

How to choose the right hotel without unpleasant surprises

Before you book, check these 7 things to avoid mistakes,
disappointment and hidden costs.



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Why choosing the right hotel matters more than simply finding a good price

Booking a hotel is not just about price. It is about the quality of the experience.

Rushed choices can lead to real risks:

- misleading photos
- small rooms
- unclear services
- hidden costs
- inconvenient locations

With the right checks, you can avoid disappointment and enjoy a truly pleasant holiday.





Check 1: Verify the real location, not just the stated distance

Reading that the hotel is close to the centre or to the beach is not enough. You should check:

- whether you can walk or need a car/taxi
- whether the area is safe and well served
- whether shops, restaurants and public transport are nearby

Practical tip: use Google Maps to check real travel times, look at Street View photos and read reviews about the location.

Check 2: Read reviews the right way

Do not look only at the average score. Read recent reviews from the last 3-6 months.

Look for patterns: if many guests mention noise, cleanliness or extra costs, that is a signal.

Be careful with reviews that are too positive and also with extremely negative ones. Both can be misleading.

Read what guests say about location, breakfast and services.

Tip: read at least 10-15 recent reviews, not only the first ones you see.



Check 3: Look carefully at photos, room size and room descriptions

Photos can be misleading because of angles, lighting and perspective.

Check:

- the real size of the room
- whether it is a single or double room
- how many beds there are
- whether there is a balcony or window
- the bathroom: shower or bathtub
- whether there are enough power sockets

Look at all available photos, not only the main ones. Read the description carefully.

Tip: compare official photos with guest reviews. Guests often post real photos. If there are very few or unclear photos, pay attention.

Check 4: Check what is included and what is extra

One of the most common problems is discovering hidden costs after booking.

Check carefully:

- whether breakfast is included, and what type
- whether parking is free or paid
- whether tourist taxes are clearly shown
- whether access to the pool or gym is included
- whether Wi-Fi is free
- whether there are pet fees

Read terms and conditions carefully, especially when booking through OTAs such as Booking.com, Expedia and similar platforms.

In these cases it can be useful to contact the property directly and confirm whether specific services are included.

Tip: make a list of what matters to you and check each point. If the price seems too low, important services may be missing.





Check 5: Evaluate the services that truly affect your holiday

Not all services have the same value.

Think about what makes your holiday enjoyable. If you love the beach, check whether access is easy and whether sunbeds and umbrellas are available. If you want to relax, check for a spa or a quiet pool. If you travel with children, look for family services. If you work remotely, check Wi-Fi quality and work-friendly spaces.

Read reviews to understand how guests really rate these services.

Tip: prioritise the services that matter to you, not the ones that simply look good on paper.

Check 6: Compare OTAs and the official website

The same hotel may have different prices on Booking, Expedia, Airbnb and its official website. Sometimes the official website is more convenient; sometimes it is not.

Important: check whether cancellation conditions are different, whether different services are included and whether the final price is really the same once taxes are added.

Tip: compare at least 2-3 platforms before booking. If the price difference is significant, contact the hotel directly to understand why. The official website may include extra benefits, such as upgrades or late check-out, that you do not see online.



Check 7: Contact the property before booking

If you have specific doubts or questions, contact the hotel directly. This is the final and most important check. You can ask for:

- confirmation of the room you selected
- available upgrades
- special services for your situation, such as honeymoon, anniversary or small children
- packages or offers not visible online
- clarification about photos or descriptions

How to contact them: email, phone or chat from the official website.

Tip: a fast and professional reply is a good sign. If they do not reply or sound unhelpful, it is a warning sign.

Final checklist: Before confirming your booking

A practical checklist that summarises all 7 checks.

- I checked the real location on Google Maps
- I read at least 10-15 recent reviews
- I checked all room photos and the room size
- I verified what is included and what is extra
- I checked the services that really matter to me
- I compared prices on at least 2-3 platforms
- I contacted the hotel for clarification
- I carefully read the cancellation terms
- The final price, including taxes, is what I expected
- I feel confident about my choice

Ready to book with confidence?

By following these 7 checks, you will have the information you need to choose the right hotel for you. No more unpleasant surprises. No more disappointments. Just a holiday that truly matches your expectations. If you want a stay designed with care and attention to detail, discover EF Style Experience or contact us to find the solution that best suits your holiday. Our team is here to help you choose well.

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