments*. There are two kinds of fibres: natural fibres and man-made fibres (from natural sources).

▲ NATURAL FIBRES

Natural fibres include animal, plant, and mineral fibres.

Animal Fibres

Animal fibres would include the following:

Wool which is derived from sheep and goat is of two qualities: (1) Worsted yarns which have long finer fibres which have been combed to be parallel. Worsted yarns are commonly used for warm clothing. All finer quality of fabrics is made of worsted yarns; and (2) Woollen yarns are bulkier produced from carded, non-parallel fibre. Woollen yarns have small fibres. Woollen yarns are used for making carpets, blankets and felts. Wool is commonly used for warm clothing.

The wool is sheared from sheep, sorted, washed and dried; oil is applied and the fibres are combed so that they lie parallel to each other. From here the yarns are spun. Wool provides warm, comfortable fabrics for dresses, suits and cardigans. Some members of the camel and goat family also produce wool. The pashmina wool of the Afghanistan goat is the rarest fibre of them producing the finest shawls, carpets and rugs. Other animal textiles are made from hair or fur such as alpaca wool, vicuña wool, llama wool, and camel hair, generally used in the production of coats, jackets, ponchos, blankets, and other warm coverings. Angora refers to the long, thick, soft hair of the Angora rabbit. Cashmere, the hair of the Indian Cashmere goat, and mohair, the hair of the North African Angora goat, are types of wool known for their softness.

Silk is derived from caterpillars. These worms form a cocoon or nest around themselves with the saliva from their mouths. They lie in the cocoon and change into butterflies, break their cocoon, lay their eggs on leaves and die. Silk is divided into two kinds—cultivated silk and wild or *Tussar* silk. Cultivated silk is derived when the butterflies are killed inside the cocoon and after de-gutting the cocoon, the yarns are stretched out. This is the only fibre in nature which comes in the yarn form with 200 metres to 400 metres in length. The wild silk is derived from broken cocoons and yarn is 2" to 21" long. All finer qualities of fabric are produced from the cultivated silk and the thicker ones from wild silk.



Plant Fibres

Plants provide more textile fibres than do animals or minerals. In fact, one plant, cotton, accounts for 95% fibres of the natural fibres in the United States. Cotton fibres produce soft, absorbent fabrics that are widely used for clothing, sheets and towels. Flax is a plant with blue flowers grown for its stem the fibres of which are made into linen. The seeds of the Flax plant are used to produce linseed oil. Plant fibres may be categorised as follows:

1. Seed fibres, e.g. cotton
2. Stem fibres, e.g. flax, jute, seaweed and ramie (China grass)
3. Fruit fibres, e.g. coconut (coir), pineapple (Pina), banana and cacti.

Cotton

It is derived from plants which are 3 to 5 feet tall. The flowers of cotton are in pods which are cracked and opened. The cotton fibres are removed and further cleaned by removing the seeds. These fibres

are combed to lie parallel to each other and from these the yarns are spun. Cotton fibres produce absorbent fabrics that are widely used for clothing, sheets, and towels. As earlier mentioned all long fibres make finer and thinner yarns and hence the quality of the fabric depends on the quality of fibres used in yarns. The strength and beauty of linen produced from flax fibres have made it a popular fabric for fine table cloths, napkins and handkerchiefs.

Since cotton is a major textile used in hotel operations, it is beneficial to understand the preparation process of cotton to yarn.

Opening and Cleaning Raw cotton comes to cotton mills in 500 pound (125 kg) bales. The cotton is put through an opener machine to fluff it and separate any residual cotton seeds. It is then beaten through a picker machine to beat the cotton and dislodge the seeds. It is sieved using a fan to reach a fluffy consistency.



Carding The cotton from the picking machine comes out in sheets or 'laps' and fed into a carding machine consisting of rollers with fine teeth. The cotton leaves the carding machine in large ropes of fibre.



Note: In a wider sense, carding can refer to these four processes: willowing—loosening the fibres; lapping—removing the dust to create a flat sheet or lap of cotton; carding—combing the tangled lap into a thick rope of 1/2 inch in diameter, a sliver; and drawing—where a drawing frame combines 4 slivers into one—repeated for increased quality.

Combing: It is optional, but is used to remove the shorter fibres, creating a stronger yarn.

Drawing: It is a process where fibres are straightened, twisted and made into consistent thickness the width of a pencil. These ropes are called 'slivers'. The slivers are later separated into finer yarns called 'rovings'. The rovings feed into looms to make fabric.

Weaving At this point, the 'rovings' are fed into looms to weave them into fabric. The three primary movements of a loom are shedding, picking, and beating-up.

- Shedding:** It is the operation of dividing the warp into two lines, so that the shuttle can pass between these lines. There are two general kinds of sheds—"open" and "closed". In the open shed, the warp threads are moved when the pattern requires it from one line to the other. In the closed shed, the warp threads are all placed level in one line after each pick.
- Picking:** The operation of projecting the shuttle from side to side of the loom through the division in the warp threads. This is done by the overpick or underpick motions. The overpick is suitable for quick-running looms, whereas the underpick is best-suited for heavy or slow looms.
- Beating-up:** The third primary movement of the loom when making cloth, and is the action of the reed as it drives each pick of weft to the fell of the cloth.



Production Methods

Weaving is a textile production method which involves interlacing a set of longer threads (called the warp) with a set of crossing threads (called the weft). This is done on a frame or machine known as a loom, which are of various types. Some weaving is still done by hand, but the vast majority is mechanised.

Knitting and **crocheting** involve interlacing loops of yarn, which are formed either on a knitting needle or on a crochet hook, together in a line. The two processes are different in that knitting has several active loops at one time, on the knitting needle waiting to interlock with another loop, while crocheting never has more than one active loop on the needle.

Spread tow is a production method where the yarn are spread into thin tapes, and then the tapes are woven as warp and weft. This method is mostly used for composite materials; Spread Tow Fabrics can be made in carbon, aramid, etc.

Braiding or **plaiting** involves twisting threads together into cloth. Knotting involves tying threads together and is used in making macramé.

Lace is made by interlocking threads together independently, using a backing and any of the methods described above, to create a fine fabric with open holes in the work. Lace can be made by either hand or machine.

Carpets, rugs, velvet, velour, and velveteen are made by interlacing a secondary yarn through woven cloth, creating a tufted layer known as a nap or pile.

Felting involves pressing a mat of fibres together, and working them together until they become tangled. A liquid, such as soapy water, is usually added to lubricate the fibres, and to open up the microscopic scales on strands of wool.

Non-woven textiles are manufactured by the bonding of fibres to make fabric. Bonding may be thermal or mechanical, or adhesives can be used.

Finishing processing of textiles

The raw grey woven cotton fabric from the loom contains impurities that require further treatment in order to develop its full textile potential and the added value. The fabric will need one or more finishing processes given below:

Desizing

The cloth may be steeped in a dilute acid and then rinsed, oxidised or use enzymes to break down the impurities of the cloth as required. This process makes the fabric more absorbent which is what cotton fabric are noted for.

Scouring

Scouring, is a chemical washing process in closed iron vessels called 'kiers', to remove natural wax and non-fibrous impurities (e.g. the remains of seed fragments) from fabrics. The fabric is boiled under pressure (as presence of oxygen degrades the cellulose in the fabric) in an alkali (sodium hydroxide) which forms soap with free fatty acids. At this stage, even the most naturally white cotton fibres are yellowish. The next process, i.e. bleaching, is required.

Bleaching

Bleaching improves whiteness by removing natural colouration and remaining impurities from the cotton. The level of bleaching is based on the required whiteness and absorbency. Cotton being a vegetable fibre will be bleached using an oxidizing agent, such as diluted sodium hypochlorite or diluted hydrogen peroxide. If the fabric is to be dyed a deep shade, then lower levels of bleaching are acceptable. For white bed sheetings and medical applications, the highest levels of whiteness and absorbency are essential.

Mercerising

Mercerising is the process of adding lustre and strength to the fabric. The fabric is treated with caustic soda solution that swells the fibres. Cotton is mercerised under tension, and all alkali must be washed out before the tension is released otherwise the fabric will shrink. Mercerising can take place directly on grey cloth, or after bleaching.

Non-chemical finishing treatment

Many other chemical treatments may be applied to cotton fabrics to produce low flammability, crease resist and other special effects but four important non-chemical finishing treatments are:

(a) **Singeing**

Singeing is designed to burn off the surface fibres from the fabric to produce smoothness. The fabric passes over brushes to raise the fibres, then passes over a plate heated by gas flames.

(b) **Raising**

Raising is a process where sharp teeth lifts the surface fibres giving fluffiness, softness and warmth, as in flannelette.

(c) **Calendering**

Calendering is the third important mechanical process, in which the fabric is passed between heated rollers to generate smooth, polished or embossed effects depending on roller surface properties and speeds.

(d) **Shrinking (Sanforising)**

Mechanical shrinking (sometimes referred to as sanforising) is done, whereby the fabric is forced to shrink so that there is no residual tendency to shrink after subsequent laundering.

(e) **Dyeing**

Cotton is an absorbent fibre which responds readily to colouration. The dyeing process is carried out with an anionic direct dye by completely immersing the fabric (or yarn) in an aqueous dyebath according to a prescribed procedure. Other dyes and reactives are used to improve colour fastness during washing, rubbing and light. These require more complex processes thus are more expensive.

(f) **Printing**

Printing is the application of colour and pattern using paste or ink to the surface of a fabric. It may be considered as localised dyeing. Printing designs on to already dyed fabric is also possible.

