## What does a hotel manager do?

A hotel manager, or lodging manager, is a hospitality professional who oversees the functions of hotels, motels and resorts. They maintain operations and ensure guest satisfaction. In many environments, a hotel manager will review their facility’s budget and revenue to increase profitability. Additionally, they evaluate each department manager’s performance and offer constructive feedback for improvement.

Hotel managers may also perform the following functions:

* Oversee employee hiring, onboarding and exit processes
* Assist with scheduling continuous management coverage
* Maintain relationships with external vendors
* Create reports and presentations for the hotel owner or board of directors
* Develop and execute hotel policies

## Hotel manager requirements

Most hotels employ managers with a combination of higher education and hospitality experience. Hotel managers can also obtain a variety of hospitality certifications. Here are the usual requirements to be a hotel manager:

### **Education**

Though there are no specific education requirements to become a hotel manager, many facilities prefer a Bachelor’s Degree in Hospitality or a related field. Some lodging managers have an associate’s degree or higher.

### **Training**

Hotel managers usually have at least five years of on-the-job hospitality experience in varying departments, such as housekeeping, front of house, engineering or food and beverage. This experience provides a thorough understanding of hotel functions.

Some hotel managers may also receive off-the-job training through seminars and conferences. For example, a hotel manager could attend a hospitality conference regarding new technology or best hotel practices. These conferences can be useful as a form of ongoing training to help hotel managers remain up to date on industry trends.

### **Skills**

Hotel managers should possess the following key skills:

#### **Customer service**

Since hotel managers operate in the hospitality industry, they usually need excellent customer service skills. They should be able to resolve difficult guest issues smoothly and efficiently. To communicate with guests, they need emotional intelligence so they can listen to and understand customers’ needs with ease.

#### **Critical thinking**

The hospitality industry is a fast-paced environment, so hotel managers should have the ability to think critically and make informed decisions quickly. Not only do hotel managers review and solve difficult customer issues, but they also attend to all internal functions. They must ensure each department operates smoothly to create a satisfactory guest experience.

#### **Time management**

Efficiently managing time is another valuable skill most hotel managers should possess. They oversee all departments, which requires extensive planning and coordination. Most lodging facilities never close, so it’s important to ensure sufficient staffing at all times. They should be able to plan their schedules to spend enough time with each department and manage others’ time as well.

## Hotel manager work environment

Hotel managers typically work regular business hours in an office setting. They often visit and survey other departments in a non-office setting, such as housekeeping. Since hotels operate continuously without closing, some managers may work nights, weekends or holidays. Most hotel managers are available at all times for emergencies.

Most hotel managers should be able to sit for extended periods of time in front of a computer and interact with a variety of employees and customers regularly.

## How to become a hotel manager

### 1. Earn a hospitality degree

You can get an associate’s or bachelor’s degree in hospitality to learn the necessary knowledge. You can also obtain a degree in a related field, such as business administration. Though most lodging facilities prefer a degree, you may be able to substitute experience for education.

### 2. Gain hospitality experience

Most employers prefer at least five years of experience to become a hotel manager, though you may need more in some luxury hotels and resorts. You can gain experience in different positions, such as front desk clerk, housekeeper, maintenance technician or catering coordinator.

### 3.Obtain certifications

While not required by most employers, you can obtain many different hospitality certifications that help you specialize and increase your earning potential. You can become a Certified Hotel Administrator, which shows you have extensive knowledge of the hospitality industry. You can also earn certifications in hospitality sales, marketing, supervision, revenue and customer service, all of which could prove valuable.

## What does a receptionist do?

Receptionists manage the front desk of an organization or business. They handle administrative tasks, including greeting visitors and answering the phone. Since a receptionist is often the first person to interact with customers and visitors, they have a responsibility to make a professional and courteous first impression. In some organizations, receptionists have a role in security by restricting visitor access or notifying a security team of potential incidents. Receptionists may also manage communications by forwarding calls, maintaining internal calendars and helping visitors reach their destination in the office.

