

Linen Room

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Describe the linen room layout
- Identify the linen room equipment and accessories
- Explain the exchange of room and restaurant linen
- Explain the uniform room layout and exchange procedure
- Outline the importance of par stocks
- Describe linen inventory control

Overview

Maintaining a guest room is one of the most essential tasks of housekeeping operations, with bathroom and bed linen being the key part of this maintenance task. A linen room forms the core of the operations carried out in most housekeeping departments. The linen room is a place where the expensive linen of the guest room is stored and maintained. Room attendants must deal with linen rooms during their day-to-day work; hence, they need to be thoroughly familiar with the linen room.

The Floor Linen Room and its Layout

The Floor Linen Room is an area that stocks linen and other supplies for a particular floor. It is also known as the Floor Pantry. It includes the following:

- ✈ Furniture
- ✈ Fixtures
- ✈ Water and Sink supply

Furniture

Floor linen room consists of furniture that can be used for different purposes. More precisely, it includes:

- ✈ Cupboards to store different guest and cleaning supplies as well as items such as blankets, pillows and mattress protectors.

- ✦ Wooden or mobile shelves (labelled) to store the expensive linen of guest rooms. Separate shelves are used to store used newspapers and magazines, used bottles and vacuum cleaners.



Figure 2.1: Wooden and Mobile Shelves

Fixtures

Fixtures consist of a janitor closet and a wooden or canvas lined hampers. Following are the details of the fixtures:

- ✦ A janitor closet for storing equipment that is fitted with long handles utilized for cleaning purposes. Examples of such equipment include mops, waste buckets and so on. Cleaning chemicals and agents are also kept in the closet with appropriate labeling and segregation.
- ✦ Wooden or canvas lined hampers are used to store soiled linen received from the maid's cart. It is stored in the hamper until it is sent to the laundry. The canvas can be both stationery and mobile. Hotels which are more technologically advanced, carry the soiled linen from the linen room using chutes that are connected to the laundry.

Sink with Water Supply

A linen room also includes a sink with water supply, that is used for cleaning and flower arrangements. Guest laundry bags are stored on a separate shelf to avoid laundry mix up. A space in the floor linen room is dedicated for storing baby cots, roll-away beds and maid carts. Figure 2.2 shows the layout of the floor linen room.