Jute

These plants are very much like bamboo but of thinner quality. These are cut and collected, put into water to rot, then the green layer is removed and the fibres are collected and spun into yarns.

Fibres of the jute plant can be woven into burlap. They are used to make sack and backing for rugs and carpets, etc.

Coconut fibres

These are well known as husk of the coconut and also called coir. The coconut is steeped in water and these fibres are removed and spun into yarns. These are used for door mats and ropes etc.

Mineral Fibres

Asbestos is the only real mineral fibre used for textiles. It is derived from rocks and these fibres are mixed with other textile fibres and made into yarn. These are used for firemen's garments and to form fire-retardant hoses as they are poor conductors of heat though they burn at extremely high temperatures.

Glass, Aluminium, Gold and Silver are melted and strung out into fine strands from which fabrics like fibre glass ideal for flame resistant fabrics and aluminium, gold and silver for decorative yarns for bedspreads, evening gowns and tablecloths.

Synthetic or Man-made Fibres

Most manufactured fibres are made from wood pulp, cotton linters (leftover cotton from the cotton seed) or petrochemicals derived from crude oil and natural gas. The fibres made from wood pulp and linters are rayon, acetate and tri-acetate.

- Rayon and acetate are widely used for clothing, draperies and upholstery. Rayon is an absorbent fabric and therefore dyes easily.
- Fabrics of acetate resist shrinking and stretching.
- Tri-acetate has the qualities of acetate as also resists wrinkling, especially useful for sportswear.

The chief fibres from petrochemicals include nylon, polyester, acrylic and olefin.

- Nylon has many useful qualities: it launders well; wears well; exceptionally strong; and versatile for clothes, carpets and upholstery.
- Polyester resists wrinkling and ideal for clothes that are required such for long use.
- Acrylic is heavier and ideal for blankets and carpets.
- Olefin cleans and dries easily and therefore the perfect material for carpets.



The chart below gives a more comprehensive idea of synthetic fibres and their uses to a housekeeper:

Fibre	Characteristics	Uses
Acetate	Resists mildew, shrinking, stains and stretching.	Clothing; draperies; upholstery
Acrylic	Soft; resists mildew, sunlight and wrinkling	Blankets; carpeting; clothing; upholstery
Aramid	Resists heat, chemicals and stretching	Bulletproof vests, ropes
Fibre glass	Resists chemicals, flames, mildew, moisture and sunlight.	Drapery; ironing board covers

(Contd.)

Fibre	Characteristics	Uses
Metallic	Resists insects, mildew and tarnishing	Decorative trim for bedspreads, tablecloth and upholstery
Modacrylic	Soft; resists chemical flames and wrinkling	Artificial furs; blankets; carpeting
Nylon	Strong; elastic; easy to launder; dries quickly; retains shape.	Carpeting; hosiery; lingerie; upholstery
Olefin	Lightweight; resists insects, mildew, moisture and sunlight	Carpets
Polyester	Resists wrinkling; easy to launder; dries quickly	Blankets; carpets; clothing; sewing thread;
Rayon	Absorbent; easy to launder; dyes easily	Carpeting; clothing; draperies; upholstery
Rubber (synthetic)	Strong elastic; repels moisture	Mattresses; swimwear
Saran	Resists acids, insects, mildew, moisture and stains.	Draperies; outdoor furniture; rainwear; upholstery
Spandex	Elastic; lightweight; resists sunlight and perspiration	Fitted sheets; slipcovers; swimwear
Triacetate	Resists shrinking, stains and wrinkling; dries quickly	Draperies; sportswear; blended with other fibres.

Key Terms



Fabric	Woven strands of fibre
Fibre	Strands from, animal, plant, mineral or synthetic sources from which textiles are made
Linters	Leftover cotton from cotton seed

Review Quiz



True or False

- Housekeepers buy various fabrics in volume.
- Fibres are the raw materials for all fabrics.
- Fibres are interlaced to form fabrics.
- Fibres may be placed in four categories.
- Mineral fibre is an example of natural fibre.
- Fibres of the flax plant are made into linen.
- Cotton fibres are used for absorbent fabric.
- Fibres of the cotton plant are used for the backing of rugs and carpets.
- Some man-made fibres are made from petrochemicals.
- Olefin is used in making carpets.

Fill in the Blanks

- Twisted fibres form _____
- Short fibres are called _____ fibres.
- Continuous lengths of synthetic fibres are called _____

4. Natural fibres include animal, vegetable and _____ fibres.
5. Fibres of the flax plant are made into _____.
6. Wool are converted into two yarns—worsted yarns and _____ yarns.
7. Silk is derived from the _____.
8. Silk is of two kinds—cultivated silk and _____ silk.
9. Coconut is a _____ fibre.
10. The source of nylon is from _____.

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Horticulture

Learning Objective



To enable readers to have a basic knowledge of horticulture; their different types and how they are addressed in hotel operations.

▲ INTRODUCTION

We have already learnt that one of the principle roles of housekeeping is the aesthetic upkeep of the hotel. Aesthetics is provided by interior design and horticulture with flower arrangements. Large hotels have a dedicated horticultural team to beautify the external areas of a property, duly supported by a florist responsible for all the flower arrangements in the house. They report to the Executive Housekeeper. Smaller properties depend on the housekeeper to fill in this function assisted by a few gardeners to execute the role. It is therefore important for any housekeeping professional to have some basic knowledge of horticulture and floral art.

▲ HORTICULTURE

The word horticulture comes from the Latin word *hortus*, which means garden. Horticulture is a branch of agriculture that specialises in fruits, vegetables, flowers, and ornamental shrubs and trees. While the definition encompasses a wide range of activities, a hotel is interested in the use of plants in landscaping and flower arrangements. Therefore, horticulture is the art and science of gardening. While flowers and plants are grown in gardens, they are nurtured as saplings in greenhouses and nurseries. A greenhouse maintains exotic plants at controlled climatic conditions while nurseries are where saplings are grown to maturity before they are re-planted in the garden. Horticulture is generally divided into four main specialties:

1. **Pomology** is the cultivation of shrubs, trees and vines for fruits.
2. **Olericulture** deals with vegetable plants.
3. **Floriculture** is the production and use of flowers and foliage plants.
4. **Ornamental horticulture** is concerned with shrubs, lawns and ornamental trees in landscapes.

In this chapter, we will be concerned with landscaping and floral art.

▲ LANDSCAPING

Landscape is the science of designing and developing land for human enjoyment. The external areas of a hotel represent the quality of the hotel and its management. It is the first evidence to a visitor before s/he even steps inside a hotel. It promotes the hotel and creates an ambience of peace and tranquility. This visual impact is created by gardens and the adornments that enhance it. The landscape is done by a landscape architect at the inception of the hotel. They study the climatic conditions, water supply, and type of vegetation, soil composition and the slope of the land. They preserve attractive views especially of city landmarks. They then proceed to dig the land and bring it into shape. They determine the shrubbery and flowers and hand the continued responsibility to the hotel's horticulturist or housekeeper.

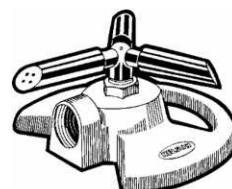
The horticulture department of the hotel consists of a horticulturist, head gardener and gardeners. The number of gardeners will depend on the acreage. Landscapes include private beaches; hill slopes; cascades; and waterways. Complex landscapes will require different expertise and an additional number of gardeners to maintain them.



Horticultural Facilities & Equipment

Water Supply

A landscape will have a ***water supply system***. This is very important to gardens. Flowers and shrubs need water for survival. Water heads have to be further distributed to the far corners of the garden by hoses and sprinkler systems. The role of water is magnified when the landscape has waterways, waterfalls and islands requiring large volumes of water.



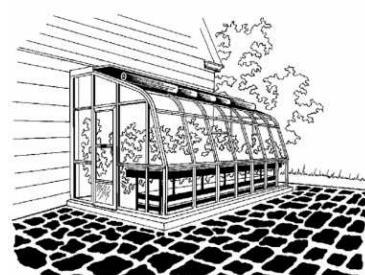
Nursery

Another major feature is a ***nursery*** for saplings. It is a dedicated portion of land away from the guest view, where all the preliminary preparation of plants is done. This includes growing them from seed to sapling ready for transplanting into flower beds. The nursery is also the place where flowerpots are prepared for internal decoration. Those flowers that are suitable for indoor use are nurtured here before they are transported indoors. They would have to be recycled periodically for sunlight and are brought to the nursery.



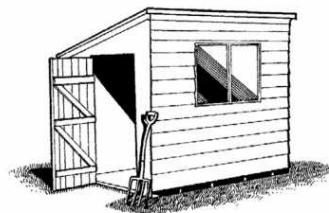
Greenhouse

The next major feature is a ***greenhouse***. This feature is optional. Superior hotels like to have an edge over others by displaying exotic flowers. They procure seeds and saplings from all parts of the world. Some hotels may have their flowers as their signature. The greenhouses maintain flowers in controlled climatic conditions.



Garden Shed

Another essential construction for a horticultural operation is the **garden shed**. The shed is where all the small gardening tools are stored. Large landscapes will have large numbers of tools for gardeners to complete their work. The shed could also be where the manure of the gardens is stored. Another alternative is the nursery.



