

HOUSEKEEPING · OPERATING STANDARD 117

The Public Areas Standard

WHO

Public area attendants, checked by their supervisor

WHEN

All day on timed rounds, from 06:00 until the last guest has gone to bed

YOU NEED

Round sheet, caddy with colour-coded cloths, wet-floor signs, spare stock

TIME TO TRAIN

45 minutes, with one supervised round of the building

What this standard achieves

Guests cross the lobby, ride the lifts and use the washrooms without ever finding a spill, a smeared door or an empty soap dispenser, and without watching the cleaning happen. The hotel knows each area was checked, by whom and when, because every round is signed.

Measured by

01

Public washrooms checked and signed every 30 minutes, 07:00–23:00

02

Lobby walked every 30 minutes, entrance glass checked every hour

03

Lift cars checked every hour, buttons and rails wiped

04

Every guest corridor vacuumed once a day, between 10:00 and 17:00

05

Spills and breakages cleared within 5 minutes of being seen

06

Wet-floor sign out before a mop touches the floor

07

Soap, paper and towels never below a quarter in any washroom

08

Machine cleaning only between 23:00 and 07:00

PHASE 1

Before the first guest

STEPS 1–4

- 01 Read the day's sheet at 05:45: events and their break times, group arrivals and departures, VIPs arriving through the lobby, areas closed for works. Busy hours get extra rounds on the sheet.
- 02 Stock the caddy: colour-coded cloths (red for toilets and urinals only), glass cleaner, neutral cleaner, disinfectant, dustpan and brush, gloves, spare soap, paper and liners, and two wet-floor signs.
- 03 Finish the heavy work before 07:00, while the lobby is empty: machine the hard floors, vacuum rugs and seating, shake or change the entrance mats, clean the inside glass of the doors, polish brass and steel.
- 04 Set the lobby before the first guest: furniture on its marks, cushions plumped, newspapers in the rack, flowers with no dead heads and clear water, every bin empty and every light on as set.

PHASE 2

Working among guests

STEPS 5–9

- 05 Check yourself against The Presence Standard before you step into the lobby: uniform, name badge, clean hands, and the morning's arrivals in mind.
- 06 When a guest comes towards you, stop work, step aside, greet them and let them pass. A guest never has to walk round a mop, a machine or a caddy.
"Good morning. Please, go ahead."
- 07 Answer a guest's question if you can in one sentence. For anything else, walk them to the front desk or the concierge rather than pointing the way.
"The spa is on the lower ground floor. Let me show you to the lift."
- 08 Keep your equipment out of the walking line: the caddy beside you, never in a doorway, at a lift door or on a stair; cables run along the wall; nothing left unattended, even for a minute.
- 09 Work quietly between 07:00 and 23:00: no floor machines in the lobby, at restaurant entrances or near meeting rooms while guests are there. Use a cordless vacuum, a dust mop or a dustpan.

PHASE 3

The lobby round

STEPS 10–14

- 10 Walk the lobby every 30 minutes in the same loop: entrance, seating, front desk side, lifts, washroom corridor. Pick up anything on the floor, clear used cups and glasses, empty bins over half full.
- 11 Wipe prints from the entrance glass, door handles and push plates every hour, and more often in rain or at busy arrival times. Check the entrance mat is dry, flat and free of sand at the edges.
- 12 Reset each seating area as soon as the guests leave it: cushions plumped, tables wiped dry, newspapers and magazines back in the rack in order, chairs on their marks.
- 13 Check flowers and plants on every round: no dead leaves or petals, no water on the table, vase water clear. Tell the florist by noon about anything you cannot put right.
- 14 Clear what others leave: room service trays to in-room dining as The Tray Collection Standard sets out, luggage trolleys to the bell desk, found items as The Lost Property Standard sets out.

PHASE 4

Public washrooms

STEPS 15–20

- 15 Before you go in, knock, announce yourself and wait for an answer. Put the cleaning sign at the door and clean one section at a time, so the washroom stays open. Follow the hotel's rule on who cleans which washroom.
"Housekeeping. Is anyone inside?"
- 16 Every 30 minutes: wipe basins, taps and counters dry, clean and dry the mirrors, check every toilet and urinal, pick up paper from the floor and empty any bin over half full.
- 17 Refill soap, hand cream, hand towels and toilet paper so nothing is below a quarter, and fold the end of each toilet roll. Replace used cloth towels with clean ones, folded the same way.
- 18 Clean toilets and urinals with the red cloth and the toilet brush only: seat, hinges, base and the wall behind. Check the floor round each base and behind each door with a torch for hair and splashes.
- 19 Breathe in as you leave: the washroom should smell of nothing. If it doesn't, find the cause (a drain, a bin, a cubicle) and fix it or call engineering. Never cover a smell with spray.
- 20 Sign the sheet inside the door, or scan the code, with the time and your initials. The supervisor checks the signatures against the room on every walk of the building.

PHASE 5

Lifts, corridors and stairs

STEPS 21–24

- 21 Every hour in each lift car: wipe the buttons and handrails, check the mirror and steel from the side, sweep or vacuum the floor and straighten the mat. Clean the call buttons and door tracks on every floor once a day.
- 22 Vacuum every guest corridor once a day, between 10:00 and 17:00, end to end with the crevice tool along the skirting, never outside a DND room. Spot-clean marks on walls, doors and frames.
- 23 Once a day on each floor, check the ice and vending areas, service doors and lift lobbies: floor clean, nothing stored outside a service room, ice machine area dry, bins emptied.
- 24 Sweep the stairs and landings guests use and wipe the handrails twice a day. Fire exits are never blocked by a caddy, a trolley or stock, not even for a minute.