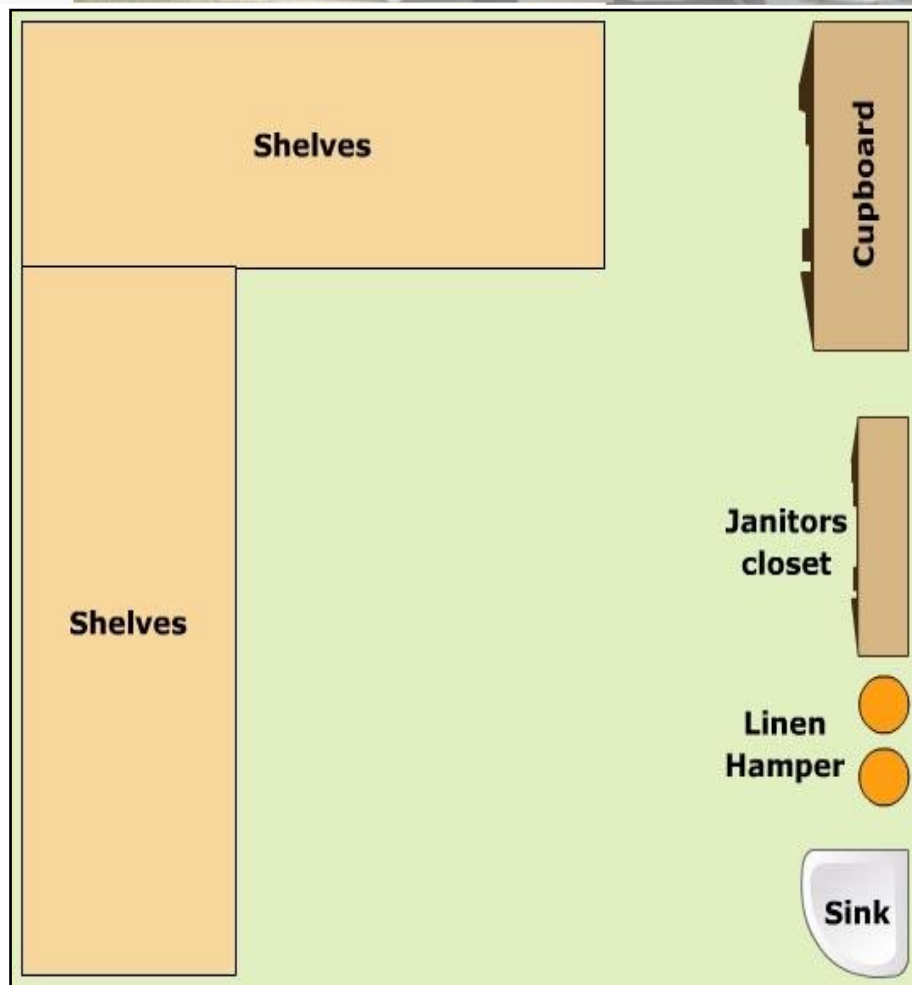


Figure 2.2: Layout of Floor Linen Room

Since the floor linen room is used for storing expensive items such as linen, guest supplies and other things, it is always locked. Only the floor supervisor has the keys to the room.

The linen room is generally located at a distance from the guest view such as elevator landing or at the end of the floor. The room must be cool. Hence, it is located away from steam pipes and dust. Proper ventilation is essential for the linen room as excess moisture causes molds. This can damage the linen and result in complaints from guests.

The Linen Room: Layout and Accessories

The linen room supports the operations of most of the housekeeping departments. A supervisor is allocated to supervise the linen room and is entrusted with the responsibility of issuing fresh linen and receiving the soiled linen.

Layout of a Linen Room

Figure 2.3 shows a typical layout of the linen room is as follows:

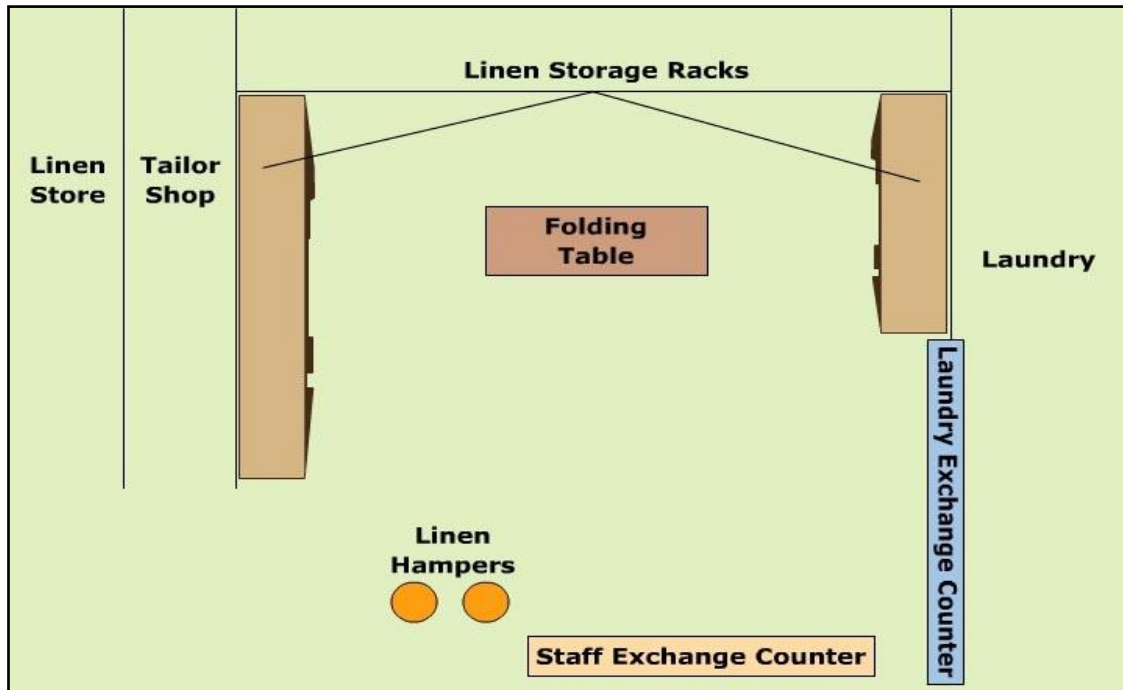


Figure 2.3: Layout of Linen Room

As seen in the figure, the linen room comprises:

- ✈ Linen Store
- ✈ Tailor Shop
- ✈ Linen Storage Racks
- ✈ Linen Hampers
- ✈ Staff Exchange Counter
- ✈ Laundry
- ✈ Folding Tables

It is seen that the linen room has one entrance adjoining the in-house laundry. This arrangement is made especially for security purpose.