▲ GARDENING TOOLS

The horticultural team has an assortment of **gardening tools** to help them accomplish their work. These include:

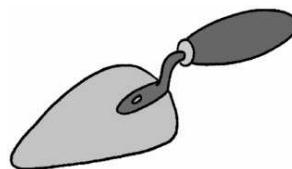
1. **Shovels** for digging up large amount of soil.
2. **Trowels** for shallow digging especially to transplant saplings.
3. **Wheel barrows** to transport soil and other items.
4. **Hoe** for digging flower beds.
5. **Leaf blowers** for blowing aside unwanted dead leaves that scatter the lawns.
6. **Lawn mowers** to cut grass into a lawn.
7. **Pitch fork** for picking dead leaves.
8. **Rake** for collecting leaves and soil.
9. **Shears** for cutting shrubbery.
10. **Watering can** needed to water indoor plants and select flower beds.
11. **Hoses** to extend water to areas not reached by the main supply.
12. **Tillers** to prepare the flower beds for planting.
13. **Trimmers** to trim branches;
14. **Flowerpots** for indoor and outdoor potted plants.
15. **Pruners** to crop flowers and branches.
16. **Manure** to fertilise the soil.



Types of Gardening Tools



Shovel



Trowel



Wheel Barrow



Hoe



Leaf Blower



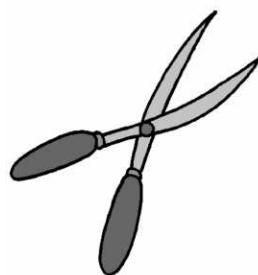
Lawn Mower



Pitch Fork



Rake



Sheers



Watering Can



Hoses



Tiller



Flowerpots



Pruner



Manure

▲ TYPES OF GARDENS

There are two types of gardens that a housekeeper is involved with: (a) outdoor gardens and (b) indoor gardens.

Outdoor gardens: There are two types that fall in this category (a) ornamental gardens and (b) food gardens. The housekeeper with her horticulture team is concerned with ornamental gardens which in itself has various categories:

- Potted gardens:** These are gardens where flowers like Begonias, Geraniums, Fuchsias and Petunias are grown in flowerpots. Each type of flower requires its own care. Pots come in a wide range of materials, sizes, shapes and prices bought from nurseries and gardening shops.
- Formal flower gardens:** These consist of flower beds dug in the ground and laid out in patterns to give a visually attractive look. Generally, the flower beds have straight or rounded edges. The beds will have similar flowers that rise to a common height and shape. These need the constant care of gardeners to keep them neat and trim.

3. **Informal flower gardens:** These have different types of flowers of irregular heights in one bed. They need less caring and give a multi-cultured look.
4. **Rock gardens:** These gardens have flowers or shrubbery in and around a rock arrangement called a rockery. The garden may centre their flower planting around rocks already existing in the landscape or those rockeries specially created.
5. **Water gardens:** These are gardens where water is the theme. Some hotels may inherit ponds and lakes. Flower arrangements can be done around these natural assets. Other properties may create artificial ponds which are expensive. Other aspects of water gardens are waterways, fountains and waterfalls. Some of these water features can have plants that grow in water like water lilies. Naturally such gardens must be assured of plenty of water and have such systems for recycling the water; filtration; and care to prevent the growth of moss and lichens. Such gardens are expensive.
6. **Wild flower gardens:** These are gardens that take advantage of abundant local flora. Gardeners acquire them from the countryside and re-plant them in the hotel garden. There are states that pride themselves with their flora. The hotel can take advantage of this.

Indoor Gardens

Indoor Gardens are created with potted plants. The size of the pot determines how large the plant will grow. There are special plants for indoor purposes that require little sunlight and water. Most of them are leafy shrubs rather than flowers. Ideally the plant can be next to windows or under atriums. However, this is not essential. Some plants grow on artificial light from incandescent or fluorescent lamps. Popular indoor plants are the wax begonia; Boston fern; cacti; corn plant; common coleus; split leaved philodendron; English ivy; India rubber plant; and the African violet. To a housekeeper, indoor plants may be found in lobbies; suites; foyers; atrium lounges; executive offices; business lounge; meeting rooms; etc. Indoor plants need a degree of humidity. This can be achieved by placing pots on trays with water and pebbles, sand or charcoal. The moisture evaporates and makes the immediate surroundings humid. Misters are hand-held equipment that squirts mist onto plants. Misters are used to prevent water from spreading to other areas of the room. This must be done once daily at least.

Most indoor plants can be bought ready-made or nurtured in the nursery or greenhouse before placing them indoors. Here are some tips to maintain them:

- Keep them in a fairly cool place away from direct sunlight.
- Their soil should be moist.
- They need special fertilisers but care must be taken not to over feed them.
- Keep them aside from outdoor plants to ensure that they do not get disease or pests.
- Water them when the soil just below the surface is dry, using tepid water and not cold or hot water. The best time to water them is in the morning.



- Wash the plants every two weeks to flush out dirt and any small pests that may have lodged on them. The plants can be washed in floor pantries or in the greenhouse. Alternatively, wipe the plants with a wet cloth or sponge on both sides.
- Prune the dead leaves and flowers to improve the appearance and growth of plants.
- Change pots sometimes. Repotting can be achieved by inverting the old pot and let the plant with the soil slide into the hand. Place drainage material like pebbles or broken chips of clay pots, in the new container. The material needs to be only 1 inch thick for pots with a hole at the bottom. Put fresh soil in the pot and insert the old plant with soil into the pot finishing the pot with fresh soil.
- Many indoor plants can be easily propagated by taking cuttings from them. Most cuttings consist of stems or leaves. The cuttings are placed in water to develop roots. The rooted cuttings are then planted in soil and developed into complete new plants.

Key Terms



Annual plants	Plants that live for a year
Biennial plants	Plants that live for two years
Floriculture	Production and use of flowers and foliage plants
Greenhouse	Shed where exotic plants are maintained at controlled climatic conditions
Horticulture	Branch of agriculture that specializes in fruits, vegetables, flowers and ornamental shrubs and trees
Landscaping	Science of designing and developing land for human enjoyment
Misters	Hand-held equipment that sprays mist on indoor plants
Mulching	A composition of organic material to stifle weed growth
Nursery	Place where saplings are grown to maturity
Olericulture	Vegetable farming
Ornamental Horticulture	Growing of shrubs, lawns and ornamental trees in landscapes
Perennial plants	Plants that live beyond two years
Pomology	Cultivation of shrubs, trees and vines for fruit
Weeding	Process of removing unwanted plants

Review Quiz



True or False

1. Pomology is the cultivation of vegetables.
2. Landscaping is done by a horticulturist at the inception of the hotel.
3. Trowels are used to dig large amounts of soil.
4. Informal gardens have flowers of irregular height.
5. Gardens fall into two broad categories.

6. Biennial plants live for six months.
7. Most packaged seeds give precautions towards seed care.
8. Some indoor plants grow in artificial light.
9. Indoor plants should be kept away from direct sunlight.
10. Most indoor plants are leafy shrubs rather than flowers.

Write short notes on the following:

1. Types of gardens
2. The gardening process

Safety in Housekeeping

Learning Objective



To help readers to be aware of the occupational hazards in housekeeping operations and the precautions required to maintain safety.

▲ OCCUPATIONAL HAZARD

Housekeeping in a hotel is a physically demanding job. Personnel are on their feet for a full shift of 8 hours performing various tasks that are demanding on the body. The main concerns arise out of physical workload; excessive bodily motions; and awkward positions that put a strain on the back, limbs, shoulders and neck. In a typical day, they would be:

- **Walking:** Consider the miles public area personnel cover when cleaning the length and breadth of a hotel. The gardeners walk long distances to care for landscapes and gardens.
- **Standing:** All housekeeping personnel are on their feet in a full shift.
- **Stooping:** Room attendants will need to stoop to pick garbage from floors; to clean bathtubs and water closets; and to get linen from bottom shelves of maid carts; etc.
- **Squatting:** Gardeners will need to squat for long hours while preparing flower beds, planting seeds; and preparing flower pots for indoor decoration.
- **Kneeling:** Room attendants would kneel while cleaning bathroom floors. Public area staff would do the same to clean stubborn stains from floors and staircases.
- **Stretching:** Linen keepers will stretch to get linen and uniforms from higher shelves. Room attendants would stretch to clean the upper reaches of bathroom tiles and mirrors.
- **Reaching:** All housekeeping personnel reach for something or the other. Room attendants reach for cleaning supplies; linen and uniform keepers reach for items in exchange; the florist while doing the flower arrangements; etc.
- **Twisting:** Room attendants and public cleaners have to twist their torso to clean areas around them to achieve maximum productivity.
- **Crouching:** This is required to clean lower reaches of furniture like under dressers and wardrobe lower shelves. Gardeners have to crouch to tend to floor indoor plants, etc.

- **Lifting:** Room attendants have to lift weighty linen off beds and maid carts; housemen have to lift heavy furniture and carpets; public area housemen have to lift furniture to re-arrange them; gardeners have to lift potted plants; and the list goes on.
- **Pushing:** Housekeeping personnel have to push maid carts; vacuum cleaners; shampoo machines; trolleys; etc. Gardeners push wheel barrows.

The above are only sample situations when the body is under pressure. There are countless other situations in a shift that truly challenge housekeeping personnel. Statistics show that the room attendant changes body position every three seconds while preparing a room. Assuming that the average cleaning time for a room is 40 minutes, and there are 16 rooms in a shift, a room attendant would end up doing 8000 different postures every shift. They can be classified as “heavy” to “very heavy” work as the energy required is approximately 4 kilo calories/min.