Additional responsibilities include:

* Scheduling appointments and meetings
* Greeting clients and visitors and connecting them with the appropriate party
* Entering customer or appointment information into the company database
* Managing documents and records
* Managing paper correspondence and phone calls
* Creating and managing filing systems
* Making travel arrangements

## Receptionist requirements

Obtaining a position as a receptionist may involve certain requirements depending on the level of jobs for which you’re applying, including:

### **Education**

Entry-level receptionists typically need at least a high school diploma or equivalent in addition to related work experience. Some positions need a minimum of an associate or bachelor’s degree.

Those without degrees can also earn certificates at community or vocational colleges that teach the skills needed to be a receptionist, including payroll accounting, business math, customer service, office management and office software. Online training in the form of tutorials and webinars is also available for office software and other useful skills.

### **Training**

Many receptionists receive the training they need on the job. As an entry-level position, most employers will have an onboarding process that includes training specific to the company’s procedures and policies. You might also consider volunteering or interning in an office setting to learn office etiquette and develop communication skills. Volunteers and interns learn to operate standard office equipment, such as multi-line phone systems and printers.

### **Skills**

Receptionists need several hard and soft skills to succeed in this role. Some specific skills include:

#### **Organizational skills**

Receptionists are responsible for many aspects of a business, so being organized is crucial. Receptionists use organizational skills to schedule meetings, book travel arrangements, create and maintain spreadsheets, greet visitors and answer phones.

#### **Communication skills**

As the first point of contact for visitors, receptionists use their communication skills to welcome visitors as they enter, offering refreshments while they wait for the appropriate party to be available. Smiling and presenting a friendly disposition are some of a receptionist’s most valuable skills. Another communication tool is active listening. A receptionist’s active listening skills will help to expedite requests from visitors, callers and executives. Additionally, receptionists write emails, take meeting notes and facilitate communication between colleagues.

#### **Technical skills**

Receptionists often use many different software applications, social media accounts or bookkeeping or accounting programs. Receptionists find that focusing on remaining familiar with relevant software and technology helps adapt to new programs.

#### **Time-management skills**

Receptionists often handle a variety of different tasks related to the office. To ensure they can complete all of their duties throughout the day, they should have good time-management skills to separate and complete tasks effectively. They may also schedule meetings for others, so they should be able to manage other employees’ time as well.

## Receptionist work environment

These professionals work in office, lobby or waiting room settings with the following elements:

* Acting as the first point of contact for visitors and callers
* Sitting at a desk for extended periods of time
* Working a standard 40-hour workweek
* May be required to work on holidays and weekends
* Using computers, printers, fax machines and office telephones
* Communicating with visitors and callers as well as internal staff and executives

The education, skills and experience of receptionists can be transferable in many fields. Receptionists can offer their skills to the following industries:

* Manufacturing
* Government
* Education
* Corporations
* Health care

## How to become a receptionist

Here are the most common steps to follow in becoming a qualified receptionist:

### 1. Pursue education.

Once you graduate from high school or receive the equivalent certification, review local job listings in your intended industry to determine the job requirements. You can easily learn necessary skills in word processing, database and spreadsheet software through online tutorials.

### 2. Gain relevant work experience.

Many new receptionists begin their careers right after high school, obtaining entry-level jobs and learning as they work. Volunteering or interning at an office can also provide valuable experience. Receptionists can later build on that experience to advance into more senior-level positions.

### 3. Earn professional certifications.

Though not required, you may consider earning certifications in the different types of software used in an office, as well as social media, bookkeeping and even marketing.

### 4. Prepare your resume.

Include your date of graduation, relevant certifications and your work history. Highlight specific achievements accomplished using your transferable skills. Keeping it concise, relevant and clear will help your resume stand out among other applicants.

### 5. Apply to entry-level or support roles.

Review the current job market for your area and apply to positions that you are qualified for. Creating a compelling cover letter that highlights the specific skills and traits you possess will emphasize your suitability for the role.