The linen store is used to keep a stock of fresh linen. This fresh linen is used to restock the linen that is lost or damaged over a course of time. The amount of linen that is stocked depends on the size of the hotel. The amount of linen is based on the total requirement needed for all the rooms and restaurants at a time. This is also referred to as linen in circulation. Generally, an in-house laundry should



take about 24 hours to launder the soiled linen and keeping this in mind, the hotel needs to maintain a par stock of five. That apart, every hotel has its own policy about changing the bed linen. Expensive, deluxe properties may change the used linen every day. Economy hotels change linen every alternate day or every three days.

Linen rooms are classified into two categories:

- ✈ **Centralised:** In a centralised linen room, all the linen is collected at a central point. A centralised set-up is beneficial for small hotels that have few rooms.
- ✈ **Decentralised:** In decentralised linen room, there is a main linen room which supplies the required items. There are also floor linen rooms or floor pantries that cater to only a set of rooms.

Linen Room Accessories and Equipment

Different accessories and equipment are used in the floor linen room. Some of them are as follows:

- ✈ **Trolleys:** Trolleys are used to move fresh linen from the laundry. The latest trolleys are fitted with wheels. Hence, they can be easily moved around without causing much fatigue to the room attendants. Linen essential for an entire floor is carried in big trolleys, which in turn helps the housemen/house cleaners by reducing their effort and time. These trolleys have enough space to carry the linen of the entire floor.
- ✈ **Ladders:** Ladders enable the attendants to reach the higher shelves of the racks.
- ✈ **Cupboards:** These are useful to store high quality linen.
- ✈ **Folding table:** As the name suggests, it is used to fold fresh linen.
- ✈ **Linen bags:** Linen bags are used to separate the linen that needs to be sent to the laundry.
- ✈ **Hampers:** Hampers are used to hold the dirty and soiled linen. These hampers are attached with the room attendant's trolley.
- ✈ **Racks:** Racks have compartments to store fresh linen that is in circulation. It can be fixed or mobile.
- ✈ **Cloth Bags:** All linen bags are collected in big cloth bags and carried to the laundry or linen store.



Hamper



Laundry Bag



Ladder



Racks

Types of Linen

The linen room stocks the following types of linen:

- ✈ **Bathroom Linen:** It includes hand towels, bath rugs, bath towels, face towels and pool towels. These are of specific measurements.
- ✈ **Bedroom Linen:** It includes blankets, duvets or comforters, bed spreads, pillow covers, mattress protectors and bed sheets.
- ✈ **Restaurant Linen:** It includes table napkins, tea napkins, table cloths, frills, base cloths, slip cloths, runners, placemats, tray cloths, waiter cloths and dusters.

Exchange of Room and Restaurant Linen

Linen needs to be exchanged on a regular basis in the hotel guest rooms. There is a possibility of misplacing linen or linen getting lost in this exchange process. Hence, the exchange process is critical and requires close co-ordination between the Linen Supervisor and Laundry Manager. The Linen Supervisor must maintain a strict exchange process to avoid misplacing or losing linen. The Linen Supervisor and the Laundry Manager must be meticulous in keeping a track of the movement of linen loads from floors and from the linen rooms. Usually, the exchange norm is one fresh item for one soiled one.


Room Linen

The process followed by a Floor Supervisor for room linen are as follows:

- ✦ Soiled linen from the floors or the linen room is sent to the laundry.
- ✦ A room linen control sheet is filled in with the figures which are calculated by physically counting each soiled item on the floor. Three copies of this sheet are created and one copy is retained by the Floor Supervisor.
- ✦ The second and third copies of the room linen control sheets are sent to the floor houseman. These are sent along with the basket of dirty linen to the laundry or linen room.
- ✦ The laundry or linen supervisor then recounts the soiled linen in presence of the floor representative. This enables him to verify the quantity of linen mentioned in the room linen control sheet. The concerned authority then tallies the linen, puts a 'Received' stamp on the sheet and returns the second copy. The third copy is retained by him or her.
- ✦ On request, the linen supervisor provides fresh linen. In such circumstances wherein the linen room is short of fresh linen at a point of time, the linen supervisor enters the amount due on the room linen control sheet. The shortfall is issued in the next exchange of linen.