The question then arises, “How do we reduce this physical stress on housekeeping personnel?” The following suggestions are useful to keep in mind:

1. **Lighter equipment** can reduce work when purchasing them. Heavy equipment including racks must be on wheels. Portability helps greatly in work management.
2. **Motorised equipment** help in relieving the effort just like the vacuum cleaners, portable bathroom scrubbers or window cleaners. With the same intention, mops and brooms must have long handles to reduce stooping, crouching and kneeling that contribute to musculoskeletal injuries immediately and in later years.
3. **Modern detergents** help in cleaning spots and stains easily with a swipe eliminating tedious scrubbing. The housekeeper must constantly research the market for new developments and encourage trials when suppliers arrive at the door step.
4. **Job rotation** is one possible approach to prevent permanent injuries. It requires workers to move to different tasks to allow muscles already stressed to rest. Room attendants could perform linen exchange duties or procure supplies from the stores. Supervisors can be rotated from floors to desk control operations or night supervisors to day shifts.
5. **Job enlargement** is a credible alternative where the scope of tasks is broadened to give balanced exposure. For example, public area cleaners can be asked to do administrative duties like general supplies; cleaning equipment; issue of equipment from stores; etc.
6. **Teamwork** is a wonderful way to reduce physical stress. Tasks can be shared like housemen doing the vacuuming of rooms or supervisors help in replenishing maid carts.
7. **Education and training** in safe work practices must be part of an ongoing agenda. Training should remove bad habits and replace them with improved work habits.

Work Hazards & Prevention

Let us examine the areas in a housekeeping operation when accidents take place:

1. Falls from slippery floors; make-shift ladders; cluttered work areas; and improper carpet lay-out.
2. Cuts from broken glass in linen bundles and garbage.
3. Back pains from improper working postures.
4. Muscle cramps from improper lifting.
5. Breathing problems and burns from the use of hazardous chemicals and detergents.

6. Electrocution from live electric wires and improper maintenance and use of equipment.
7. Injuries due to improper work habits.

Let us look at each of these and examine how to prevent them:

Falls

1. Use “Wet Floor” signs whenever washing or mopping floors. This protects both guests and employees from falls and the resultant litigation due to injuries of this nature.
2. Use ladders to reach higher shelves. Ladders come in many sizes from step stools to extended ladders. Here are some tips when using ladders:
 - They must be stable and strong.
 - The rungs must be well fixed and loose ones repaired immediately.
 - Ladders come in wood and aluminium. Use aluminium ladders as they are light and look better in public areas.
 - Ladders must have rubber footing to prevent slippage.
 - They must have support rods so that they do not lean against walls to scratch them. Ladders without support should be kept one fourth of its length away from the wall.
 - The person climbing must be free of tools in the hand.
 - Climbers must face the ladder.
 - The employee should not climb to the top of the ladder to prevent the ladder from becoming top heavy and losing balance.
 - It is preferred to climb leaving the top two rungs.
 - Employees must position the ladder so as to reach the desired spots easily.
 - Over-reaching can cause imbalance to the ladder.
 - It is preferable to have someone holding the ladder from below even if it has support rods. The helper can pass tools as well as caution passers by from walking below the ladder.
 - It may be prudent to put a sign “Do not walk under the ladder”.
 - Employees must be prevented from using make-shift ladders like packing crates or chairs.
3. Cluttered workplaces have the hazard of falls. Employees must keep their areas free for easy traffic. Tools and articles must be kept against walls in corridors. Curled carpet ends can cause trips and falls. Usually hotels use synthetic carpets that are stuck to the floor to prevent curling. However, due to heavy traffic, ends get loose and pose hazards. The housekeepers must be vigilant to these carpet ends in their daily inspections and have them re-glued to the floor immediately. Rugs can cause curling over time. It is prudent to turn them over for a while so the edges regain their natural fall on the floor.

Cuts

Any heap whether linen or garbage is a potential hazard for broken glass or exposed syringes. Cleaners must not place their hands into garbage heaps. Room dustbins must be emptied en masse into the garbage hamper of the maid cart. Room attendants are trained to shake soiled linen for guest belongings in occupied rooms. This is a good precaution as it also ensures that broken glass or other sharp objects are not hidden in folds.

Back pains

Back pains are a common complaint among housekeeping personnel due to the sheer pressure on their backs while doing their daily chores. The secret is to keep the correct posture while doing work. A correct posture balances the neck, chest and lower back in the natural curve. Those who have to stand for hours must do so in an upright position. It is good to circulate the blood by walking around for those like linen and uniform keepers who have to stand for long hours in a fixed position at the exchange counter.

Back pains and cramps are also created by improper lifting throughout their working day. Here are few tips for correct lifting:

- Tighten stomach muscles in preparation to lift.
- Bend at the knees and not the waist. Keep the head and back straight. The strong leg muscles help in the lifting process. Leg muscles are stronger than back muscles.
- Use both hands. Lift while hugging the load as close to the body. Do not be over ambitious in carrying heavy loads. Carry loads that are comfortable and one that can get the hands around. Avoid twisting the body. Seek another persons help for heavy loads.
- Walk with firm footing ensuring that the path is clear before the task. One should be able to see ahead over the load.
- Use the leg muscles again when lowering the load at the destination following the same steps as lifting.

Back pains and cramps are also caused by sudden movements like tugging or pushing heavy carts. Ensure that movable parts are well oiled.

Hazardous Chemicals

Housekeepers normally use mild detergents for daily use. However, potent chemicals like acids and strong detergents are unavoidable for difficult stain treatment. Exposure to such chemicals can cause allergy, nausea, burns, vomiting, breathing problems, skin rashes, blindness and even death. Cleaners must be trained in the safe use of these chemicals. Suppliers often provide the training and safety pamphlets in the use of these chemicals. Employees must be provided with safety goggles, gloves and masks for operations that involve the use of hazardous chemicals. Another aspect is their storage. Housekeepers must make sure that these items are labelled properly and stored in separate areas in the store that is not easily accessible.

Electrocution

Housekeepers must take precautions to prevent electrical hazards. Firstly, ensure that the equipment bought has the ISI stamp of safety. This stamp is provided by local regulatory bodies confirming that equipment manufacturers have followed safety rules before they sell their equipment to clients. Secondly, ensure that employees are properly trained in the use of equipment. The manufacturers are the best people to provide this training. The housekeeper must release the employees for such training as it is not only a safety precaution for the employee but also for the equipment to ensure their long life. Thirdly, employees using the equipment must follow the following general precautions:

- Never operate them in water (unless built for water), as they are conductors of electricity.
- Ensure that connections to sockets are made with proper insulated plugs and not with open wires. Connections must be made by holding the plug firmly. The same must be followed when unplugging them.
- Switch off equipment as soon as sparks, smoke or flames are observed.

- Cords must be uncoiled before using the equipment. They should be away from traffic areas to prevent falls. Cords must not be stretched beyond their length. Extension cords are handy to extend their lengths.
- The employee must check all appliances like guest room television, coffee machine and mini-bar for loose connections. Lamps must also be checked and faulty connections reported to maintenance. Most open plug points nowadays have in-built safety features, but exposed sockets must have proper covers.

The housekeeper must also ensure a preventive maintenance schedule for the upkeep of equipment.

Proper Work Habits

Many injuries are caused by poor work habits. These can be corrected by proper training. Housekeeping personnel can follow the tips given below:

- Smoke only in designated areas; never in the elevator in any case.
- Ensure that elevators are not overloaded and keep to the limits as indicated in the cabin.
- Use the correct equipment and accessories for cleaning.
- Do not operate equipment when not trained.
- Use accessories like gloves, masks and goggles when dealing with toxic material.
- Use ladders for climbing, not crates and boxes.
- Look for broken glass when cleaning. Dispose them in broken glass containers only, and not in garbage bags or dustbins.
- Avoid using bare hands to dip into trash cans for fear of cuts from glass or razor blades.
- Use the handrails while climbing steps.
- Untangle cords of equipment before use and keep them away from pathways.
- Report any safety hazards if it cannot be rectified by the self.
- Rely on maintenance to complete fixing jobs. They are the experts.
- Check equipment for their serviceability.

▲ FIRST AID

Housekeeping personnel must be skilled at first aid as they could be on the spot to give immediate attention to a guest or employee in distress. First aid is a part of the overall safety programme. Many hotels organise training classes run by the Red Cross, St. John's Ambulance or similar health organisations, who award certificates of completion of first aid programmes in recognition of its importance. Large hotels may have their own basic clinic with a qualified nurse.

In preparing for first aid, the first step is to have a first aid cupboard or box in a central location. The cupboard could be located at the desk control room due to its easy accessibility to all housekeeping personnel. The cupboard should contain the following items:

Clinical thermometer Cotton wool Bandage roll $\frac{1}{2}$ ", 1", & 2" Adhesive dressings (band-aids), etc. Sterilised gauze Tweezers	Bed pan and urine bottle Rubber sheeting Safety pins Tincture iodine Tincture enzoine Junction violate solution	Dettol Burnol or Furacin Crocin tablets Aspirins Mercurochrome Fruit salts Antiseptic creams
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The cupboard should be cool and dry and clearly captioned for easy identification. Following are some immediate steps that can be taken towards first aid:

Emergency	First Safety Steps
Burns and Scalds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Apply Burnol liberally (b) Place burnt area under cold running water or ice. (c) If burns are serious, apply sterile dressing and send to hospital immediately.
Bleeding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Clean wound with cotton dipped in Dettol. (b) Put dry antiseptic dressing or tincture iodine for bigger wounds. (c) Put pressure on wound by placing gauze on it and bandaging the area tightly.
Clothes on Fire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Prevent person from running (b) Smother flames by wrapping victim with a heavy material, e.g. curtain, blanket or heavy coat. (c) Treat burns as given above
Fainting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Loosen clothing (b) Lay victim flat on the back with feet raised or place in chair bending the head forward between the knees. (c) Apply warmth to lower limbs and rub them upwards.
Fracture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Immobilise both limbs by tying both legs and the arms across the body respectively. (b) An alternative is to get two boards and tie legs/arms between them. (c) Send for the doctor
Heart Attack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Call for a doctor immediately. (b) Do not move person from the room. (c) Clear all the people. (d) If critical, try artificial respiration by mouth-to-mouth method.
Object in the Eye	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Do not rub the eye (b) Use an eye bath with warm water to rinse out the eye. (c) If no improvement is noticed, check eye against the light and locate foreign matter. Remove it with the corner of a clean handkerchief. (d) If foreign matter is embedded in the eyeball, do not jet it out. Drop two drops of castor oil in the eye, cover the eye with a soft pad, bandage lightly and take to a doctor.
Sprain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Apply dry bandage firmly wrapped round the affected part and soak with cold water. (b) Rest the limb.
Shock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Rest the patient by laying him or her on the couch (b) Loosen clothing (c) Give warmth by hot beverage and hot water bottle. (d) Keep the surrounding area silent.

