

Vrbo vs Airbnb

Résumé

Alternative à Airbnb, Vrbo permet de louer des maisons, appartement dans leur intégralité.

Article

Everything to know about home rental site Vrbo, including how it works and what makes it different from Airbnb

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The letter F.

An envelope. It indicates the ability to send an email.

An image of a chain link. It symbolizes a website link url.

A stylized bird with an open mouth, tweeting.

The word "in".

A stylized letter F.

Three evenly spaced dots forming an ellipsis: "...".

Two crossed lines that form an 'X'. It indicates a way to close an interaction, or dismiss a notification.

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- [Vrbo](#) is a vacation rental booking platform where homeowners can list their homes directly without going through a management company.
- Only entire homes are listed on [Vrbo](#), so you will never have to share with the host or other guests.
- Below, we break down everything to know about the home rental site, from pricing and fees to how it differs from competitors such as [Airbnb](#).
- Read more: [Are vacation rentals safe? We spoke to experts, a company representative, and an Airbnb host to share everything you should know before booking someone's home](#)

Although it's commonly pronounced as "verb-oh", [Vrbo](#) is actually an acronym that stands for "vacation rentals by owner," which says a lot about the rental site's beginnings.

These days, travelers are pretty accustomed to direct communication with hosts thanks to the rise of online booking platforms like [Airbnb](#), but when Vrbo first launched in 1995, it was a relatively new concept that helped homeowners bypass the cost of a management company. Today, the site boasts over two million private homes in over 190 countries.

While [HomeAway](#) and [Vbro](#) used to be separately branded sites that shared the same listings and were both run by Expedia Group, as of July 2020 [HomeAway has been entirely folded into Vrbo](#). Users familiar with HomeAway will find a very similar feel and style on Vrbo and the listings are the same as those previously offered on HomeAway.

For those more familiar with [Airbnb](#), [Vrbo](#) has many similarities, but there are a few key differences when it comes down to the booking experience, service fees, and the health and safety precautions being taken to protect travelers from the novel coronavirus.

The main distinction between the two websites is that homeowners on Vrbo only rent out the whole property, which means you won't find anyone else sharing the space with you. This is unlike Airbnb where you may also book a room in a shared house. Normally, sharing a space with housemates wouldn't be a big issue if the price is right, but in the age of coronavirus, having the place to yourself is a big point for Vrbo.

This is especially true since [experts have said that private home vacation rentals are actually safer than hotels](#) right now since there are far fewer interactions with other people.

Read on to learn how Vrbo works.

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How booking on Vrbo works

The booking experience of [Vrbo](#) is very similar to what you'd find on Airbnb and other booking platforms. You may filter by the number of bedrooms, property type, house rules, and amenities.

But, it gets a little finicky when it comes to pricing. Prices won't populate on the page unless you specifically filter by price, and unlike Airbnb, you won't know the total price of your stay until you click through to the main listing page where you can then see a breakdown of the total price and fees.

Each property is given an overall rating out of five stars and you'll be able to read reviews at the bottom of the page. If you like a place but aren't ready to commit, you can save it to a "Trip Board" and come back to it later.

Once you book and the homeowner accepts your booking, you'll be able to communicate directly with them about the property's details and check-in process.

Vrbo also offers a [Book With Confidence Guarantee](#), which provides every traveler with payment protection against fraudulent listings and access to a team of re-booking specialists. If the owner cancels at the last minute or you can't get into the house for some reason, the re-booking specialist can help you find somewhere else to stay. Bear in mind that this is not trip insurance and if you decide to cancel your trip on your own accord, you won't be refunded unless you purchase additional trip insurance.

Vrbo

How is Vrbo different from Airbnb?

In many ways, the experience of sorting through properties on Vrbo is exactly like Airbnb. The main distinction between the two platforms is that Vrbo is strictly for entire home rentals and you will always have the entire home to yourself. Airbnb, on the other hand, tends to emphasize hospitality and market the value of a good host, while Vrbo is strictly about the property.

In fact, hosts and travelers do not have their own profile pages like they do on Airbnb. This means you can't click through to a reviewer's profile to see whether or not they leave overly negative or positive reviews, nor can you click through to a host's profile to see the other properties they have and read the reviews on those.

However, Vrbo does have its own version of Airbnb's Superhosts, which they call Premier Partners. These are owners with a low rate of cancellations and an average guest rating above 4.5.

However, even these qualifications are not quite as strict as Airbnb where Superhosts must average a 4.8 rating to earn Superhost status. Additionally, it's more difficult to compare prices on Vrbo than on Airbnb. For many Vrbo listings, you must click through to the final listing page to see the full breakdown of costs, while Airbnb is more upfront about this information on its listings.

[Read a full breakdown of the differences between Vrbo and Airbnb here.](#)

What is pricing on Vrbo like?

The pricing is very reasonable on Vrbo when you compare similar properties in the same area across rental sites.

In some cities, you can find apartments for as little as \$79 per night, like this [tiny house in Austin, Texas](#) or you might splurge on a unique property like a [home built by a famous architect](#) or a [actual castle](#).

Nightly rates will vary depending on where you're searching and the time of year, but prices are rarely lower than \$50 per night or higher than \$500 per night, unless it is an exceptionally large or unique home, or located in a coveted area in peak season.

