



# Organization policies & Procedures for room preparation

Each hotel will have its own policies and procedures. Policies and procedures are very important and must be adhered to. They help to ensure the health, safety, security, and privacy of the hotel, its staff and guests, including their assets and belongings. In this article, will specifically explain the hotel policies and procedures of housekeeping services.

To begin with, it important to define what policies and procedures are:

- Policy - rule or code of conduct
- Procedure - step by step instruction

Housekeeping will normally have more policies and procedures than most departments in a hospitality business because of the nature of work, the need for detailed consistency in performance, also because of the safety and security priorities.

There are various kinds of policies and procedures that are applied in a hotel. For instance, the housekeeping department may have some policies such as:

- Zero tolerance of theft
- Guest room doors must be open whilst cleaning is in progress
- Protective clothes to be worn when cleaning

As for the procedures, housekeeping department may have several standard of procedures regarding to make bed, bathroom cleaning, floor mopping, etc.

# Organizing

Organizing refers to the executive housekeeper's responsibility to structure the department's staff and to divide the work so that everyone gets a fair assignment and all the work can be finished on time.

The major areas within the department are; Housekeeper's office, Desk Control Room, Linen Room, Linen Uniform Room, Uniform Room, Tailors Room, Lost and Found Section, Floor Pantries, and Heavy Equipment Stores.

- **Housekeeper's Office**

This is the main administration center for the department. It must be an independent cabin to provide the Housekeeper with silence to plan out her work and held her meetings. It should be a glass paneled office so as to give her a view of what is happening outside her office.

- **Desk Control Room**

This is the main communication center of housekeeping. It is from here that all information is sent out and received concerning the department. The Desk Control Room should have a desk with a telephone and a computer. It should have a large notice board for the staff schedules and day-to-day instructions. Here is also the point where all staff report for duty and check out at the duty end. It would be next to the Housekeeper's Office.

- **Linen Room**

This is the room where current linen is stored for issue and receipt. The linen room should have a counter across which the exchange of linen takes place. The room should be next to the laundry so that the supply of linen to and from laundry is quick and smooth.

- **Linen Uniform Room**

This room stores the stocks of new linen and uniforms. These stocks are only touched when the current uniform and linens in circulation falls short due to damage or loss. Larger hotels may have enough space for an independent Uniform Store in addition to a Linen Store.

- **Uniform Room**  
This room stocks the uniforms in current use. This room must have enough hanging space.
- **Tailors Room**  
This room is kept for house tailors who attend to the stitching and mending work of linen and uniforms.
- **Lost and Found Section**  
This should be a small space with a cupboard to store all guest articles that are lost and may be claimed later.
- **Floor Pantries**  
Each guest floor must have a floor pantry to keep a supply of linen, guest supplies and cleaning supplies for the floor. It is the housekeeping nerve center for the floor. The floor pantry should keep linen for that floor in circulation. It should be near the service elevators and have shelves to stock all linen and other supplies.
- **Heavy Equipment Stores**  
This will be a room to store bulky items such as vacuum cleaners, shampoo machines, etc.

## DAILY ACTIVITIES

What are all the activities you think a room attendant does during a shift?

- Prepare for work
- Enter room
- Clean room
- Provide information to guests
- Maintain storage areas and trolleys
- Close shift



# Grooming & Personal presentation standards

In all aspects of grooming, room attendants should reflect expectations of the guest and the property.

- ☺ Ensure consistency
- ☺ Build confidence and pride of staff
- ☺ Uphold a professional image



## Attributes and qualities of a house keeping personnel

Servicing guest bedrooms requires you to maintain a high standard of personal hygiene because housekeeping duties are physically demanding and it is likely that you will get hot and sweaty while working. Most establishments require housekeeping staff to wear a uniform. Shower facilities are often also provided for staff. Make sure that you shower or wash daily. Washing hair, brushing teeth and having a fresh clean body odor are very important if you are a housekeeper, and for anyone working in the hospitality industry, especially if you have guest contact.

Housekeepers need to adhere to certain grooming and personal presentation standards (official and/or unofficial). This may include: Personal appearance  
Personal hygiene  
Personal characteristics

## What are expected standards for housekeeper?

- Clothing
- Name Badge
- Hair
- Nails
- Jewelry
- Make up



## Dress Codes and Uniforms of housekeeping

Most establishments provide their staff with uniforms. You must always wear this uniform with pride. Your uniform serves several purposes and benefits:

- It makes you easily-identifiable to guests
- It protects your own clothing from getting dirty or damaged
- It may protect you from chemicals and other related materials you work with
- It ensures that you look smart and professional - improving the image of the housekeeping department and the establishment it.

