



# Unit 1 — Introduction to Hotels 1

## Reading: Introduction to Hotel English, Part 1

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If you're working in, or thinking of working in the hotel industry, it's important to know the differences between the many types of hotels that exist today. Just as hotel guests compare the facilities and amenities offered by each hotel, before choosing the best fit for their planned vacation or business trip, any potential hotel employee will want to find the work environment that appeals to them the most!

In the past, a hotel could be chosen simply by the number of stars next to its name, or the cost of a room. Nowadays, there are not only hotels to suit every budget, but also to satisfy the needs of all sorts of different clients. Hotel guests may be families vacationing with children, couples on their honeymoon, single businessmen and women needing extended stay accommodation, or large groups attending meetings, conferences and exhibitions.

Hotels have sprung up worldwide, that cater to the very specialized tastes of their guests. Some people want to stay in eco-friendly surroundings, some want to take their pets with them when they travel, some want to learn a skill, like cooking or painting, and others want to do nothing more than spend their days in bubbling spa water, eat 'healthy' food and lose some weight.

All hotels, regardless of price and style, share certain characteristics. At the lower end of the market, they offer travelers the basics: a simple room with a bed (or beds) to sleep in and use of a bathroom. At the upper end of the market on the other hand, guests may experience the ultimate in luxury and comfort: they stay in designer styled rooms and suites with custom made fixtures and furnishings, and enjoy superior facilities and services. Luxury hotels offer everything from indoor and outdoor swimming pools to gourmet restaurants and spa treatment and fitness centers. However, the height of luxury for many guests is that they are cared for by multiple members of hotel staff, whose job it is to make them feel pampered!

**Hostels:** Perhaps the most basic of hotel types is the hostel. Popular with backpackers and travelers on very limited budgets, hostels offer little more than a place to sleep. Accommodation is often in shared rooms with shared bathroom facilities and, if guests are lucky, there may be a kitchen of sorts, where food can be heated and drinks made. For students and young people more interested in the trip than in where they catch a few hours sleep, a hostel is often seen as a place to meet up with other like-minded travelers, and its lack of comfort is happily ignored.

**Motels:** A motel is a simple hotel, designed to accommodate motorists on long trips, who need to break their journey for a night before continuing on to a final destination. Motels originated in the United States, where they were first seen

along empty stretches of the new Interstate Highways. The main feature of their design was the way individual rooms were built facing parking areas and rooms could be entered without having to pass through a lobby, as you would in a hotel.

A typical motel room contains one or more beds, a TV, a small kitchen area with refrigerator and microwave, and a bathroom. Guests generally check-in at an on site reception office, pay in advance, and vacate their rooms when they are ready to continue their journey.

In recent years and in many countries, motels have developed an unfortunate reputation as places where rooms can be rented by the hour, and where guests are not of the most desirable type. However, many motel chains, both in the United States and in Europe, have concentrated on improving their image by renovating properties and adding amenities such as restaurants, coffee bars and swimming pools. Many motels close to popular holiday destinations can be as comfortable as some of the more centrally located hotels, making them a good option for both short and long stay visitors to the area.

## **Discussion Questions**

Why might it be useful to know something about all the different types of hotels before applying for your first job in the hotel industry?

What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of staying in a hostel?

Which do you personally prefer to stay at: a hotel, a hostel, or a motel? Why?