## What does a purchasing agent do?

Purchasing agents procure supplies, equipment and services for a company to perform business operations. The duties and responsibilities of a purchasing agent may include:

* Reviewing requisition requests, prepare purchase orders and solicit bids for goods and services
* Negotiating and administering contracts with suppliers and vendors
* Analysing financial reports, price proposals and other financial data to determine reasonable prices for goods and services
* Balancing cost and quality to procure the best quality of goods or services for the lowest price in adequate amounts
* Monitoring and adhering to applicable laws, regulations and policies regarding the purchase of goods and services

## Purchasing agent requirements

Obtaining a position as a purchasing agent may require education, training and skills to demonstrate your ability to successfully procure quality goods and services while managing company costs, including:

### **Education**

Although graduation from a four-year college or university with a Bachelor’s Degree in Finance, Business or a related discipline is common, it may not be required to obtain a purchasing agent position. Experience in procurement and demonstrated ability to procure quality products and services at negotiated prices may serve in place of formal education. Research purchasing agent positions in specific industries and companies to determine the education requirements for that industry.

### **Training**

Purchasing agents may need specific training to have a thorough knowledge of applicable purchasing laws, regulations and policies. Training should also include the ability to read, comprehend and administer complex contracts as well as an understanding of contract law. Additionally, they should have financial training to analyze pricing and identify reasonable prices for comparable goods and services. Purchasing agents also need training to effectively identify and coordinate with vendors to negotiate prices.

The American Purchasing Society (APS) offers courses and seminars to help purchasing agents achieve these goals. Courses and seminars offered by APS include subjects such as negotiation, price analysis and essential law for buyers and sellers. Purchasing agents may also receive on-the-job training to learn the company’s vendors, supply chain management systems and policies.

### **Skills**

Purchasing agents need proficiency in several skills to succeed in their careers. Required skills for a successful purchasing agent may include:

#### **Negotiation**

These skills include the ability to collaborate with others to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes. Purchasing agents use negotiation skills to work with vendors in procuring quality products and services in the correct amount for the lowest possible price.

#### **Analytical skills**

These skills involve the ability to extract and interpret meaningful information from raw data. Purchasing agents use these skills to determine reasonable pricing for goods and services by evaluating financial reports, pricing structures, market conditions and other financial data.

#### **Financial skills**

These skills include the ability to analyze and understand financial data. It is important for purchasing agents to accurately review financial reports and data when estimating reasonable prices for goods and services.

#### **Complex problem-solving**

These skills involve the ability to identify complex problems and review available information to develop creative solutions. Purchasing agents use these skills to procure quality goods and services at the lowest possible price. An example of this skill may include the ability to identify comparable products at a lower price because they are marketed to a different demographic than a more expensive alternative.

## Purchasing agent work environment

Purchasing agents typically work in an office environment. The work may involve extensive reading of either paper documents or electronic documents on a computer monitor and sitting for extended hours. Travel is not typically required for purchasing agents but may be necessary to meet with vendors and monitor supply chains. Most purchasing agents work full time and can find positions in nearly any industry.

**What does a hotel front desk clerk do?**

A hotel front desk clerk is a hospitality professional who works at the check-in desk of a hotel, resort or another guest lodging. Some of the duties hotel front desk clerks typically have are:

* Taking calls from guests staying at the hotel as well as external customers
* Scheduling and modifying guest room reservations and other accommodations
* Assigning guests to their rooms and distributing hotel room keys
* Providing information to hotel guests such as local destinations and sightseeing, travel accommodations and restaurant recommendations
* Serving as a point of communication between guests and the hotel’s administration
* Collecting payment from customers upon check-in or check-out

### **Education**

Hotel front desk clerk positions typically require at least a high school diploma or an equivalent. Postsecondary education is not required by hotel front desk clerks, however, a bachelor’s degree in hospitality or a related field can provide foundational knowledge of the hospitality industry and possibly increase their earning potential.

### **Training**

Hotel front desk clerks typically have a period of on-the-job training upon hiring to become familiar with the specifics of the hotel or resort they’re working in. During this training, they often shadow a fellow hotel front desk clerk as they learn to navigate the guest services software, interact with the hotel’s or resorts’ clientele and complete other necessary tasks. They may also complete tasks while supervised by a manager, supervisor or fellow hotel front desk clerk to ensure work is done efficiently and correctly.