This process is essential not only to guarantee the change of bathroom and bed linen of all rooms but also important from pilferages and inventory control point of view. Any lapse in this process may lead to complain from guests.

Figure 2.4 shows the room linen control sheet.



| Room Linen Control Sheet | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 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: |

Figure 2.4: Specimen of a Room Linen Control Sheet

Restaurant Linen

Restaurant linen has a different exchange procedure. There is a specific **time** allotted for each restaurant by the linen room to exchange linen. The linen supervisor has to ensure that the restaurant representative arrives at the scheduled time. The restaurant linen exchange procedure includes the following steps:

- ✦ The linen supervisor checks the soiled linen that is received for damages.
- ✦ Each item is counted and tallied with the food and beverage linen exchange form that is filled by the restaurant supervisor.
- ✦ After this, the relevant figures are entered into the linen exchange register that is maintained specially for food and beverage outlets.
- ✦ The same number of linen is issued on a one-to-one basis and the figures are entered in the linen exchange register.
- ✦ Each of the soiled linen is counted while the laundry supervisor is present and then, forwarded to the laundry for washing.
- ✦ The fresh restaurant linen that is received from the laundry is then counted by tallying it against the linen exchange register.

Discarded Linen

The linen supervisor must check for linen which needs to be discarded. Such discarded items of linen are shown to the Inventory Ledger Accountant who then declares the linen as discards and deletes the entry of such items from the inventory register. A discard register is maintained by the linen keeper which has details such as the date and number of all the discards. The discarded linen is replaced by purchase or housekeeping store. The discarded linen is then used as cleaning cloths for cleaning crew, covering furniture that is stored in furniture yard, wrapping long-stored linen and so on.

The discarded entries must be approved and signed on by a housekeeper, as these items add up to the cost to the company. The Executive Housekeeper oversees the department's budget.

Standard Hotel Linen Size Charts

There are standard hotel linen charts which all hotels must follow. Table 2.1 lists the bedroom linen size chart.

Table 2.1 shows the bedroom linen size chart.

| | Duet Cover | Mattress Protector | Flat Sheets | Bed Sheets |
|------------|-------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Twin | 55" X 79" | 35.83" X 46.45" | 71 X 108" | 66" X 104" |
| Double | 79" X 79" | 53.94 X 74.01" | 91 X 108" | 81" X 104" |
| Queen | 83" X 83" | 60.23 X 79.92" | 92 X 108" | 90" X 110" |
| King | 89" X 87" | 72.04 X 79.92" | 108 X 108" | 108" X 110" |
| Super King | 102" X 87" | 60.23 X 79.93" | 120 X 108" | 180" X 200" |
| Emperor | 114" X 92" | 78.74 X 78.74" | 126 X 114" | 200" X 200" |

Table 2.1: Bedroom Linen Size Chart

Table 2.2 lists the pillowcases and pillows size chart.

| Pillowcases | |
|-------------|-----------|
| Standard | 20" X 30" |
| King | 20" X 40" |
| Pillows | |
| Standard | 20" X 26" |
| King | 20" X 36" |

Table 2.2: Pillowcases and Pillows Size Chart

Table 2.3 lists the bath room linen size chart.

| Bath Room Linen | |
|-----------------|-----------|
| Bath Mat | 18" X 24" |
| | 20" X 30" |
| Bath Towels | 36" X 70" |
| | 20" X 40" |
| | 22" X 44" |
| | 24" X 50" |
| | 27" X 50" |
| Wash Cloth | 12" X 12" |
| | 13" X 13" |
| Hand Towel | 16" X 26" |
| | 16" X 30" |

Table 2.3: Bathroom Linen Size Chart

Table 2.4 lists the restaurant linen size chart.

| Restaurant Linen | |
|------------------|------------------------|
| Table Cloths | 45" X 45" |
| | 54" X 54" |
| | 64" X 64" |
| | 54" X 110" |
| Napkins | 17" X 17" |
| | 22" X 22" |
| Runners | 17" X Variable lengths |
| Place Mats | 12" X 18" |
| | 14" X 20" |

Table 2.4: Restaurant Linen Size Chart

The Uniform Room Layout, Equipment and Exchange Procedure

A uniform room is indispensable because of the volume of uniforms that are required by the staff of a large hotel. The entire staff has different uniforms, for example, the uniform of kitchen staff differs from the reception staff.