### Always remember to:

- Travel to work in your home clothes and change into your uniform at work. This makes sure your uniform does not get dirty on the way to work and that you do not carry in any bacteria from outside the establishment.
- Exchange your uniform for a clean one as often as is directed by the housekeeping department or as needed.
- Make sure that your uniform is clean and wrinkle free.
- Keep your uniform in good condition, reporting any repairs needed or taking care of them yourself - depending on your establishment's policy.
- Ensure that your uniform has a full set of buttons at all times.
- Adhere to any code of conduct that your establishment may have about wearing your uniform, for example: you are not allowed to smoke in your uniform robe under the influence of alcohol while wearing it. You may also be prohibited to enter certain establishments in your uniform e.g. alcohol selling establishments like bars.
- Name Badges: Some establishments issue their employees with name badges to wear as part of their uniform. The badge may contain the name as well as department or position, for example: "Mona, Housekeeping". Remember to wear your badge according to hotel policy.

## Hair and nails

Your establishment will make mention of this in the personal appearance policy.

### You must at all times:

- Have clean, well-kept hair
- Wear your hair in such a way that it does not interfere with doing your job properly, for example hang in your eyes and prevent full sight.
- Ensure, in the event that that you hair fall out a lot, that you wear something to prevent it being distributed all over a guest room, for example.
- Some establishments may require you to wear a head scarf or bandanna with your uniform.
- Make sure that your nails are tidy at all times. Your nails must not be long enough to damage items in the line of work e.g. catch on linen or scratch other items. Some establishments require short, unpolished nails. This will be indicated by the establishment's policy.
- If your nails are long, it is difficult to clean them and you may collect and transfer dirt and bacteria, which may cause yourself, your colleagues and guests to become sick.

## Jewellery and Cosmetics

Once again the requirements will differ from one establishment to the next. Most establishments adhere to the following basic standards:

- No jewelry, except for a wedding band and possibly a watch is allowed
- A watch may be quite a handy tool for a housekeeper to assist him/her with time keeping
- Chains around the neck, dangling earrings and loose bracelets are usually not allowed, as they may pose a safety risk.
- Some establishments only allow basic day make-up to be worn by housekeepers - for the sole purpose of looking neat and tidy
- Be careful of very strong smelling perfume as the smell may hover in the guest room long after you have left and may not necessary be pleasant to the guest.

Use the following Personal Presentation Checklist to assess yourself:

Personal Presentation Self-Appraisal Checklist	Yes	No	Comments
Is your personal hygiene up to the standard required?			
Is your hair clean and tidy, and tied back if required			
Are your fingernails clean and neat			
Are your clothes clean?			

## Personal Hygiene

Personal hygiene is important in all areas of the establishment, even in the housekeeping department. Your personal hygiene not only affects you, it affects others too!

Personal hygiene practices in the workplace

- Good personal hygiene practices can be facilitated in the workplace by:
- Proper and sufficient changing rooms, basins with soap, hot and cold water, paper towels, hot air dryers etc
- Clean laundered uniforms
- The use of disposable gloves where necessary
- Ensuring that you know what is expected of you in terms of personal hygiene standards and practices

## The key rules to good personal hygiene

There are five basic rules for personal hygiene:

### Practice personal cleanliness

If you carry dirt on your body or if you have not showered for some time, bacteria will start growing on you in this dirt. You could also smell stale and sweaty, which is not pleasant for guests or your colleagues. The following rules of personal cleanliness are important:

- Shower, bath or wash thoroughly every day
- Keep hair and nails clean and neat
- Brush teeth at least twice daily and use a breath refresher as needed throughout your shift (especially smokers)
- Always wear clean clothes

### Travel to work in home clothes

- As previously mentioned, when you arrive at work, you are carrying a lot of bacteria and dirt with you on your clothes and possibly shoes. It is best to wear street clothes to work, wash if necessary and then put on a clean uniform before going on shift.
- Low-heeled closed shoes will protect you against potentially dangerous chemicals and machinery. They will also help you to move quickly and efficiently around your workplace.
- Most establishments require their housekeepers to wear clean socks, flesh-coloured stockings or tights to maintain a professional hygienic appearance.