▲ FIRE PREVENTION

In dealing with this subject it is necessary to understand that it falls into two separate categories – (a) fire prevention and (b) fire-fighting.

(a) Fire Prevention

Fire prevention is that step taken to ensure that fire does not occur. One of the most important requirements for fire prevention is good housekeeping that falls under the jurisdiction of the maintenance department rather than the housekeeping department. However, the housekeeping department is involved in a major way through orderliness and the elimination of hazards. Housekeeping personnel reach all parts of the hotel during the day and night and are therefore the eyes of the property in preventing, locating and reporting fire.

The chief engineer is the chief fire officer to fight fire in the hotel. He lends support in fire prevention by organizing and supervising fire drills for all staff. He is responsible for the fire fighting equipment and training his maintenance team as fire patrols as well as fire-fighters. Given below are some of the fire prevention methods:

Stairs

In most hotels the service stairway is also the fire escape. Stairways are hazardous even under the most favourable conditions. It is important to keep steps clean and free of oily substances that cause slippage. Steps and rails must be kept structurally safe. Passageways should always be kept well lit and clean and free of obstruction and debris. Keeping stair shaft areas clean and bright, with suitable light coloured paints, lends a great deal to promoting general safety. Most stairways lead to fire escape doors that are different from the usual exit doors. These doors have a push lever to exit. These doors must be kept clear and only used for fire emergencies.

Care of Fire Extinguishers

Fire extinguishers may be rarely used, however, when needed, they must work. All fire apparatus, including extinguishers, hoses, valves and sprinkler systems should be inspected semi-annually and carry tags indicating the date of inspection and the initials of the inspector. This work is delegated to trained maintenance department employees or by an outside contractor. Used extinguishers and hoses are never replaced until they have been properly serviced.

In the case of used woven fire hoses, the procedure to re-house them in the hose niches, involves stretching the hoses flat and drying them thoroughly before replacing them. If this procedure is not followed, weak spots will develop which rupture the moment water pressure is applied.

Tank type (soda acid, fog and foam) extinguishers must be recharged. This work should be done by experienced professional people.

In addition to the periodic inspection described above, it is necessary that the soda acid extinguishers be tested at least every two years to ensure the solidity of the outside container and to ascertain the condition of the discharge hose and nozzle. These tests will avoid the possibility of explosion which can occur where tank bodies are weakened by corrosion or blocked nozzles. Both housekeeping and maintenance department employees should constantly be on the alert to ensure that fire extinguisher stations are not used to store or serve as temporary resting places for room service trays or cleaning materials.

Fire Regulations

In following the suggested procedure outlined above, each hotel should develop a set of fire regulations. These regulations should be printed, framed and posted adjacent to every extinguisher and in service landings and personnel locker rooms.

Fire Detection Systems

All hotels nowadays have to comply with fire safety regulations to get a licence. This requires installing fire detection systems and people training. Many hotels are at threat of having their licence revoked if fire safety is not provided on an ongoing basis. There are different methods of fire detection:

Fire Alarm Systems

The fire alarm system is a method when alarm bells ring when activated. Hotels provide these fire push buttons, enclosed in glass and painted in red, at strategic points throughout the hotel. Normally such points have hoses, fire axes, extinguishers and sand buckets.

Fire alarm systems should be tested monthly, preferably with employee fire drills. Alarm bells must be reset and the glass replaced immediately following the fire or fire drill. This is a responsibility of the chief engineer.

The Chief Engineer ensures that the fire alarm system has an uninterrupted supply of electric power by connecting it to an emergency generator or batteries.

Smoke Detection Systems

Most hotel rooms have smoke detectors. Smoke detectors trip the alarm system if the smoke exceeds permissible limits. They set alarms in fire detection panels located in the telecommunications room or the engineering control room. There are two types of smoke detectors: photoelectric and ionisation. Photoelectric systems go off when smoke obstructs a beam of light located inside the detector. Ionisation detectors sense smoke when there is a shift of electrical conductivity between two plates.

Sprinkler Systems

Sprinklers are set off by heat not smoke. Therefore, even if the smoke detector indicates a fire, the sprinkler will not be set off. The sprinkler system has sensitive glass bulbs that crack with a certain degree of heat letting loose open water valves that sprinkle water in the area. They are located in ceilings of guest rooms, public areas, linen room and those areas prone to fire. The sprinkler systems are fed from dedicated water reservoirs that must be full at all times. Small hotels may create their swimming pool on the rooftop to double as a fire reservoir also.

Fire Doors

Fire doors are provided, especially in long corridors to seal of a section of the corridor affected by fire. Like other fire equipment, when the need arises, their proper functioning is very important. Therefore, they should be under constant maintenance. Fusible links and door closers should be inspected semi-annually and fire doors must never be blocked.

Fire Drills

The management must organise ‘employee fire brigades’ around a cadre of maintenance department employees. This brigades respond to an alarm and arrive at the scene properly equipped in less than two minutes.

Employees of other departments such as housemen, maids and waiters can be organized to assist in such tasks as removing furniture, directing guests, etc. Properly organized drills held on a monthly or by-monthly basis can serve as a very effective weapon in preparing for a potential emergency.

Fire Protection Checklist

The manager of each hotel should either personally review the use of a Fire Protection Checklist (Fig. 31.1) or delegate the responsibility to the engineering department. Defective items as a result of the review should be promptly entered in a log book for correction. The management should follow up on the correction of defective items. A notation should be made in the log book when the defect has been eliminated.

FIRE PROTECTION CHECKLIST		
Item	Date Checked	Log Page Number
Monthly Checklist		
Corridors & Stairs		
Exits and exit lights		
Stairways and fire escapes unobstructed		
Stair doors are closed		
Fire alarm boxes and hoses unobstructed		
Fire extinguishers in position		
Fire extinguishers full		
Fire doors and shutters checked		
Fire alarm system checked		
Bottom of fire shafts clear		
Exit signs lit		
Fire appliances visible for use		
Emergency lighting systems checked		
Rooms		
Cords of floor lamps checked		
Fire escape plans behind doors		
Sprinkler control valves open		
Air conditioning filters cleaned		
Kitchens		
Kitchen hoods clean		

Waste behind kitchen equipment removed		
Gas pipes checked		
Power sockets checked		
Housekeeping & Laundry		
Detergent and chemical store locked		
Detergents and chemicals labelled		
Upholstery shop fire hazards checked		
"No smoking" signs in restricted areas		
Public ash tray bins provided		
Laundry steam pipes checked for leaks		
Electrical wire system check		
Fire Pump Operations		
Fire pump operating		
Fire supply lines		
Watchman's time charts checked		
Electrical load checked		
Fire water tank full		
Semi-Annual Checklist		
Number of fire drills		
Safety of documents		
Electric motors cleaned		
Central heating checked		
Kitchen range extinguishing system		
Vent ducts cleaned		

Fig. 31.1 Fire Protection Checklist

(b) Firefighting

Housekeeping personnel most probably will be the first to locate a fire and will have to take the initial steps in the firefighting chain. In the first instance, they need to know how to classify fires and the methods of extinguishing them. Some fires call for a wetting and cooling method below the ignition point. Others require a blanketing effect which either excludes or dilutes oxygen to a point where it will not support combustion.

Classification of Fires

For all practical purposes, there are three general classes of fires.

Class A

These fires are caused by ordinary dry combustible materials such as wood, textiles, paper, rubbish, etc. In these fires water quenches and cools the burning materials.

Class B

These fires are caused by inflammable liquids such as oils, grease, petrol, chemicals, etc. In these fires a blanketing effect is essential to snuff out oxygen.

Class C

These fires caused by electrical equipment and short-circuits that require non-conductive agents to extinguishing them.

To deal with such emergencies, experts have developed fire extinguishers to deal with initial fires of a low to medium magnitude:

Types of Extinguishers

There are three types of extinguishers for hotel industry purposes. These are classified by the type of fire they are good at extinguishing. One must understand that as fires grow other combustibles may ignite needing all three types of extinguishers. Most hotel fires have been caused by electrical short circuits.

Class A fires require soda acid extinguishers, which eject water under gaseous pressure when they are inverted. They involve fires of wood and paper materials. Their use is limited to smaller fires since they contain only two and a half gallons of water. Water from hoses is used when fires are beyond the capacity of small extinguishers.

Class B fires require carbon dioxide fog or foam extinguishers for liquid, grease and oil fires.

Class C fires require carbon dioxide fog as the preferred extinguishing agent since it is non-conductive. These are used for electrical fires. Care must be exercised in using carbon dioxide extinguishers. The nozzle should never be touched with bare hands when the extinguisher is in operation.