When a new employee joins the hotel, he/she is provided with uniforms. The new employees are provided with either standard uniforms or tailor-made uniforms for specific styles. When an employee is issued the uniform, the responsibility of the uniform is with the employee. The employee needs to keep the uniform in the locker room provided by the hotel. The locker room is separate for men and women.

Layout of Uniform Room

Figure 2.5 shows that a uniform room has separate exchange counters for employees and the laundry.



The uniform room also contains:

- ✈ Material Store
- ✈ Cupboards
- ✈ Folding Table
- ✈ Hampers
- ✈ Mobile Hanging Racks
- ✈ Shelves

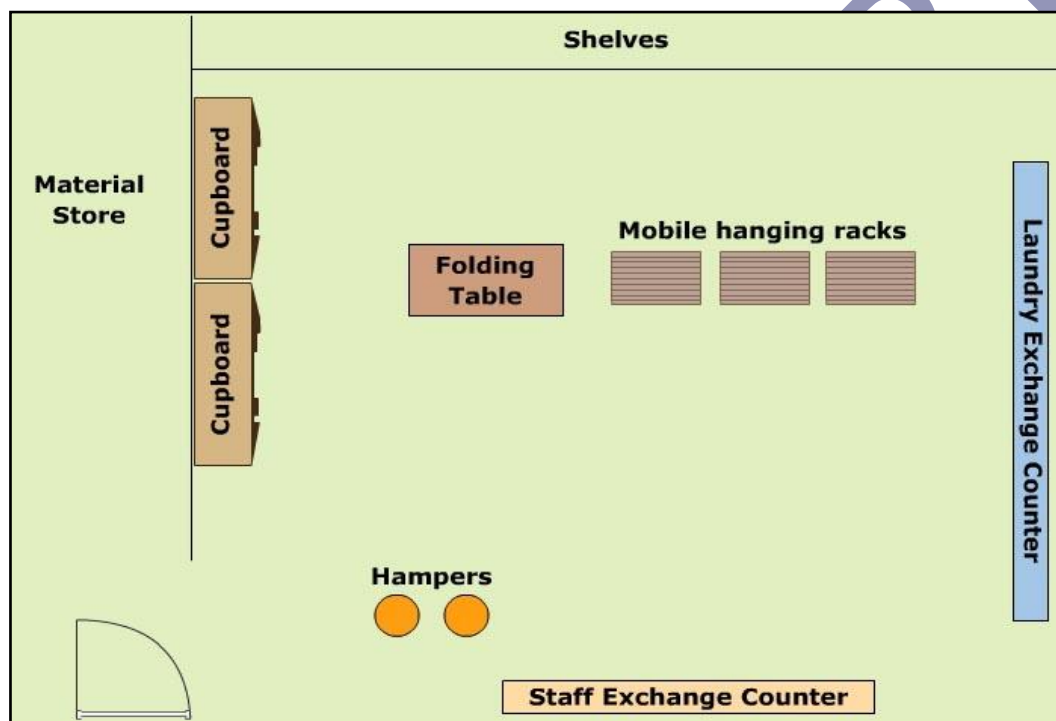


Figure 2.5: Uniform Room

The location of uniform room is such that, all employees have an access to it. The corridor in front of the uniform room must be wide enough so that the employees are able to form a queue during morning rush hours and avoid congestion and unnecessary hassles.

Accessories and Equipment of Uniform Room

The uniform room is equipped with accessories and equipment similar to that of the linen room. More precisely, it includes:

- ✈ **Coat brushes:** As the name suggests, it is used to brush the dust-off the coats.