### Wash your hands

It is important to wash your hands in order to prevent bacteria spreading from you to the guests, from one guest room to the next etc. Wash your hands every time you:

- Have used the toilet
- Blow your nose or use a tissue/handkerchief
- Cough or sneeze
- Have handled food



- Have handled rubbish
- Have smoked
- Take off gloves
- Have been in contact with any possibly contaminated items or areas e.g. condoms, toilets etc.
- Move from one room to the next

### Avoid bad habits

Bad habits like smoking, drinking and addiction to narcotic substances have a negative effect on your health and appearance. Smoking causes bad odours, smelly breath, stained teeth, chronic coughing, yellow fingernails etc., all of which can be detrimental to your work ability and professional appearance. Other bad habits may include:

- Scratching your body - any areas
- Picking pimples or sores
- Wiping your hands on your clothes
- Continuously wiping your hands on your uniform/apron may cause three things to happen:
  - Your uniform/apron will get wet and be an ideal place for bacteria to grow
  - You will deposit dirt and bacteria onto the uniform/apron
  - You will transfer bacteria and dirt from your apron to the area you are working in and the items you handle.

These bad habits are not only detrimental to your own health and the satisfaction of your guests, but also cause unhygienic conditions, as bacteria spreads more readily.

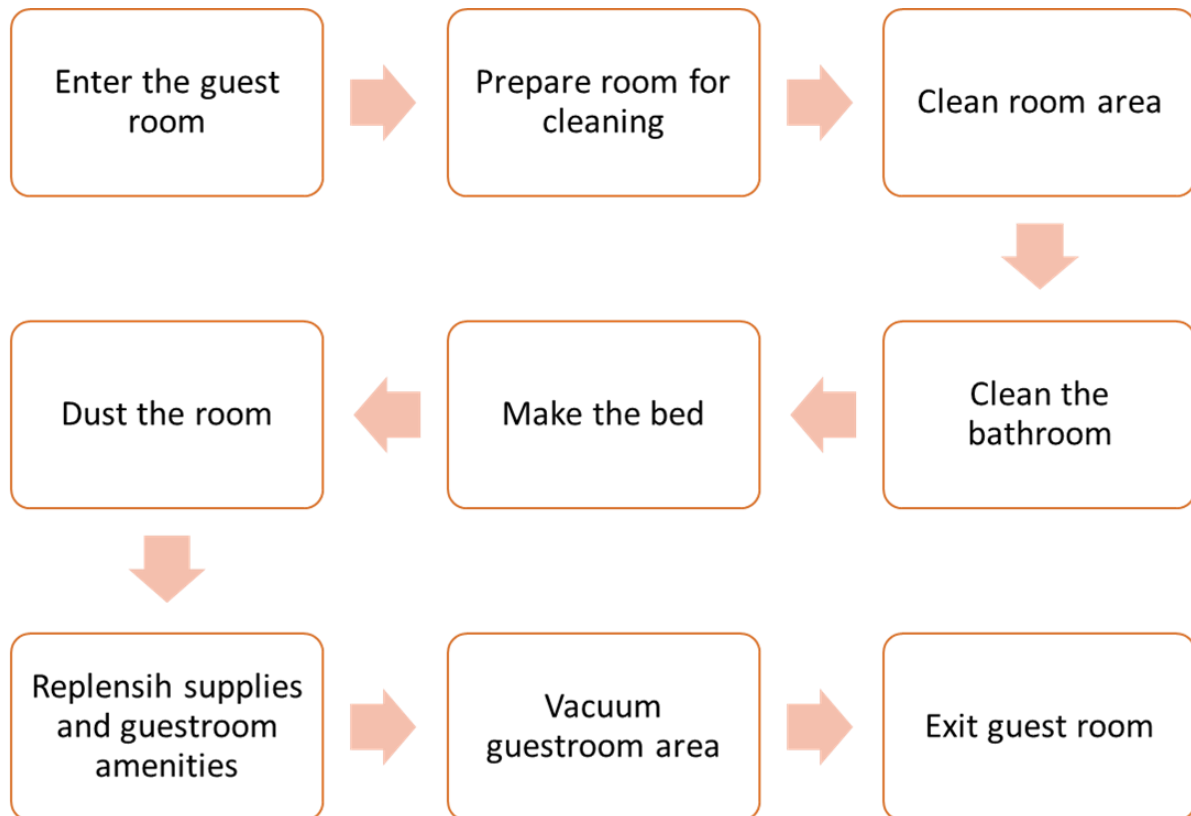
### General appearance and posture

You need to be confident at work and looking and feeling good comes from taking pride in your appearance, and most importantly, your attitude to your appearance.