## Hotel front desk clerk work environment

Hotel front desk clerks work at check-in desks for hotels and resorts around the world. Most hotel front desk clerks work their positions full-time, though depending on the specific hotel or resort, part-time and seasonal positions may be available. While most hotel front desk clerks work during normal business hours, hotel front desk clerk positions have the opportunity to work nights and weekends, as most hotels have someone servicing the front desk 24 hours a day. Hotel front desk clerks spend much of their day standing upright at their desks working with hospitality management software but take time away from this work to assist guests on the phone and in-person as they need help.

### **Skills**

### Some of the most important skills for a hotel front desk clerk to master are:

* **Computer literacy:** Most of the daily responsibilities of a hotel front desk clerk involve working with computer software, such as specialized hospitality management software and conventional office software like word processors and spreadsheets. Some positions provide on-the-job training for the software the clerk will use in their daily work, however existing computer literacy can help a front desk clerk adjust to their position more quickly and allow them to complete their duties more efficiently.
* **Customer service skills:** The hotel front desk clerk is often the first point of contact for guests at a hotel or resort. An effective front desk clerk is enthusiastic and confident when working with hotel guests and take actions to help ensure that guests feel comfortable and welcome for their stay.
* **Communication skills:** The hotel front desk clerk is a central point of communication between the guests, the hotel’s services team and the administration. Developed communication skills allow a hotel front desk clerk to facilitate communication between each of these parties through phone conversations, in-person meetings and emails. Active listening can also help these professionals address guests’ needs thoroughly and promptly.
* **Organization skills:** An organized hotel front desk clerk can efficiently use their hospitality management software systems to accurately report reservation availabilities, make changes to reservations, and manage check-in and check-out of multiple guests.
* **Flexibility:** Hotel front desk clerks must be able to balance their responsibilities and adapt their minute-by-minute activities to the needs of their guests. A flexible front desk clerk is capable of efficiently managing their daily duties and attending to their guests without neglecting either responsibility.

## How to become a hotel front desk clerk

1. **Earn a high school diploma or an equivalent.** Becoming a hotel front desk clerk usually requires a high school diploma or an equivalent. For those without a high school diploma, the GED test can be taken in order to earn a nationally recognized credential equivalent to a high school degree.
2. **Spend time working in hospitality.**Consider accepting an entry-level position at a hotel or resort, such as in facilities or food service. This experience can allow to practice customer service skills and learn the fundamentals of the hospitality industry.
3. **Earn a hospitality degree.** If you choose to pursue higher education, a bachelor’s degree in hospitality or a related field can help you be a more competitive candidate for positions at all levels in the hospitality field, as well as provide you with much of the basic knowledge required when working in hotels or resorts. During this time, you may also wish to earn an AHLEI certification.
4. **Find positions as a hotel front desk clerk.** If you’re currently in an entry-level position at a hotel or resort, speak with your management about advancement to a front desk clerk. If there are no open positions in your current workplace, search for available hotel front desk clerk positions at other hotels and resorts in your area. For these candidates and those who are entering the field for the first time, create a resume that includes your most relevant experience, education and skills to demonstrate your qualifications to prospective employers.

## What does a front desk agent do?

A front desk agent is the first point of contact with hotel guests. They use their skills and professional experience to anticipate guests’ needs and provide them with a pleasant experience during their stay. They book reservations, check guests in and out of their rooms and accommodate any special needs or requests. A front desk agent’s responsibilities include:

* Maintaining communication with maintenance and housekeeping departments to ensure the highest level of guest service
* Making reservations for guests at local restaurants, entertainment venues or other local attractions, arranging taxi or shuttle services and offering recommendations when asked
* Providing information about rooms, rates and hotel amenities
* Answering external phone calls as well as calls from checked-in guests and keeping a documented record of each call for later reference
* Remaining in contact with guests in advance of special events for which they’ve reserved space and service
* Promoting hotel services

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* Promoting hotel services

## Front desk agent requirements

Obtaining a position as a front desk agent may involve certain requirements depending on the level of jobs for which you’re applying, including:

### **Education**

A post-secondary education is not typically required to be a front desk agent, though most employers prefer at least a high school diploma or equivalent. An associate’s degree in business, administration or hospitality can also benefit those looking to advance their career.