Distribution of Extinguishers

The following suggestions ensure the adequacy of protection over given areas:

Class One Extinguishers: These are placed in areas of light occupancy such as offices or light public areas. There should be one fire extinguisher for every 5000 square feet, so located, that an individual will not be required to travel more than 100 feet to reach the nearest extinguisher.

Class Two Extinguishers: They are located in high occupancy, where fires of a broader extent may be anticipated, such as kitchens, boiler rooms, etc. Locations of this nature should have an extinguisher for every 2500 ft.² so located that an individual will not be required to travel more than 50 feet from any point to reach the nearest extinguisher.

Class Three Extinguishers: They are positioned in hazardous work areas such as woodworking shops, upholstery shops, paint shops, etc. This class should be protected with one extinguisher for every 2500 ft.² so located that an individual would not be required to travel more than 50 feet from any point to reach the nearest extinguisher, plus special extinguishers in confined areas for special hazards. It is to be understood that fire hose racks connected to its standpipes or emergency water supplies are included in the extinguishers mentioned above.

Suggested Procedure

Following is suggested sequences to enable hotels develop their own fire fighting procedure. Circumstances may not always permit adherence to all points in this line of approach, but it should prove advantageous.

1. Close windows and doors of the room in which the fire has started. If in a public area close doors to all surrounding rooms.
2. Ascertain the extent and seriousness of the fire.
3. Ring the fire alarm box or call switchboard operator for internal assistance. Remember that it is advantageous to avoid the hysteria which accompanies a general fire alarm by comforting them that help is on the way.
4. Inform the telephone operator giving a quick accurate description of the location of the fire.
5. Maintenance department personnel should proceed to the location immediately with extinguishers. They remove all combustible or volatile material away from the fire area.
6. The safety and peace of mind of the guest is most important. All personnel in contact with guests must be calm and reassuring.
7. If the fire is in a guest's room, the guest should be evacuated immediately into the corridor and the corridor doors and adjoining room doors should be closed.
8. It is recommended that the emergency stairs are used for evacuating guests.

Review Quiz



Write short notes on the following:

1. How can we reduce physical stress?
2. What are the proper work habits that prevent accidents?
3. What are the housekeeper's responsibilities towards work safety?
4. What are the items at a first aid station?
5. What stems should you take in the following circumstances:
 - Bleeding
 - Clothes on fire
 - Fainting
6. What are the classifications of fire extinguishers?
7. What are the essential requirements of any local occupational hazard authority?
8. What is the recommended fire fighting procedure for a hotel?

True or False

1. Lighter equipment can reduce physical stress.
2. Injuries are caused by improper work habits.
3. A right posture at work can reduce backache.
4. Back pains are caused by improper lifting.
5. Electrocutions from equipment can be prevented by proper training.
6. Cords must be coiled when in use.
7. A preventive maintenance schedule of equipment reduces work hazards.
8. Fire sprinklers are set off by smoke.
9. Class A fires are caused by inflammable liquids.
10. Class B fires require carbon dioxide fog or foam extinguishers.

Security in Housekeeping

Learning Objective



To help readers get a broad perception of the types of security issues and the steps to prevent them.

▲ INTRODUCTION

We know by now that housekeeping personnel are spread across the hotel in pursuit of their cleaning and maintenance duties. They therefore become the ideal “eyes and ears” of the organisation to detect any security threats to the organization. They become a close ally with the security department that relies on their presence throughout the hotel. The main security concerns are:

▲ SECURITY IN HOUSEKEEPING

The main security concerns are:

- Lost and found (discussed in Lesson 16, “Housekeeping Control Desk”, Part VI)
- Guest theft
- Employee theft
- Bomb scare

Guest Theft

Guest theft is a reality of the hotel business. Guests take hotel items as souvenirs or plainly because the items in a hotel are useful at home. Thefts are usually from rooms where items like towels, vanity sets, soaps, bathrobes and slippers are useful for common use. Some hotels may look at such items as marketing strategies especially when items are monogrammed with the hotel logo. They may not mind if items like vanity sets, soaps and guest stationery are taken. The hotel may build such costs into the room rate. But items as towels and bathrobes are a serious concern because of their cost to replace them. Housekeeping personnel take the following precautions to prevent guest theft:

Key Control

Following are the precautions employed in key control:

- Only authorised persons have access to guest rooms. They are the guests, floor housekeeping personnel, maintenance personnel, laundry valets, room service waiters, bell boys and security personnel (in case of emergencies).
- Registered guests are issued keys/cards and cautioned not to keep it lying around. Most modern hotels have done away with keys.
- Guests are required to hand their room keys/cards to the receptionists or deposit them into secure key boxes at the reception when leaving the premises.
- Master keys/cards are controlled very strictly. Firstly, master keys have outsized key rings to prevent the keys from being pocketed. The outsized key rings force the bearer to hold it in their hand. Secondly, master keys are issued to few legitimate personnel. They are the lobby manager and floor supervisor only. Each has to sign for them and register it into the log book. The movement of master keys is monitored closely. A master key lost is a major security threat to the property. Hotels may be forced to change the locks of the entire hotel at a great investment.

Suspicious Movements

Following precautions are observed:

- Housekeeping personnel are trained to observe suspicious movements and report it to the security.
- Floor crews must learn to recognise guests that are registered into the hotel.
- Room maids are not permitted to open guest room doors for any guests.
- Legitimate residents are required to use their own keys and not have the room maid to open their doors.

Departure Procedure

Hotels observe the following procedure:

- Bell boys are trained to give a quick glance at the room and bathroom before they remove guest baggage. They look for missing towels, blankets, vanity sets, pictures, mini-bar consumption, etc.
- Room maids too will follow-up the procedure if they notice a departure taking place.

It provides a chance to question the guest at the front-office cashier desk.

Standard Issues to Guest Rooms

The ability to detect missing items is made possible by equipping rooms with a standard number of items. So if a room has two bath towels the lobby or room personnel will quickly scan the bathroom for both of them. Each item in the room is standardized in numbers for easy control and detection.

Entry/Exit Point

A guest room has only one entry/exit door. Windows are usually secured in centrally air-conditioned or heated properties. The housekeeping personnel have window keys to open them. This feature of construction reduces the element of theft. Room doors are provided with peep holes, door chain latch and double locking facilities to secure unauthorized entry when the guest is present.

The hotel business operates mostly on trust. In spite of the precautions given above, thefts do happen by few unscrupulous guests who are exceptions rather than the rule.

Employee Theft

Employees too find that hotel items are useful at home, e.g. towels, table napkins or bars of soap. A hotel reduces pilferage by adopting the following precautions:

Gate Pass

An employee is required to possess a gate pass issued and authorised by the head of department whenever a hotel property is removed from the hotel.

- This gate pass is shown to the security officer at the time office from where employees exit the hotel.
- Hotels have only one employee entry and exit point to the hotel located at the back of the hotel where the time office is situated.
- The time office ensures that employees meticulously register their entry and exit on time cards.

Spot Checks

- Security personnel conduct spot checks of employee hand bags at random to ensure that unauthorised items are not being taken out of the hotel. A hotel item in possession without a gate pass is considered as theft and liable to dismissal from service.
- Security personnel make spot checks of employee lockers periodically to ensure that hotel property is not stored there except for the employee uniform. Uniforms are not permitted outside the property.

Limited Access

- Employees have limited access to areas of the hotel. For example, a cook is not permitted to be on a guest floor nor a swimming pool attendant in the reception.
- The hotel provides uniforms to distinguish personnel in the hotel.
- All personnel are expected to be in their designated areas only.
- Only certain personnel are permitted on the guest floor as mentioned earlier. Each has distinguishing uniforms.
- Room attendants may open the guest room doors for these authorised personnel only after verification of their intentions. She has to be present when the guest is not in.

Another aspect of limited access is the authority to enter stores. Only storekeepers and their helpers are permitted within stores and held totally accountable for items received and issued. Similarly, the keys to the housekeeping stores may be given to authorised supervisors only just as the entry to the linen and uniform rooms is only open to the linen and uniform keepers only.

Par Stocks

Room attendants have par stocks of items on their maid carts that have to be accounted for at the end of their shifts. Similarly, guest rooms have par stocks as mentioned earlier. Room attendants are held accountable for a set of rooms and ensure that guest room par stocks are maintained. Similarly, the floor pantry maintains par stocks also, as a control measure.

Bomb Threats

Terrorism is a new concern for all public buildings. Hotels are prime targets for explosions by radical groups who want to make a statement. Housekeeping personnel must be alert to suspicious objects around, especially those that are unaccompanied. Room attendants are trained to report anything suspicious in guest rooms whether they are drugs, excessive amounts of money, arms and bomb-like structures. A hotel would have worked out an emergency plan to meet these threats. Most threats are just threats and do not require alerting guests.

Review Quiz



Write short notes on:

1. Precautions for guest thefts
2. Precautions for employee thefts

True or False

1. Housekeeping is the 'eyes and ears' of security.
2. Some hotels treat guest theft as a marketing strategy.
3. Master keys are issued to all management staff only.
4. Master keys lost pose least problems to the hotel.
5. Room maids may open guest rooms to other visitors of the guest.
6. Bell-boys check on guest theft.
7. Par stocks are a measure of controlling theft.
8. An important measure to control guest theft is the gate pass.
9. Employees may take their uniforms home.
10. Hotel employees may visit un-related departments in the hotel.