Maintain a good posture. When you are talking to a colleague or guest, remember to stand up straight, look professional and be positive. Do not slouch, lean against something or fidget with equipment or your hands.

# WORKFLOW FOR ROOM PREPARATION (准备房间的工作流程)

## Guest Preparing Workflow:



# Daily Guest Room Preparation

Following is a list of activities a room attendant may be required to complete on a daily basis. As you can see there are many activities a room attendant is responsible for in a normal work shift, involving a wide variety of knowledge and skills.



## Prepare for work

- Collect master keys
- Collect daily room allocation sheets
- Stock housekeeping trolleys
- Stock and store supplies
- Determine the order of cleaning of rooms
- Identify any special requests.



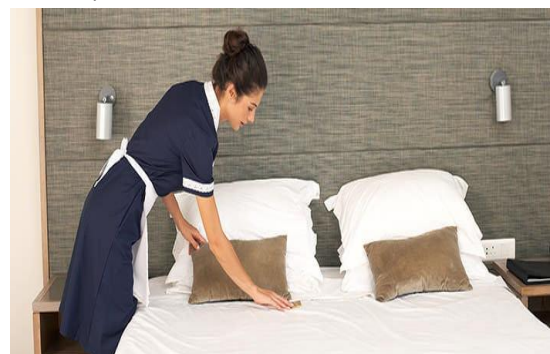
## Enter room

- Knock on door in compliance with policy
- Open door
- Place trolley in door path.



## Clean room

- Open curtains and windows for ventilation
- Remove used guest amenities and rubbish
- Clean showers, tubs, sinks and bathroom items
- Change linen and make beds
- Check for damaged linen items
- Inspect rooms for safety hazards and for the operating condition of equipment and report defects to the maintenance department
- Report lost and found articles, maintenance problems or special room problems
- Dust and clean room decorations, appliances and structural surfaces (wall fixtures, window sills, and vents)
- Dust, brush, polish vacuuming furniture.
- Replenish guest amenities and supplies
- Check, record and replenish mini bar
- Prepare rooms for guest arrival and respond to special guest requests, such as delivering newspapers or cleaning a spill.
- Deliver and retrieve items on loan to guests such as iron and ironing board
- Perform rotation cleaning duties (such as. steam clean of carpets) as required
- Vacuum and sweep carpets and other floor surfaces.
- Mop floor surfaces as needed.
- Record room status on work assignment sheets
- Phone supervisor or reception updating status of room
- Close door.



# SAFETY AND SECURITY MEASURES IN HOUSEKEEPING



Housekeeping in a hotel is a very physically demanding job. The personnel are on their feet for a full shift of 8 hours during which they perform various tasks that are demanding for the body. Housekeeping has the largest workforce in the hotel. It is therefore, imperative for the Housekeeper to ensure safe conditions and practices in the department.

Managers must train employees to recognize potentially hazardous conditions and take corrective actions before they cause injuries like sprains, strains, falls;

- Wet floors and slippery walkways
- Messy floors
- Equipment left out in the way
- Improper lifting techniques

Best practices for handling chemicals, proper personal protective equipment selection, material handling, and slip, trip, and fall prevention are discussed. Readers will gain an understanding of how to identify at-risk situations and how to avoid serious injury or illness.

Housekeepers are exposed to a variety of hazards while on the job and perform a variety of tasks throughout their work shift. Proper training to identify hazards and risks associated with these tasks will help prevent employee injury

## Occupational Hazard

1. Walking
2. Standing
3. Stooping
4. Squatting
5. Kneeling
6. Stretching
7. Twisting
8. Crouching
9. Lifting
10. Pushing

The above are only sample situations where the body is under pressure. There are countless number of other situations that truly challenge housekeeping personnel.

## Reducing the Physical Stress

The question then arises, how we reduce the physical stress on housekeeping personnel. The following suggestions are useful to keep in mind.

1. Lighter equipment can reduce work. Heavy equipment must be on castors. Portability helps greatly in work management.
2. Modern Detergents help in cleaning with a swipe that may eliminate tedious scrubbing.
3. Job Rotation
4. Team Work.
5. Education and Training in safe work practices must be part of ongoing agenda.