### **Training**

Most front desk agents learn the skills and knowledge they need for their role while on the job, including customer service, communication and problem-solving. Training is generally part of the orientation process with a new employer, and many front desk agents eventually cross-train as concierges or night auditors. Training often includes a period of textbook learning and safety instruction, followed by shadowing a current front desk agent for one to two weeks or until the trainee is comfortable enough completing tasks on their own. Front desk agents can use previous customer service or hospitality experience when beginning work for a new employer.

### **Skills**

Front desk agents require a range of skills to succeed in a kitchen setting. Some skills include:

* **Organization:** Since front desk employees frequently multitask throughout the day, they must remain organized to allow them to successfully complete all tasks accurately and efficiently.
* **Customer service:** Front desk agents receive the majority of guest complaints and requests. Responding promptly and appropriately to these challenges will help ensure they provide guests with a positive experience.
* **Communication:** This skill is critical for front desk agents to maintain clear communication in person and over the phone with guests and staff. Maintaining a positive tone while greeting guests and addressing complaints is of key importance to upholding high standards of guest service.
* **Interpersonal skills:** It is important for a front desk agent to maintain clear, courteous communication with staff members and guests. As they often work at a fast pace in a busy environment, it is a front desk agent’s responsibility to stay calm and positive under pressure. They will use their interpersonal skills to help resolve conflict and meet their guests’ needs.
* **Technical skills:** Front desk agents regularly use office software to access reservation records, process payments and complete other administrative tasks. Basic computer literacy will help a front desk agent comfortably use reservation software, payment processing programs, web searches and other tech-based tasks.

## Front desk agent work environment

Front desk agents work in highly visible, service-oriented settings with the following elements:

* Frequently interacting with guests in person and by telephone
* Resolving conflicts involving unpleasant or displeased guests
* Working in close proximity with other staff members
* Completing tasks in a busy environment
* Making autonomous decisions to ensure guest satisfaction
* Maintaining scheduling flexibility and remaining available to work days, evenings, weekends, late night or overnight shifts and holidays.
* Standing for extended periods of time

## How to become a front desk agent

If you’re interested in becoming a front desk agent, consider following these steps:

### **1. Pursue education.**

Although there are no formal educational requirements to become a front desk agent, employers typically prefer candidates that have a high school diploma. Additionally, completing coursework in hospitality, business administration and computer literacy can prove beneficial in making you a more desirable applicant, and taking a public speaking class will help you communicate effectively.

### **2. Gain relevant work experience.**

Most front desk agents receive their training while on the job, but transferable skills, such as customer service and computer software, can be obtained by working as an appointment setter, sales clerk, receptionist or a similar front-facing position.

### **3. Earn technical certifications.**

Though generally not required, earning technical certifications in guest services, management and leadership can prepare you for the responsibilities of a front desk agent.

### **4. Prepare your resume.**

You should include your highest level of education, industry certifications and your work history on a resume. Your work experience should include the company name, dates of employment and a summary of your responsibilities. A resume that shows your career progression and personal growth can make you a more competitive applicant for the front desk agent job you want.

### **5. Apply to open guest service positions.**

Check current job listings in your area and apply to positions you qualify for based on the required skills and experience. Knowing what skills you offer can help you increase your chances of getting the job you desire. In addition to a well-crafted resume, present a cover letter that summarizes your ability to perform that specific role.

## What does a night auditor do?

A night auditor is the first point of contact for late-night hotel guests and manages many aspects of their visit. A night auditor acts as a front desk agent, with the added responsibility of balancing reports from the previous day’s shifts. Other responsibilities include:

* Greeting and checking in guests upon arrival and providing them with relevant hotel information
* Auditing and balancing reports from the day shifts
* Answering phones, scheduling wake-up calls and taking reservations
* Verifying that all end-of-day tasks have been completed by other departments
* Responding to guest inquiries, concerns and complaints as needed
* Running end-of-day reports before the close of the shift
* Preparing guest invoices for next-day checkouts
* Processing and verifying reservation payments
* Balancing cash drawers and reconciling with receipts
* Supervising and managing the hotel safe, ensuring the safety of guests’ valuables
* Communicating with maintenance and housekeeping departments to ensure reliability and cleanliness of hotel amenities
* Acting as concierge by making reservations for guests at local restaurants, entertainment venues or other local attractions and arranging for taxi or shuttle services, offering helpful recommendations when asked
* Providing information about rooms, rates and hotel amenities
* Answering calls from hotel guests and documenting the details of each call for later reference
* Up-selling guest rooms and promoting hotel features and services

Night auditors are typically required to have previous hotel or hospitality experience to help them anticipate the needs of hotel guests and provide a pleasant stay.

## Night auditor requirements

Obtaining a position as a night auditor may require certain qualifications depending on the level of jobs for which you’re applying, including:

### **Education**

Most employers prefer at least a high school diploma or equivalent for night auditor positions. Although not required, an Associate’s Degree in Business, Administration or Hospitality can be beneficial to those who want to advance their career.

### **Training**

Most night auditors learn the skills and knowledge they need for their role while working as a front desk agent or another entry-level customer service-focused role. Training is typically part of the orientation process with a new employer, and often includes a period of reviewing training videos and safety instruction, followed by shadowing a current night auditor for one to two weeks, or until the trainee feels proficient enough to complete tasks on their own.

### **Skills**

Night auditors are detail-oriented and use their analytical skills to analyse and reconcile the previous day’s transactions and add charges to guest accounts as appropriate. They also serve as the concierge and provide customer service to all hotel guests throughout the night. Successful night auditors possess and utilize the following skills:

#### **Bookkeeping**

Night auditors audit the day’s transactions, calculate guest expenses, and reconcile registers, as well as generate the proper reports about those duties.

#### **Communication**

Excellent verbal and written communication skills are needed to greet guests, answer phones and speak with other staff members, and to write detailed reports regarding the previous day’s activity as well as activity taking place during the overnight shift.

#### **Customer service**

Night auditors use customer service skills to check guests into their rooms as well as promptly address all guest requests and complaints.

#### **Organization**

Night auditors are frequently required to multitask and must remain organized to allow themselves to complete all tasks accurately and efficiently.

#### **Technical skills**

Night auditors use software programs to access reservation records, process payments and complete other tasks. Basic literacy is needed to comfortably use reservation software and payment processing programs, with a more thorough understanding of bookkeeping and digital auditing programs required.

## Night auditor work environment

Night auditors work in highly visible, hospitality-oriented settings with a focus on the following elements:

* Interact with guests in person over the phone
* Work mainly alone
* Making autonomous decisions to ensure guest satisfaction
* Maintaining a schedule of overnight shifts
* Standing for long periods

The skills and experience of night auditors can often be transferred to a range of industries, including:

* Retail
* Customer service
* Bookkeeping
* Administration

## How to become a night auditor

The most common path to becoming a night auditor includes the following steps:

### **1. Gain related experience**

Hospitality, retail, customer service and entry-level front desk positions can help you gain the skills you need to become a night auditor. Performing tasks that require processing credit card batches and working with bookkeeping or accounting software to perform daily accounting and auditing functions are also helpful.

### **2. Earn certifications**

While a degree is not required, most night auditor positions require applicants to have technical, customer service and math skills to perform auditing functions and provide guest service. These skills can be refined by attending a certification program at a local college or trade school.

These programs can also provide the basic training for an entry-level job as a night auditor, including word processing, data entry, bookkeeping, filing and records management. Other available training may include instruction in hotel technology and billing procedures.

### **3. Prepare your resume**

Include your highest level of education, industry-related certifications and your work history. Your work experience section should include the company name, dates of employment and a brief description of your responsibilities. A resume that shows your career progression, as well as personal growth, can make you a more attractive applicant for the night auditor job you want.

### **4. Apply to entry-level positions**

Check the job listings in your area and apply to positions that you are qualified for based on required skills and experience, and that have the potential for advancement. Knowing what skills you offer can help you find and get the job you want. Highlight your skills and qualifications in a cover letter that summarizes your ability to perform that specific role.