APPENDICES

Answers to Quizzes

LESSON 1: TYPES OF HOTELS

Multiple Choice Question

1. (b), 2. (a), 3. (c), 4. (c), 5. (b), 6. (a), 7. (c), 8. (b), 9. (b), 10. (c)

Fill in the Blanks

1. business, 2. furnished apartments, 3. condominium, 4. sports hostels, 5. palace, 6. residential hotel, 7. convention hotel, 8. segmentation, 9. camp, 10. airport

LESSON 2: HOTELS CHAIN ASSOCIATIONS

Fill in the Blanks

1. partnership, 2. franchise, 3. management contract, 4. straight lease agreement, 5. capital funds, 6. operational manuals, 7. corporate trainer, 8. referrals, 9. operational funds, 10. reservation system

LESSON 3: ORGANISATION OF A HOTEL

Fill in the Blanks

1. front-office, 2. staff departments, 3. organization chart, 4. the general managers, 5. accommodations manager, 6. human resources manager, 7. front-office manager, 8. receiving manager, 9. general manager, 10. finance and accounting manager

True or False

1. False, 2. True, 3. True, 4. True, 5. True, 6. False, 7. True, 8. False, 9. False, 10. False

LESSON 4: TYPES OF ROOMS

Fill in the Blanks

1. twin, 2. duplex, 3. double room, 4. swimming pools and beaches, 5. tourist huts, 6. safety from electrocution 7. information to services, 8. double room, 9. suite, 10. chalets

LESSON 5: LAYOUT OF THE HOUSEKEEPING DEPARTMENT

True or False

1. True, 2. True, 3. False, 4. True, 5. False, 6. True, 7. True, 8. True, 9. True, 10. False

LESSON 6: ORGANISATION OF THE HOUSEKEEPING DEPARTMENT**True or False**

1. False, 2. False, 3. True, 4. False, 5. False, 6. True, 7. True, 8. True, 9. True, 10. False

LESSON 7: COMPETENCIES OF A HOUSEKEEPING PROFESSIONAL**True or False**

1. True, 2. True, 3. False, 4. True, 5. False, 6. True, 7. True, 8. False, 9. True, 10. True

LESSON 13: RULES ON A GUEST FLOOR**True or False**

1. True, 2. False, 3. False, 4. False, 5. False, 6. True, 7. False, 8. True, 9. True, 10. False

LESSON 15: CLEANING A ROOM**True or False**

1. False, 2. True, 3. False, 4. True, 5. True, 6. False, 7. False, 8. True, 9. True, 10. True

LESSON 16: HOUSEKEEPING CONTROL DESK**True or False**

1. True, 2. True, 3. True, 4. True, 5. False, 6. False, 7. True, 8. False, 9. False, 10. False

LESSON 17: THE LINEN AND THE UNIFORM ROOM**True or False**

1. True, 2. True, 3. False, 4. False, 5. True, 6. False, 7. True, 8. True, 9. True, 10. True

Fill in the Blanks

1. 4, 2. carry soiled linen, 3. one against one, 4. chutes, 5. Room Linen Control Sheet, 6. Food & Beverage Linen Exchange Form, 7. Daily Delivery of linen of Uniforms Form, 8. Linen Exchange Register, 9. inventory-taking, 10. Par Stock

LESSON 18: INTRODUCTION TO PUBLIC AREAS**True or False**

1. True, 2. True, 3. True, 4. True, 5. True, 6. False, 7. False, 8. True, 9. True, 10. True

LESSON 19: ROLE OF A PUBLIC AREA SUPERVISOR**True or False**

1. True, 2. True, 3. False, 4. False, 5. True, 6. False, 7. False, 8. False, 9. True, 10. True

LESSON 20: PUBLIC AREA CLEANING WORKFLOW**Fill in the Blanks**

1. housemen and gardeners, 2. early mornings, 3. sand urns, 4. baseboard, 5. sweeping and mopping, 6. kitchen stewarding, 7. polish, 8. hotel management 9. F &B staff, 10. maintenance department

LESSON 21: HOUSEKEEPING EQUIPMENT**True or False**

1. True, 2. True, 3. True, 4. True, 5. False, 6. False, 7. True, 8. False, 9. False, 10. True

Fill in the Blanks

1. dried, 2. polythene, 3. six, 4. portable, 5. floor, 6. dustette, 7. wet extractor, 8. rotary floor machines, 9. housemaid's box, 10. nylon nap brush

LESSON 22: CLEANING METHODS**Fill in the Blanks**

1. water, 2. resilient floory, 3. stone or clay, 4. linoleum, 5. bars, 6. patios, 7. ease of maintenance, 8. Weave, 9. hot water extraction, 10. bonnet method

True or False

1. False, 2. False, 3. True, 4. True, 5. False, 6. False, 7. True, 8. False, 9. False, 10. True

LESSON 23: CLEANING AGENTS**Fill in the Blanks**

1. water, 2. ammonia hydroxide, 3. methanol, 4. paraffin, 5. turpentine, 6. vinegar, 7. hydrochloric acid, 8. washing soda, 9. open shelves, 10. oil

True or False

1. True, 2. False, 3. False, 4. False, 5. True, 6. True, 7. True, 8. True, 9. False, 10. True

LESSON 26: ORGANISATION OF THE LAUNDRY DEPARTMENT**True or False**

1. True, 2. False, 3. False, 4. False, 5. False, 6. False, 7. False, 8. False, 9. True, 10. True

LESSON 29: TEXTILES**True or False**

1. True, 2. True, 3. False, 4. False, 5. True, 6. True, 7. True, 8. False, 9. True, 10. True

Fill in the Blanks

1. yarn, 2. stable, 3. filaments, 4. mineral, 5. linen, 6. woollen, 7. caterpillars, 8. wild (or Tussar), 9. fruit, 10. petrochemicals

LESSON 30: HORTICULTURE**True or False**

1. False, 2. False, 3. False, 4. True, 5. True, 6. False, 7. True, 8. True, 9. True, 10. True

LESSON 31: SAFETY IN HOUSEKEEPING**True or False**

1. True, 2. True, 3. True, 4. True, 5. True, 6. False, 7. True, 8. False, 9. False, 10. True

LESSON 32: SECURITY IN HOUSEKEEPING**True or False**

1. True, 2. True, 3. False, 4. False, 5. False, 6. True, 7. True, 8. False, 9. False, 10. False

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Glossary

Adjacent Room	Two rooms beside each other across the corridor
Adjoining Room	Two rooms that are either beside each other and/or have an interconnecting door
Airport Hotel	Lodgings in the precincts of an airport
Alkalies	Compound used to soften water
American Plan	A pricing plan that includes the room and all meals
Analogous colours	Related hues lying adjacent on the colour wheel
Annual plants	Plants that live for a year
Attendance	The process of recording those present
Balance	The actual and visual stability of a design
Bed & Breakfast	A pricing plan that includes a room and English breakfast
Bias	Predisposition to an idea
Biennial plants	Plants that live for two years
Bleaching	Process of making white
Bluing	Offsetting agent to make yellowed fabric white
Body Language	Non-verbal messages conveyed by the body
Budget	A formal financial statement of anticipated revenues and expenses for a future period
Budget Hotel	An economic lodging with minimal services
Business Hotel	One that caters to the business and corporate traveller
Cabana	Room with a sofa cum bed ideally situated beside swimming pools or beaches
Camp	A facility for those on treks
Caravan	Mobile home
Carpet Density	Thickness of a carpet
Carpet Height	Length of carpet fibres
Carpet Pile	Main finish of the carpet
Casino Hotel	One that provides accommodation and gaming facilities to a gambling public
Chalets	Independent homes for lease found in Switzerland
Colour	A visual sensation dependent on light with emotional and cultural association
Communication	An exchange of ideas
Conference Hotel	A property dedicated to holding conferences
Condominium	A complex with rooms and apartments under individual ownership
Connecting Room	Two rooms with an interconnecting door, ideal for a family
Contact	Getting in touch with candidates for interviews and tests
Continental Plan	A pricing plan that includes a room and a Continental breakfast
Continuous Education	Process of upgrading one's knowledge periodically
Control Desk	The communications center of housekeeping
Convention Hotel	One that is equipped to hold conventions
Cross Training	Training of employees in other related job positions

Debentures	Loans taken by a business from their shareholders at a fixed interest rate
Deferred Share	Fixed rate share of founders redeemed after they pay all ordinary and preferential shares
Deluxe Hotel	A luxury hotel
Detergents	Compounds or their combination used for cleaning
Development	The continuous improvement of the human capital
Direct Complimentary	Hues that lie directly opposite on the colour wheel
Discrepancy	An occupancy discrepancy between the floor supervisor's findings and the front office room rack
Discretionary Expenses	Unexpected short-term expenses to serve a specific purpose
DND	A room sign that denotes "Do-not-Disturb"
Dominance	The emphasis of one part over another
Double Room	Room with one king size double bed
Double Suite	Two rooms, one serving as a living cum dining area and the other with a double bed
Downtown Hotel	Lodging located in the heart of a city
Duplex Suite	Two suites on two floors with an interconnecting staircase
Education	Learning that contributes to total life growth
Employment Agencies	Public organizations that connect the unemployed population to recruiters
Empowerment	A management policy that encourages employees to manage their own performance to meet business goals
Enzymes	Protein molecules in plants, animals and human beings that speed up chemical reactions
European Plan	A pricing plan that includes room charges only
Executive Room	Room with additional features like internet connections, computer points, mini bars, etc; specially designed for the business executive.
Executive Suite	Suite specially fitted for business executives
Facility Planner	A person who designs floor layouts of service areas
Family Hotel	One that caters to families travelling together
Fiber	Strands from natural, animal or synthetic sources from which textiles are made
Filaments	Synthetic fibers of continuous length
Flat press	Roller iron that presses flat linen
Floating Hotel	Accommodation on a boat
Floriculture	Production and use of flowers and foliage plants
Flower Shop	The place where fresh flowers are transformed into arrangements for the hotel and guests
Form	Structural quality of an object or design
Formats	Layouts of information
Forms	Specific documents that drive action
Franchise	The license to use a brand name
Furnished Apartments	An extended stay property with studios to suites equipped with open kitchenettes
Government Houses	Lodges built during the British Raj in India for travelling officials
Green House	The place where exotic plants are nurtured under certain climatic conditions
Group Hotel	One that serves a body of people of 15 members and above, travelling together
Harness	Series of frames on loom on which lengthwise warps are mounted.
Head Hunting	Process identifying talent in competition to attract for employment
Horticulture	Branch of agriculture that specializes in fruits, vegetables, flowers and ornamental shrubs and trees
Hospice	Traditional European lodging for travelling pilgrims
Hot-head Press	Iron with a hot metal top surface
Housekeeper's Office	The main administrative centre of the department
Interior design	Art of creating indoor areas that are attractive, comfortable and practical

