

FRONT OFFICE · OPERATING STANDARD 108

The Valet Standard

WHO

Valet attendants and doormen, checked by the bell captain

WHEN

Every guest or visitor car left with the hotel, from arrival to departure

YOU NEED

Numbered tickets, the locked key cabinet, the valet log, a phone for photos

TIME TO TRAIN

45 minutes, with two drop-offs and one recall practised

What this standard achieves

Every guest who arrives by car knows within a minute what parking costs, how the car comes back and who holds the keys. The car returns as it arrived, at the door at the agreed time, so the last minutes of the stay go on saying goodbye instead of waiting on the kerb.

Measured by

01 Valet parking offered to every guest arriving by car

02 Price per night and the recall said before the key is taken

03 Numbered ticket handed over, matching tag on the key

04 Walk-round done and five photos taken before the car moves

05 Key in the locked cabinet within 5 minutes of drop-off

06 Car at the door within 10 minutes of a call, 15 in a resort

07 Departure car at the door at the agreed time

08 Seat, mirrors, radio and climate left as the guest set them

PHASE 1

Before the shift

STEPS 1–4

- 01 Read today's arrivals and departures for cars: guest names, plates where known, electric cars that need charging, and departure times already agreed. Note the cars due at the door in the first hour.
- 02 Check the kit: numbered tickets in sequence, key tags, the key cabinet locked with its key on the bell captain, the valet log, a charged phone or tablet for photos, and two umbrellas.
- 03 Walk the garage: count the free spaces, check the chargers work, and keep the spaces nearest the exit for cars leaving in the next two hours.
- 04 Only valets with a driving licence in date, a copy filed with the bell captain, and one supervised drive of the hotel's garage route park guest cars. Nobody else takes a key.

PHASE 2

Take the car

STEPS 5–10

- 05 Check yourself against The Presence Standard before the first car: uniform, name badge, clean hands. The door and the bags follow The Kerbside Standard; this standard starts with the key.
- 06 Once the guest is out and the bags are with the bell attendant, offer valet parking in one sentence, with the price per night, before you take the key.
"Would you like us to park the car for you, Mr Novak? Valet parking is €45 per night, charged to your room."
- 07 Ask whether the car needs anything: charging, a child seat left in or taken out, items to bring to the room. Check with the guest that the boot and the back seat are empty of anything they need tonight.
"Shall we charge the car overnight? And is there anything else you'd like brought to the room?"
- 08 Hand over the numbered ticket and explain the recall in one sentence: call the desk, message through the app or show the ticket at the door, and how many minutes the car takes.
"Here is your ticket, number 214. Call the desk about 10 minutes before you need the car, and it will be at the door."
- 09 Tie the matching numbered tag to the key in front of the guest. Never write the room number or the guest's name on the tag or on the ticket stub that stays with the car.
- 10 Ask whether anything should stay exactly as it is. Move the seat only if you must, and note its position to put it back. Never change the radio, the climate settings or the phone pairing.

PHASE 3

Check and park

STEPS 11-15

- 11 Before the car moves, walk round it and take five photos (front, back, both sides, and the dashboard showing mileage and fuel or charge). Note any existing mark in the log on the car's line.
- 12 Show the guest any existing mark before they walk in, once and plainly, so you both have the same record.
"There's a small scratch on the rear bumper. I've noted it with the photos, so we both have it on record."
- 13 Drive to the garage by the agreed route, at walking pace in the drive and below 15 km/h in the garage. No phone in hand, no music, no passengers, no detours.
- 14 Park in a numbered space, lock the car, check that every window is closed, and write the space number in the log. Plug in an electric car if the guest asked, and note the charge level.
- 15 Hang the key in the locked cabinet on the hook matching the ticket within 5 minutes of drop-off. The cabinet is never left open; only the valets on duty and the bell captain hold its key.

PHASE 4

Bring it back

STEPS 16-20

- 16 When a guest calls for the car, repeat the ticket number, give a clock time, and write the time of the call in the log.
"Of course, Ms Haddad. Ticket 214: your car will be at the main door at 18:40."
- 17 Take the key from the cabinet only against the ticket number, sign it out, and have the car at the door within 10 minutes of the call, 15 in a resort with a distant garage.
- 18 If the car will be late, call or message the guest before the promised time with the new time and the reason. Never let the promised time pass without a word.
- 19 Stop at the door with the climate as you found it, windows closed and the seat back where the guest left it. Leave the engine running only if the guest asked for the car warmed or cooled.
- 20 Take the ticket, open the driver's door, and hand over the key. Tell the guest the charge level if you charged the car.
"Here you are, Ms Haddad. The car is charged to 90 percent. Have a good evening."

