

## Concierge

# The Directions Standard

Five steps for directions a guest can follow without a phone signal. Most guests nod at the desk and forget the second turn by the time they reach the door.

| Who                                                                                                                        | When                                         | You need                                                               |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Concierges, door staff and front office at the desk                                                                        | Every time a guest asks how to get somewhere | Paper maps and a pen, current taxi fares, hotel cards with the address |
| Measured by Walking time given in minutes · Way back explained before the guest leaves · Hotel card in hand on every route |                                              |                                                                        |

## 1 Ask how

Before you give a route, ask two things: how the guest wants to travel (on foot, by taxi, bus or train) and when they need to arrive. A 25-minute walk is a pleasure at 10:00 and hard work at 14:00 in July.

"Would you like to walk there, or shall I arrange a car? And what time do you need to arrive?"

**Common mistake** Giving the fastest route by default. The guest wanted the walk along the river, and you sent them down the main road.

## 2 Mark the map

Draw the route on a paper map in pen: the hotel, the destination and no more than three landmarks in between. Write the walking time in minutes next to the destination. Send it by message if asked.

"Left at the church, right at the pharmacy with the green cross, and it's on the square. About 12 minutes on foot."

**Common mistake** Saying "it's easy, just five minutes". Nothing is easy in a city you've never seen, and five minutes was your pace.

## 3 Give the numbers

For a taxi, give the usual fare, how to pay and the journey time at that hour. For a bus, tram or train, give the line, the stop name, the ticket price and where to buy the ticket.

"A taxi to the station is about €18 at this hour, card accepted. It takes 15 minutes, or 25 after 17:00."

**Common mistake** Leaving out the fare. The guest pays double to the first driver at the rank and wonders why nobody warned them.

## 4 Plan the return

Explain the way back before the guest leaves: where to find a taxi, the last train or boat, and the hotel's phone number. Hand over a hotel card with the address in the local language.

"The last boat back is at 23:10. If you miss it, call us on the number on this card and we'll send a car."

**Common mistake** Planning only the way there. At midnight the guest is outside a closed station, and the hotel's number is in the room.

## 5 Check

When a guest has tried a route that is new to the desk, ask on their return whether the directions worked. Correct the map notes or the fare list the same day if a stop, line or price has changed.

"Bus 42 now stops at Piazza Dante, not Via Roma. Fare €2.20 since 1 Oct. Map notes updated, L. Ferri."

**Common mistake** Giving out last year's bus line because nobody updated the file. The guest waits 20 minutes at a stop that has moved.

## Before They Walk Out the Door

Six questions the desk hears every day, and the detail that goes missing from each answer. The missing detail is usually the one the guest needed.

| The guest asks                 | Your answer includes                        | Often forgotten                          |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| "How far is it?"               | Minutes on foot, not kilometres             | Whether the route is uphill              |
| "Can I get a taxi?"            | Usual fare, payment, time at that hour      | Where to find a taxi back                |
| "Which bus do I take?"         | Line, stop name, ticket price, where to buy | The time of the last bus back            |
| "Is it fine to walk at night?" | An honest answer and a well-lit route       | A car as the option after dark           |
| "Where is the museum?"         | Opening hours and the closing day           | Last entry, often an hour before closing |
| "Can I walk back?"             | The same route, marked the other way        | The hotel card with the local address    |

### How to use this with your team

Take one row at each morning briefing. The head concierge asks one person to give the full answer for a real place in your city, aloud, in under a minute. Repeat the week's weakest row on Saturday.

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