- ✈ **Hanging racks:** These racks are used to hang uniforms that cannot be folded for storage.
- ✈ **Ladders:** Ladders enable access to higher shelves of the racks.
- ✈ **Mobile trolleys:** The trolleys aid in the movement of fresh uniforms that are hung on hangers.
- ✈ **Racks:** Racks are used to store heavy uniforms that are in circulation.
- ✈ **Cupboards:** Cupboards are used to store quality uniforms.
- ✈ **Table:** Table aids in folding fresh uniforms.
- ✈ **Linen bags:** Linen bags are used to separate uniforms that are to be sent to laundry.

Figure 2.6 shows images of coat brushes, hangers and hanging racks found in hotels.

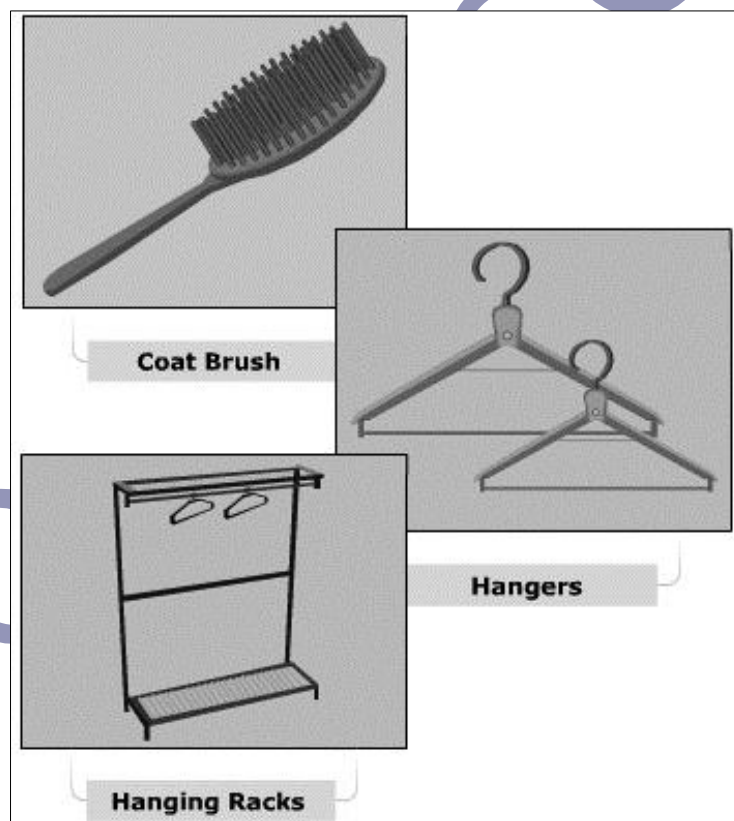


Figure 2.6: Accessories and Equipment of Uniform Room



Uniform Exchange Procedure

Generally, employees engaged in different departments of the hotel are allotted specific times to exchange their uniforms. The uniform room supervisor is in-charge of the uniform room and whenever an employee is in need of a new set, the uniform room supervisor carries out a procedure which is detailed as follows:

- ✦ The uniform room supervisor ensures that the staff arrives at the scheduled time.
- ✦ There are checks made to see if there is any damage to the uniforms.
- ✦ Fresh uniforms are issued to an employee on a one-to-one basis to ensure that the uniform is of correct size. If the uniform is tailor-made, then the uniform supervisor issues the right uniform to the right person by checking the name tags that are sewn inside the collar or trouser flap.

Exchange Procedure with the Laundry

There is an exchange procedure while uniforms are handed over to the laundry. The procedure is as follows:

- ✦ The uniforms are sorted as per size, department, quality and type.
- ✦ The uniforms are counted physically in the presence of laundry supervisor before it is handed over to him.
- ✦ The uniforms are submitted for dry cleaning along with a daily delivery of uniforms form.
- ✦ The laundry supervisor's signature is taken in acknowledgement.

Importance of Par Stocks

Par stock refers to the minimum level of supplies that are required to meet the daily linen demands of the hotel that will ensure smooth operations of the hotel. Each hotel maintains the par stock in order to maintain adequate supplies that are required for daily operations.

Importance of Par Stocks

Par stock is important because of the following reasons:

- ✦ **Optimum Utilisation of Space:** The supplies have to be stored in proper conditions in the storage space. The excess linen must be stored whenever it is not in use, thereby increasing storage space costs.
- ✦ **Efficient and Appropriate Capital Investment:** The investors of the hotel want to justify the investments made in the hotel as they would not be keen to



make additional investments that are necessary for smooth operations of the hotel.