PHASE 5

Plan the departure

STEPS 21–25

- 21 The evening before departure, or at check-out at the latest, ask each guest with a car what time they want it at the door, and write that time in the log.

"What time would you like your car at the door tomorrow, Mr Okafor?"

- 22 Bring the car round 5 minutes before the agreed time, never more than 10, with the boot clear for the bags and the windscreen clean. A car brought too early blocks the drive.

- 23 Load the bags with the bell attendant, counted against the departure count, and check with the guest that chargers, umbrellas and the child seat are all in the car.

- 24 Post the parking charge to the folio before the guest reaches the desk, so the bill is complete at check-out. The goodbye at the car follows The Farewell Standard.

- 25 Stay at the kerb until the car has left the drive, then close its line in the log with the time and your initials.

PHASE 6

Close the shift

STEPS 26–28

- 26 At the end of the shift, count the keys in the cabinet against the cars in the log and in the garage. Report any difference to the duty manager before you leave.

- 27 Hand over every car due out in the next 12 hours to the next shift by name: the guest, the ticket number and the time agreed.

- 28 Keep the photos for 30 days after departure, then delete them. Show them only to the guest, the duty manager or the insurer, never in a group chat.

What to record

At drop-off

- ☐ Ticket number and matching key tag
- ☐ Guest's name and room
- ☐ Plate, make and colour
- ☐ Time of drop-off

Condition

- ☐ Five photos, dashboard included
- ☐ Existing marks, shown to the guest
- ☐ Fuel or charge level
- ☐ Mileage

Parking

- ☐ Garage space number
- ☐ Charging asked for and done
- ☐ Key on its hook, with the time
- ☐ Valet who parked the car

Recall

- ☐ Time the guest called
- ☐ Time promised
- ☐ Time at the door
- ☐ Valet who brought it round

Departure

- ☐ Time agreed with the guest
- ☐ Bags counted into the car
- ☐ Parking charge posted to the folio

End of shift

- ☐ Keys counted against the log
- ☐ Cars due out in the next 12 hours
- ☐ Differences told to the duty manager

When the situation changes

The guest has lost the ticket

Ask for the name and room, check photo ID against the profile and the plate against the log, then release the car. Write the ID seen in the log.

The guest reports new damage

Look at the mark together and show the drop-off photos. If the mark is new or unclear, call the duty manager to the kerb within 5 minutes. Never argue at the car.

Someone else asks for the car

Release it only to a person named on the booking, or authorised by the guest in person or from the room phone, with ID seen and logged, as for keys in The Key Standard.

The guest seems unfit to drive

Call the duty manager before you bring the car. Offer a taxi or the hotel car calmly, away from other guests. The duty manager decides when the key is handed back.

The garage is full

Say so before you take the key, with the nearest alternative and its price. Never park a guest's car on the street or in a space the hotel does not control.

The guest wants to keep the key

Offer self-parking: give the garage entrance, the space and the price, and log the car as self-parked so the desk knows it is there.

Common mistakes

MISTAKE

Taking the key before saying the price. The first time the guest hears "€45 per night" is on the bill at check-out.

MISTAKE

Skipping the photos on a busy afternoon. When a scratch is found, nobody can say whether it came with the car.

MISTAKE

Leaving keys on the podium while you bring another car round. A key without a person beside it is a car anyone can take.

MISTAKE

Retuning the radio to drive 300 metres. The guest gets back into a car that no longer feels like their own.

MISTAKE

Fetching the car only when the guest reaches the door. The goodbye turns into ten minutes on the kerb beside the bags.

MISTAKE

Writing the room number on the key tag. A lost tag tells a stranger which car belongs to which room.

Check your team

After training (45 minutes, with two drop-offs and one recall practised), each person answers these without the sheet.

- 01 What does the guest hear from you before you take the key?
- 02 Which photos are taken before the car moves, and how long are they kept?
- 03 Where does the key go, within how long, and who holds the cabinet key?
- 04 How quickly does a car reach the door after a call, in town and in a resort?
- 05 What do you do when a guest has lost the ticket?
- 06 When is the departure time agreed, and when does the car reach the door?

Our Valet Facts

What every valet must be able to say without checking:
prices, times, who does what. Fill it in once with
the bell captain and keep a copy on the podium.

At drop-off

What we say _____

Price or time _____

Who does it _____

What goes in the log _____

When the guest calls

What we say _____

Price or time _____

Who does it _____

What goes in the log _____

At departure

What we say _____

Price or time _____

Who does it _____

What goes in the log _____

How to use this with your team

Fill in one block a day at the morning briefing with the bell captain. On the fourth day the bell captain plays a guest at the podium, and each valet gives all three blocks without looking at the card.

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