## Work Hazards and Prevention.

Let us examine the areas in housekeeping operation when accidents take place:

**Falls from slippery floors make shift ladders:** Put the sign "Wet Floor" this protects both the guest and staff. Ladders must be stable and strong, use aluminum ladders with rubber footing to prevent slippage. It is preferable to have someone holding the ladder from below. Employees must be prevented from using make shift ladders like packing crates and chairs.

**Cuts from broken glass in linen bundles and garbage:** Any heap of linen or garbage is a potential hazard for broken glass or exposed syringes. The cleaners must not put their hands in garbage heaps. Room dustbins must be emptied into the garbage hamper. Room attendant shake the soiled linen for guest belongings, which is a good precaution as it ensures that broken glass or other sharp objects are not hidden in folds.

**Back Pains from improper working postures:** Back pains are a common complaint due to the pressure on their backs while doing their daily chores. The secret is to keep the correct posture. Correct posture balances the neck, chest and lower back. Back pains are caused due to lifting, bend at the knees and not at the waist. Use both hands while lifting and hold the items closer to the body.

**Breathing problems and burns from the use of hazardous chemicals and detergents:** Housekeepers normally use mild detergents for daily use. However potent chemicals like acids and potent detergents are unavoidable. Exposure to these chemicals cause nausea, allergy, burns vomiting breathing problems, skin rashes etc. Cleaners must be trained in the safe use of these chemicals. Suppliers often provide the training and safety manual in the use of these chemicals. Cleaners must be provided with goggles, gloves and masks for operations that involve the use of hazardous chemicals.

**Electrocution from live electric wires and improper maintenance and use of equipment:** Housekeeper must ensure the equipment she buys has the ISI stamp of safety. Employees are properly trained in the use of the equipment. The manufactures are the best people to provide the training. Machines with loose/ open wires/ broken plugs should not be used. When not in use the wires of the vacuum cleaner should be neatly rolled and placed with the machine.

- Never operate electrical equipment with wet hands or cloths
- Do not operate near flammable liquids, chemicals or vapors
- Turn off them when sparks, smokes or flames are seen
- Check the wires and connections periodically
- Never unplug them by pulling the cord
- Keep the cords out of traffic areas
- When cleaning guestrooms, room attendants should check for frayed wires, loose connections, loose plugs, broken switches

**Injuries due to improper work habits:** Smoke only in designated area, never in the elevator. Ensure elevators are never overloaded. Use the correct equipment and accessories for cleaning. Use accessories like gloves, goggles, masks when dealing with toxic material. Look for broken glass when cleaning. Do not put bare hands into trashcans for they might get cuts by glass pieces or razor blades. Use handrails while climbing steps. Untangle cords of equipment before use and keep them away from pathways. Report on safety hazards if you cannot rectify. Rely on maintenance to complete fixing jobs. Check equipment for their serviceability.

**Working at height:** Any work which is carried above 5ft height requires a ladder. The ladder should be an A line ladder with the rubber shoes of the ladder intact and the center support in working condition.

Always use safety helmet and safety belt while working at height. The area should be cordoned off.

**Ladders:** when selecting a ladder inspect its condition, height and footing.

- Do not use broken or defective ladder
- Do not use aluminum or metal ladder when working near or on electrical equipment
- Use rubber footing on tile floors and in kitchen
- Floor must be dry and clean
- Should be high enough
- Never stand on the top step
- Never place a ladder against a window or uneven surfaces
- Should be well-balanced
- When climbing, face the ladder and have clean and dry hands and feet
- Mark the area underneath the ladder with caution signs



## Housekeepers Responsibilities towards safety are: -

1. Prepare a safety manual that is read and understood at the time of induction of new employees.
2. Paste safety rules on walls at strategic points in the work area.
3. Reinforce safety rules in daily briefings.
4. Organize continuous safety training. Involve experts like the equipment manufacturers, Engineering to take classes on fire safety etc.
5. Have a Preventive maintenance programmed for all equipment.
6. Include safety inspection in the supervisor's checklist.
7. Ensure that toxic chemicals are stored in closed cupboards and properly labeled.
8. Ensure that all waste disposal containers are leak proof and maintained in sanitary conditions. Waste disposal external to the building must be in designated municipal area and with concern for public health. The recycled items are put in their appropriate containers.
9. Make sure that locker rooms have proper washing and shower facilities. Locker rooms must be kept clean and dry at all times. Water closets must be sanitized frequently.
10. Ensure that housekeeping employees consume food and beverage in the staff canteens and not in public areas.
11. Ensure rest breaks for employees during their shift vigil.
12. Keep appropriate signs like "Wet Floor"; "Engineering at Work", labels for detergents and toxic material, safety instructions on equipment, "
13. Not to stack anything in the corridors.
14. Fire exit staircase should always be clear, not to stack items which will obstruct the movement.
15. Ensure hot and cold indicators on the tap faucets.
16. In the rooms and corridor's few lights should be connected to UPS.
17. Swimming pool pH and chlorine levels to be maintained.
18. Pool area no diving signage to be painted.
19. Bed corner to be covered.
20. Non - smoking zone signage.
21. Safety shoes for Engineering and Kitchen and Gum boots for Kitchen Stewarding.
22. Smoke detectors indicator light to blink at all the times.