- ✦ **Prevention of Problems Associated with Over-stocking:** Excessive stocking of supplies is vulnerable to deterioration, misuse, theft, loss or pilferage.
- ✦ **Simplification of Inventory Taking:** Regular auditing is conducted to safeguard the owner's investments. The auditing process is simplified as the auditors can tally the par stock because the standards are known.
- ✦ **Effective and Appropriate Budgeting:** The Executive Housekeeper is able to prepare an appropriate budget of annual capital investments in linen and uniforms based on the par stock standards. The Executive Housekeeper is also able to calculate par stock deficiencies as a result of discards.
- ✦ **Assurance of Proper Supply:** Regular upkeep of rooms requires an adequate supply of fresh linen which is used to replenish the soiled ones. This ensures that rooms are saleable and up-to-date.
- ✦ **Maintaining Control:** Par stocks also allow the linen keeper to maintain control on the numbers of linen that is needed every day.

Linen Inventory Control

Uniforms and linen are the two vital facets of any hotel operation that leave a significant impression on a guest's mind. Huge investments are made for providing linen and uniform. This necessitates that there is a tight control on these assets of the hotel.

Certain practices are followed in order to effectively control the use of linen. They are as follows:

- ✦ Avoiding shortages, misuse and mix-ups of uniforms and linen
- ✦ Appropriate and adequate storage
- ✦ Stock-taking on a regular basis
- ✦ Spot checks
- ✦ Proper supervision

Preventing Damage to Linen and Uniforms

The points to be taken care to prevent damage to linen and uniforms are as follows:



- ✦ Ensuring that the laundry personnel do not put excessive amount of bleach powder to wash the linen.
- ✦ Conducting regular checks to see if there are any faulty linen chutes, carts, baskets and so on that might tear cloth.
- ✦ Ensuring that the exchange of linen is done strictly on a one-to-one basis.
- ✦ Preventing employees from wiping spilt food, medicines or chemicals with linen and making use of dusters instead.
- ✦ Conducting periodic inspection of employee locker rooms for preventing theft.
- ✦ Ensuring that the damp white linen and uniform is not placed on concrete iron as iron rust causes holes after washing or leaves rust stains.
- ✦ Loading the laundry in the washing machines properly. Under-loading can cause damage to the linen.
- ✦ Ensuring that machines such as hydro-extractors are operating at the right speed as the extreme speed can damage the fabric leading to tear.
- ✦ Placing mesh bags at strategic points in order to prevent loss of small items.
- ✦ Conducting regular checks on laundry tumblers for things such as pins, paper clips and so on that can prick holes into the fabric.
- ✦ Monitoring that proper pressure is applied while ironing in order to prevent burn stains.

Stock-taking

Stock-taking is an important activity in inventory control. It refers to physical verification of the entire linen and uniforms. This verification is conducted at periodic intervals or at the end of the year during the time of closing account books. Stock taking helps to determine if there is any shortage or overage by detecting the variances in physical counts and balances in the inventory ledger.

Principles of Stock-taking

- ✦ All items should be segregated and grouped appropriately. This also includes the discarded items.
- ✦ A quarterly inventory should be conducted that involves physical count of items.
- ✦ A separate count of items that are in circulation as well as in the store has to be done.
- ✦ The total of the last inventory figures and the new issues should be tallied.