A good way to judge whether or not the rate is competitive for the area is to compare the rate to nearby hotels. For example, in New York City, even shoebox-sized hotel rooms typically start at \$100 per night, but on Vrbo, you can [find some apartments for less than that](#) in all five boroughs.

Generally, the nightly cost for standard-quality listings is competitive with other listing sites like Airbnb and often cheaper than hotels. However, keep in mind that like Airbnb, the base listed price on Vrbo doesn't include fees. Those fees can add up, so be sure to take that into consideration when browsing listings with a budget in mind.

Vrbo

How much is the service fee on Vrbo and what does it cover?

When you're comparing properties in the list view, you'll only see the cost per night. But when you click through the listing, Vrbo will show you the total cost of your trip based on the dates plugged in and the applicable fee and taxes.

Beneath the price, you may click "View details" to see how this total cost is broken down. Owners can charge varying fees for cleaning, taxes, and even pets, but the service fee will be applied by Vrbo for every booking. The owner has no control over how much the fee is and does not have the power to waive it.

According to the Vrbo, the service fee goes towards providing "a safer and more secure booking experience coupled with 24/7 customer support throughout your trip." The fee is based on a sliding scale, although it is unclear how exactly they are calculated.

On some listings, it can be as low as 5% of the total rental amount, and on others, it may be as high as 12%. There's no way to avoid paying the fee on Vrbo, but if you really fall in love with a place, you may be able to find it for a lower price on another booking platform. However, you won't get the benefit of Vrbo's Book With Confidence Guarantee.

Is Vrbo safe to book right now?

In light of the coronavirus pandemic, Vrbo has refunded traveler fees for bookings made before March 13, 2020, but has not yet released a new cleaning policy to ensure traveler safety going forward. However, they have released [guidelines](#) for homeowners that encourages:

- Having a proactive plan to manage and minimize risks.
- Implementing enhanced cleaning and disinfecting between stays.
- Providing sufficient hand sanitizer and soap for guests, as well as cleaning and disinfecting products.

Among listing resources to health authorities and outlining the proper way to clean the property, the information is pretty thorough — but they're just guidelines. While Vrbo encourages its owners to communicate their cleaning measures in the listing itself and with their guests, there's not much they can do to enforce or guarantee that the guidelines will be followed by hosts.

You might compare this approach to [Airbnb's Enhanced Cleaning Initiative](#), which requires hosts to go through a certification program in order to be flagged as an "enhanced" property on the site. Additionally, Airbnb is also enforcing a 24-hour buffer period between stays for these properties, or a 72 hour buffer for homes that don't want to comply with such stringent cleaning guidelines, but still want to be promoted as safe options for guests.

Vrbo has no such badge system in place, so it's up to the travelers to look into each listing's sanitation measures before they book.

Neither booking platform can guarantee safety, but Vrbo's guidelines do mean that you must have good communication with the homeowner to properly ensure that the property will be clean and safe for your arrival. If the host does not outline their cleaning regimen in the description of the home, try to contact them directly before you pull the trigger and book.

"When booking any type of lodging, consider how many people you'll be surrounded by, when was the last time someone stayed in that accommodation, and how is the state or city doing in regards to flattening the curve," said Dr. Neil Brown, [K Health](#)'s chief diagnosis officer.

What is Vrbo's cancellation policy?

Due to the novel coronavirus, future travel plans are up in the air and many travelers are looking for flexibility when it comes to planning vacations.

While Vrbo did implement a [cancellation policy in response to COVID-19](#), the policy initially only covered bookings made before March 13, 2020, with stay dates between March 13 and June 30, 2020 that were cancelled because of governmental restrictions to travel or stays in vacation homes for leisure.

However, they have not extended the policy beyond the end of June so all new bookings are not covered by the COVID-19 cancellation policy. Instead, you'll need to check individual listings' policies, which include the following options [according to Vrbo](#):

- **No Refund** - This is the strictest policy and means no refund is offered at all for any reason.
- **Strict** - Bookings must be canceled at least 60 days before the start of the stay to receive a full refund.
- **Firm** - Bookings canceled 60 days or more before the start of the stay will receive a full refund. Bookings canceled between 60 days and 30 days before the start of the stay will receive a 50% refund.
- **Moderate** (recommended) - Bookings canceled 30 days or more before the start of the stay receive a full refund. Bookings canceled at least 14 days before receive a 50% refund.
- **Relaxed** - Bookings canceled 14 days or more before the start of the stay will receive a full refund. Bookings canceled at least 7 days before the start of the stay will receive a 50% refund.

You can compare this to the [Airbnb cancellation policy here](#).

Wondering about travel safety right now?

- [Is travel safe? We interviewed experts on risks associated with flying, booking hotels or Airbnbs, renting cars, and more, plus ideas on safe vacations during COVID-19](#)
- [Are Airbnbs safe? We spoke to experts, a company representative, and an Airbnb host to share everything you should know before booking someone's home](#)
- [Which is safer: Airbnb or hotels? Here's what doctors say](#)
- [6 safer, expert-backed ways to take a vacation during the pandemic, from road trips to private vacation homes and remote campsites](#)
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[Cabins are trending on Vrbo and the home rental platform revealed the 5 homes most frequently saved to users' trip boards — here's a look inside each cabin](#)

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