Interpersonal Interviews	Communication between two people
Job Description	Face-to-face interface for the purpose of selection
Job Specification	Written description of a job performed by a job holder
Junior Suite	Profile of a person in terms of education, experience, skills and competencies to perform a job
Landscaping	Room with a seating parlour and a bed
Line functions	Science of designing and developing land for human enjoyment
Linen Room	Those functions for a good guest experience
Linoleum	The place where all house linen in circulation are stored and issued
Lost & Found	Flooring material made from linseed oil, ground cork or wood
Management	The section where misplaced guest belongings are stored
Management Contract	Is the effective utilisation of given resources to achieve the enterprise's objectives
Management Contract	An association with an independent hotel owner to provide management expertise by a chain for a fee
Manpower Planning	The number and type of human resources to be employed and deployed
Master Key	Key that accesses all doors
Matels	Automated hotels
Medium	Channel of communication
Medium	Channel used to communicate a message
Meeting	A congregation of relevant people to discuss a subject/s
Memorandum	Official written internal communication
Message	Content of what has to be communicated
Misters	Hand-held equipment that sprays mist on indoor plants
Modified American Plan	A pricing plan that includes the room, breakfast, lunch or dinner
Motel	Lodging located on the highway
Mulching	A composition of organic material to stifle weed growth
Multi-tasking	The ability to perform several related tasks
Networking	Making contacts with other persons of use
Notices	Official written announcements
Nursery	Place where saplings are grown to maturity
Occupancy	Presence in a room
Olericulture	Vegetable farming
Ordinary share	A share that earns a dividend and gives the right to vote
Organisation Chart	A schematic depiction of relationships between jobs
Organisation Structure	a framework that assigns responsibilities and channels of communications
Ornamental Horticulture	Growing of shrubs, lawns and ornamental trees in landscapes
Palace Hotel	A royal palace converted into a hotel
Palace on Wheels	Unique railway lodging found in Rajasthan, India
Par Stock	Minimum level of supplies required to meet daily demands
Parquet	Wood tiles of maple or oak for flooring
Partnership	A business run by two to twenty individuals committed to a common objective
Partnership (chain)	Joint financial association between a chain and an independent owner
Patio	Inner courtyards open to the sky
People	The human resource
Perennial plants	Plants that live beyond two years
Pomology	Cultivation of shrubs, trees and vines for fruit
Processes	Methodology

Promotion	Advancing someone from a lower position to a higher one
Proportion	Relation of one portion to another
Quad	Room for four people fitted with twin beds and two roll-away beds
Queen	Room with a queen-sized bed for single or double occupancy
Receiver	One who receives communication
Recruitment	Process of getting qualified human resources for vacant positions
Report	Studied document of proposals or action taken
Residential Hotel	Two-room suites equipped with kitchenettes for extended stay travellers
Resort Hotel	Lodging located at a place with a natural or manmade feature
Resources	Tools available for doing business
Room Rack	A rack at the reception that displays room numbers along with their occupancy status
Room Report	A document that confirms room occupancy
Room Sale	Leasing of a room for occupation for 24 hours at a predetermined cost
Room Status	Occupancy status of a room
Saponification	Methods used to make soaps
Scale	Comparative size of individual parts to the whole and to the space around it
Scanty Baggage	A person with light luggage and can be a potential skipper
Screening	Process of matching resumes with job specifications
Selection	Process of choosing from eligible candidates
Semi-variable Expenses	Expenses that is partly fixed and partly variable
Short-term (annual) plan	A plan for a year
Single Room	Room with a single bed
Single Suite	Two rooms, one serving as a living cum dining area and another with a single bed
Skipper	A person who departs without paying his bills
Sole Proprietor	A person who uses his own resources to set up a business
Sourcing	Identifying suitable places to obtain qualified human resources
Split Complimentary	Two colours opposite on the colour wheel replacing those either side of the colour wheel
Sports Hostels	Those located beside stadiums to serve sportspersons and officials
Spotter	Person specialized in removing stains
Staff Functions	Those functions in a supportive role
Star-Rating	A rating set by state tourism departments to guided travellers on the minimum facilities they can expect
Steam Press	Iron with a hot perforated metal top surface which feeds steam
Stock-taking	Physical verification of stocks by counting to tally with accounting records
Strategic Objectives	Long-term goals
Studio	Room with a sofa cum bed
Style	Fashion, manner or custom of a certain period
Suburban Hotel	Lodging located on the outskirts of a city
Suite Hotel	Lodging with suites equipped with open kitchenettes for short duration travellers
Surfactants	Active agents that break surface tension
Tactical objectives	Short-term goals
Talent Bank	Inventory of eligible "drop-in" candidates
Task List	A detailed documentation of duties and responsibilities
Terrazzo	Bound chips of marble for flooring
Testing	Evaluation of a candidate's knowledge, skills and attitudes
Tetradic	Every third colour on the colour wheel
Time Card Machines	Equipment that records date and time on a time card
Time Cards	Specially designed cards to record date and time by a time card machine
Time-Share Hotels	Lodgings in which rooms or apartments are owned by several people who occupy the facility on mutual time agreements

Tourist Huts	Independent suite detached from the main hotel. They will be found in resorts for greater privacy and exclusivity. Some suites have kitchenettes.
Trainer	Specialist who imparts training
Training Aids	Equipment and accessories required to impart knowledge and skills
Training Methodology	The way information is imparted
Training	The learning process in which an employee acquires the knowledge, skills and attitudes that lead to Changes in behavior to meet some performance objectives.
Transient Hotels	Lodging that caters to short duration travellers
Triplet	Double room with one extra rollaway cot
Tumbler	Drying machine in the laundry
Turnaround Stock	The number of times linen and uniforms is stored above what is in use
Twin Room	Room with two single beds.
Uniform Room	The place where all staff uniforms in circulation are stored and issued
Valet	Person who collects and returns guest laundry
Variable Expenses	Expenses that change with sales volume
Warp	Lengthwise arrangement of fibers on a loom
Weeding	Process of removing unwanted plants
Weft	Crosswise arrangement of fibers on a loom
Youth Hostels	Inexpensive lodging for the travelling youth
Conceptual Skills	Skills to create and anticipate
Human Skills	Skills in dealing with people
Strategy	Long-term direction
Supervisor	Workplace leader of a group
Tactic	Immediate response to ground work conditions
Technical Skills	Skills to achieve operational objectives
Day Curtains	Sheer curtains that let light in but impervious to the eye
Grouting	Filling gaps between tiles
Preventive Maintenance	A program to prevent malfunctions
Cribs	Baby cots
Par Stock	Minimum supply necessary for daily operations
Baby-sitter	A hired care-taker for minors in the absence of parents
Gate Pass	A document authorizing employees to remove guest or hotel property from the hotel
Group	15 or more people traveling together
Ken-Fixit	All purpose engineer
Log Book	A register to communicate between shifts
Lost and Found	Guest articles left behind
Public Area	Spaces open to public
Mezzanine	A floor covering part of the area between two full floors
Abrasives	Substances used to grind, smoothen, sharpen, and polish various materials
Ammonia	An alkali of one part nitrogen and three parts hydrogen
Methylated Spirits	Liquids derived from methanol
Vinegar	Sour liquid derived from wine-making
Pesticide	A chemical that eradicates pests
Insecticide	A chemical that kills insects
Herbicide	A chemical that kills weeds and unwanted plants
Fungicide	A chemical that kills fungal growth
Rodenticide	A chemical that kills rodents
Spotting Machine	A self-contained table for spotting operations
Flatwork Irons	Equipment with steam rollers that press large flat linen
Stackers	Equipment stack pressed and folded linen in appropriate sizes
Steam Cabinets	Steam chambers to eliminate wrinkles from uniforms and linen

Transporters	Mobile equipment to transport linen and uniforms
Process	Series of actions to achieve an end
Valet	A runner who collects and returns guest laundry
Spotter	Laundry specialist who removes spots and stains from fabrics
Sorter/Marker	Person in laundry who sorts garments and marks them for identification
Packer	Person in laundry who packs laundered guest garments for delivery
Hard Water	Water with the presence of mineral salts
Absorbent Pad	A pad to suck up chemicals and solvents
Absorbed Stains	Stains usually by liquid that penetrate a fabric
Built-up Stains	Stains that remain on the fabric surface
Chamois	Soft leather from sheep or goat
Compound Stains	Stains that jointly penetrate fabrics as well as leave a surface residue
Portable Steamer	A gadget that generates steam
Spotting	The process of removing stains
Steam Gun	A devise that sprays steam locally on stains

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