# First Aid

It is important for all housekeeping personnel to know about first aid as they could be the first ones on the spot to give immediate attention to a guest or an employee. It is a part of the overall Safety Programme.

The first step is to have a first aid cupboard or box in all the departments.

The cupboard should contain the following items:

- Clinical thermometer
- Cotton wool
- Bandage roll
- Band aids
- Sterilized gauze
- Rubber sheeting
- Tincture iodine
- Dettol
- Burn-ointment
- Croc in tablets
- Aspirins
- Mercurochrome
- Antiseptic cream

## SECURITY IN HOUSEKEEPING

We know that housekeeping personnel are spread across the hotel in pursuit of their cleaning and maintenance duties. They therefore become the ideal 'eyes and ears' of the organization to detect any security threats to the organization. The main security concerns are:

- Lost and Found
- Guest Theft
- Employee theft
- Bomb Scare.

## Guest Theft

Guest takes hotel items as souvenirs. The hotel may not mind things like soaps and stationary are taken as the hotel may build such costs into the room rate. But items as towels and bathrobes are a serious concern because of their cost to replace them.

Housekeeping personnel take the following precaution:

1. **Key Control:** Limited access to guest rooms.
2. **Suspicious Movements:** Housekeeping personnel are trained to observe suspicious movements and report to security.
3. **Departure Procedure:** Train bellboys to give a quick glance at the room and bathroom before they remove guest baggage.
4. **Standard Issues to Guest rooms:** The ability to detect missing items is made possible by equipping rooms with standard number of items.
5. **Entry/Exit point:** A guest room has only one entry/exit door. Windows are secure. Room doors are provided with peepholes.

## WHAT THE HOUSEKEEPING DEPARTMENT CAN DO

No other hotel employee has as much access to hotel assets and guest property as the members of the housekeeping department. No one is more sensitive to the problems of theft from hotel guestrooms than the honest attendant who is known to possess a floor master key to a guestroom that has just been robbed. There is this assumption that, because housekeeping has a key to the room, if anything is missing, the department is by default the culprit, but there are instances when thefts have been triggered from within the housekeeping employees. Housekeeping personnel have reach to all the areas of the hotel and have maximum knowledge of guest areas and public areas. Any terror activity can easily be planned in a hotel if one has help from the housekeeping department.

**Employee Theft:** As in the case of the guest, employees find that most of the items are useful at home. A hotel reduces pilferage by adopting the following precaution.

**Gate Pass:** An employee is required to possess a gate pass, issued and authorized by the head of the department whenever a hotel property is removed from the hotel.

**Spot Check:** Security personnel conduct spot checks, of employee's handbags at random to ensure that unauthorized items are not being taken out of the hotel. Staff lockers are checked periodically. Uniforms are not permitted outside the property.

**Limited Access:** Employees have limited access to areas of the hotel. For example the engineering personnel can enter the room along with a room attendant; a cook cannot go up on the floor. Every department has specific uniform, and designated areas of work that limits them to their area of work. Only certain personnel are expected to go up to the guest floors. Another aspect of limited access is the authority to enter stores. The storekeeper and the helpers are permitted to enter the stores and are accountable for items received and issued.

**Par Stocks:** Room attendants have par stocks of items on their maid cart that have to be accounted for. Similarly, guest rooms have par stocks, where the room attendants are accountable for a set of rooms and they have to ensure the par stocks are maintained.

**Bomb Threats:** Terrorism is a concern for all public buildings. Hotels are prime targets. Housekeeping personnel are trained to report on suspicious objects, drugs, and excess money lying in the room, arms and bomb like structures to the security.