PHASE 6

Spills and the unexpected

STEPS 25–29

- 25 Clear a spill or breakage within 5 minutes of seeing it or hearing about it. Put the wet-floor sign out first, pick up broken glass with gloves and a dustpan, then mop and dry the floor.
- 26 If a guest has spilled something, clear it quickly and without fuss, and offer to replace what was lost. Say nothing more about it.
"Let me take care of that for you. May I ask the bar to bring you another?"
- 27 In rain or blown sand, lay extra mats and a wet-floor sign at the entrance, mop the entrance every 15 minutes while it lasts, and wipe the wheels of the luggage trolleys.
- 28 For vomit, blood or other body fluids: close off the area with signs, put on gloves and an apron, use the spill kit and disinfectant, log it, and tell the supervisor.
- 29 Report what you cannot fix to engineering within 10 minutes: a dead bulb, a dripping tap, a cracked tile, a lift fault. Write it on the sheet with the time you reported it.

PHASE 7

Evening and night

STEPS 30–32

- 30** At 18:00 set the lobby for the evening: seating reset, flowers checked, washrooms restocked in full before the dinner hour, and the entrance glass cleaned once more.
- 31** From 23:00 the night attendant checks the washrooms and lifts every hour, and does the work too noisy for the day as the night list says: scrubbing, carpet extraction, polishing.
- 32** Hand over at the end of every shift on the sheet: rounds done, rounds missed and why, faults reported and still open, areas closed, stock running low. The next attendant starts from it.

What to record

Round sheet

- ☐ Area and time of each round
- ☐ Attendant's initials
- ☐ Soap, paper and towels refilled
- ☐ Anything not done, and why

Faults

- ☐ What is faulty, and where
- ☐ Time reported to engineering
- ☐ Time fixed, or still open

Incidents

- ☐ Spill or breakage, place and time
- ☐ Time it was cleared
- ☐ Body fluid clean-up, spill kit used
- ☐ Items found and handed in

When the situation changes

An event breaks and 200 guests come out

Ask the events office for the break times the day before. Put an extra attendant on the nearest washrooms from 15 minutes before each break, and check them every 10 minutes until it ends.

A guest is in the washroom you must clean

Wait outside, or come back in five minutes. Never clean while a guest is using the washroom, and never hurry them.

A VIP arrives through the lobby

Check the entrance, the lobby and the lift they will use 15 minutes before the arrival time, then keep out of the walking line until they have gone up.

A lift is out of order

Put a sign at each landing and tell the front desk. Check the working lifts every 30 minutes while they carry the extra traffic.

A guest asks you to stop the vacuum

Switch it off at once, apologise and move to another area. Write the time on the sheet so the round comes back to it later.

A washroom runs out between rounds

Refill it at once when a guest or a colleague tells you, and add a check at the middle of the round for that washroom for the rest of the week.

Common mistakes

MISTAKE

Mopping without a wet-floor sign because it will only take a minute. A guest slips in that minute.

MISTAKE

Signing the washroom sheet for a round you did not do. The sheet then hides the gap it was put there to show.

MISTAKE

Using the toilet cloth on the basin. One cloth for everything carries what was on the toilet to every tap.

MISTAKE

Cleaning the entrance glass at 09:00, in the middle of check-out. Guests walk through the spray and the cables to reach the door.

MISTAKE

Leaving the caddy at a lift door while you clean inside the car. A guest with luggage has to choose between the caddy and the next lift.

MISTAKE

Refilling a dispenser only once it is empty. A guest finds it empty first, between two of your rounds.

Check your team

After training (45 minutes, with one supervised round of the building), each person answers these without the sheet.

01 How often are the public washrooms checked during the day, and what do you sign?

02 What do you do in the first minute after you see a spill?

03 Which cleaning is done only between 23:00 and 07:00, and why?

04 Where must the caddy never stand, even for a minute?

05 What do you do when a guest walks towards you while you are working?

06 Where do a room service tray, a luggage trolley and a found item go?

The Public Areas Round

Each public area, how often it is checked and what each visit covers. Set the times for your building and post the card in the public area office.

Area	How often	Each visit
Public washrooms	Every 30 minutes, hourly at night	Basins dry, toilets, paper, soap, smell, signed
Lobby and seating	Every 30 minutes	Floor, cups, cushions, flowers, bins
Entrance and glass	Every hour, more in rain	Prints, handles, mats, sand
Lifts	Every hour	Buttons, rails, mirror, floor
Guest corridors	Once a day, 10:00–17:00	Vacuum, skirting, marks, frames
Stairs and fire exits	Twice a day	Swept, rails wiped, nothing stored
Floors by machine	23:00–07:00 only	Scrub, extract, polish

How to use this with your team

Brief one row a day at the shift briefing. The supervisor checks that row's area on every walk of the building that day, and reads the round sheets on Friday to find the times that slip.

Part of the DolceVita Standards Library: free operating standards for every department of the hotel, at dolcevitahospitality.com/free-resources.