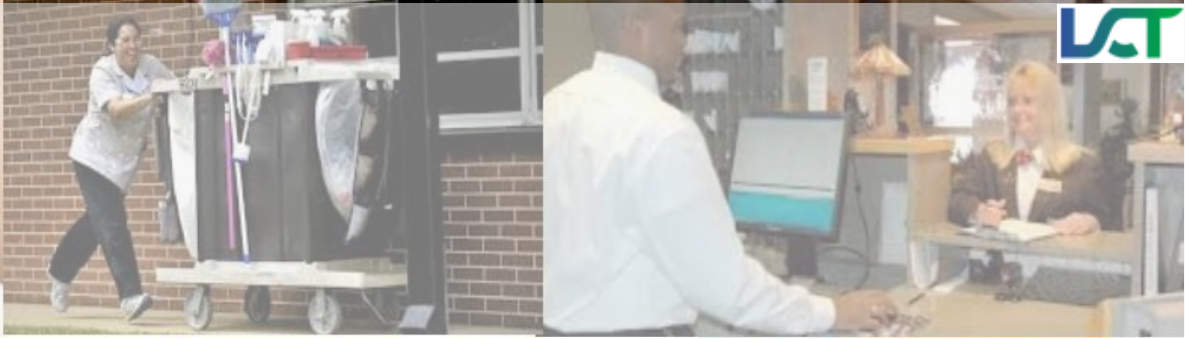
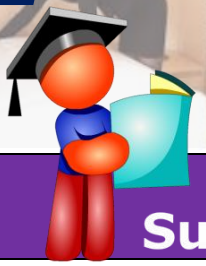


- ✦ It should be ensured that the Supervisor is personally present when the inventory clerk and the auditor are counting the items.
- ✦ Separate days should be allocated for conducting stock-taking for uniforms, room linen and restaurant linen.

Procedure of Stock-taking

The following procedure is followed while stock-taking:

- ✦ Identification of all the locations of the linen. The locations are: beds in guest rooms, floor linen pantries, linen room, linen stores and so on.
- ✦ Conducting a linen stock-taking at the commencement of the morning shift when the guest rooms are prepared for the day.
- ✦ Sealing the floor linen rooms and chutes.
- ✦ Freezing laundry delivery carts for dispatch.
- ✦ Sealing the linen room and linen store.
- ✦ Filling up the information of all the floors into a master inventory sheet – rooms.
- ✦ Conducting a counting for restaurant linen. Restaurant stock-taking is usually done after 3 pm when the restaurants are closed after lunch. In case of a 24-hour restaurant such as coffee shops, the inventory can be done after midnight when there is less traffic.
- ✦ Filling up the information in the master inventory count sheet – Food and Beverages.
- ✦ After this, all the information is transcribed by the auditor into the inventory control chart – rooms.
- ✦ All the restaurant linen information is also transcribed by the auditor into the Inventory Control Chart – Food and Beverages.
- ✦ These statements are to be consolidated by the auditor and the financial controller into a master inventory sheet.
- ✦ In the last step, the master inventory sheet is shown to the general manager for a sign-off.



Summary

In this session, **Linen Room**, you learned that:

- ❖ The floor linen room is an area that stocks linen and other supplies for a particular floor.
- ❖ The linen room supports the operations of most of the housekeeping departments.
- ❖ The exchange process is critical and requires close co-ordination between the linen supervisor and laundry manager.
- ❖ The standard hotel linen size charts.
- ❖ A uniform room is indispensable because of the volume of uniforms that are required by the staff of a large hotel. Practices for keeping control on assets of hotel, precautions for preventing damage to linen and uniform, principles of stock-taking and procedures for stock-taking for inventory control.
- ❖ Par stock refers to the minimum level of supplies that are required to meet the daily linen demands of the hotel that will ensure smooth operations of the hotel.
- ❖ Linen and uniforms are two important aspects of hotel operations that have a huge impact on the impression created in a guest's mind.



Exercise

I Answer the following questions.

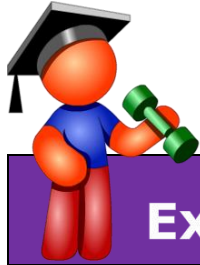
- 1) **Which of the following equipment is used to transport fresh linen from the laundry?**
 - a. Racks
 - b. Ladders
 - c. Trolleys
- 2) **Generally, the linen room has _____ entrance(s) for security reasons.**
 - a. Two
 - b. One
 - c. Three
- 3) **In floor linen rooms, _____ is used for flower arrangements and disinfecting tumblers.**
 - a. Shelf
 - b. Sink
 - c. Canvas
- 4) **The Executive Housekeeper is able to prepare an appropriate _____ of annual capital investments in linen and uniforms based on the par stock standards.**
 - a. Stock
 - b. Inventory
 - c. Budget

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- 5) _____ refers to the physical verification of the entire linen and uniforms.
- a. Stock - taking
 - b. Filling Inventory Control Chart
 - c. Budgeting

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Exercise Answers

Session 2

1. c
2. b
3. b
4. c
5. a