

HOSTY

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THE

# AIRBNB LAUNCH KIT

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The complete guide to setting up  
your short-let property in the UK.

- Listing Copy Templates
- Guest Messaging Templates
- Pricing Strategy Guide
- Photography Checklist
- Cleaning & Turnover Guide
- UK Compliance Guide
- Welcome Guide Generator (Online Tool)

# Welcome to the Launch Kit

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If you're reading this, you've probably just bought a property — or you're thinking about it — and you want to make money from it on Airbnb or Booking.com. But you're not sure where to start. Maybe you've looked at a few listings, thought "I could do that," and then realised there's a lot more to it than just uploading a few photos.

**That's exactly why we built this kit.**

We're Hosty. We help UK hosts set up their short-let properties properly — the listing, the pricing, the guest communication, the whole thing. We've done it ourselves and we've done it for clients. This kit is everything we know, packaged into something you can follow step by step.

There's no jargon in here. No corporate nonsense. No assumptions that you already know what "dynamic pricing" or "Superhost status" means. We explain everything like we're sitting across a table from you, walking you through it.

## What's inside:

**Chapter 1:** Listing Copy Templates — *Write a listing that actually gets clicked and booked*

**Chapter 2:** Guest Messaging Templates — *7 automated messages that run your hosting on autopilot*

**Chapter 3:** Pricing Strategy Guide — *How to price your property so it books AND makes money*

**Chapter 4:** Photography Checklist — *Take photos that make guests tap "Book"*

**Chapter 5:** Cleaning & Turnover Guide — *The room-by-room checklist that prevents bad reviews*

**Chapter 6:** UK Compliance Guide — *Tax, regulations, insurance — what you actually need to know*

**Plus:** Your purchase includes access to the **Hosty Welcome Guide Generator** — an online tool where you fill in a form about your property and it instantly creates a beautiful, interactive digital welcome guide your guests can access on their phone. No design skills needed.

This kit is designed to be used in order. Start with Chapter 1 (your listing) and work through to Chapter 6 (compliance). By the end, your property will be fully set up and ready for guests. The whole thing should take you a weekend.

**Let's get you set up.**

— *The Hosty Team*

## CHAPTER 1

# Listing Copy Templates

Write a listing that actually gets booked

Here's the honest truth: most guests decide whether to click on your listing in about 3 seconds. They see your cover photo, scan your title, and they're either in or they've scrolled past.

Then, if they do click, they read your first two lines and decide if it's worth reading more. That means the majority of your bookings are won or lost in three things: your **title** (50 characters), your **first two sentences** (about 250 characters), and your **cover photo**. Get those three right and bookings follow. Everything else is polish.

## Part 1: Your Listing Title

50 characters to make someone click

Airbnb gives you 50 characters. On a phone — where most people browse — only about 32 show before it gets cut off. So your most important words come first.

### The formula:

[Descriptive word] + [Property type] + [Best feature or location]

### Real examples that work:

| Type           | Title                                       | Chars |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------|-------|
| <b>Flat</b>    | Stylish 1-Bed Flat   Walk to Camden Market  | 46    |
| <b>House</b>   | Spacious 4-Bed, Free Parking, Near O2 Arena | 44    |
| <b>Studio</b>  | Bright Studio nr King's Cross, Fast WiFi    | 41    |
| <b>Cottage</b> | Cosy Cotswold Cottage, Hot Tub & Log Burner | 44    |

### Words that EARN their place in a title:

Stylish, bright, spacious, modern, private, central, quiet. Plus features guests search for: **hot tub, free parking, garden, log burner, sea view, balcony, fast WiFi, pet-friendly.**

### Words to BIN:

Lovely, nice, beautiful, amazing, stunning, perfect, welcome. They're so overused they're invisible. Instead of "lovely cottage" — write what makes it lovely. "Log Burner Cottage" tells the guest something real.

Use British English. It's cosy not cozy, flat not apartment (unless yours is genuinely premium), parking not driveway. Don't put your city in the title — it already shows in search results. No emojis (looks dated). No ALL CAPS (looks spammy).

## Part 2: Your Description — The First Two Lines

This is the preview text guests see before they tap "Show More" on your listing

About 250 characters show before guests tap "Show More." Most never tap. This preview is your single best chance to convert someone browsing into someone booking.

### The formula:

**[Your #1 selling point] + [Specific location with walking/driving time] + [Who it's perfect for]**

### Good:

*"Steps from the Royal Mile, this bright 1-bed flat has castle views, fast WiFi and free parking — perfect for couples exploring Edinburgh."*

In two sentences: location, features, guest type. Done.

### Bad:

*"Welcome to our lovely home! We're so excited to host you. This is a nice, clean flat in a great location."*

This tells the guest nothing. It wastes the most valuable space on the page talking about the host's feelings before the guest has decided the place is worth their money. Never open with "Welcome to..."

### Fill-in-the-blank templates:

#### Template 1:

*"[Distance] from [landmark], this [adjective] [property type] has [top features] — perfect for [guest type]."*

#### Template 2:

*"A [adjective] [property type] with [hero feature] in the heart of [area]. [Transport] is [X] minutes away."*

### Template 3:

*"[Hero feature] meets [location]. [Property type] sleeping [X] with [feature], [feature] and easy access to [attraction]."*

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## Part 3: Your Full Description

How to structure everything after the first two lines

After the hook, structure your description in clear sections with line breaks between them. Guests are scanning on phones — walls of text get skipped.

### THE SPACE

What guests actually get. Bedrooms, living area, kitchen highlights, outdoor space. Only mention amenities that are selling points — guests assume you have a kettle.

### LOCATION

Specific walking/driving times to landmarks, stations, attractions. "10 min walk to Liverpool Street" beats "great transport links" every time.

### GETTING AROUND

Nearest train station, bus routes, Tube stops, airports with journey times. UK guests — especially in cities — care about this deeply.

### PERFECT FOR

Name your ideal guest: families, couples, contractors, groups, dog owners. Being specific makes the RIGHT guests more likely to book.

### Leave these OUT:

Don't list every appliance. Don't mention negatives. Don't write in third person. Don't copy-paste generic text. And never put your strict rules in the description — save those for the welcome guide.

## The amenities checklist

Guests use filters to search. If your amenity isn't ticked, you're invisible to anyone filtering for it. Go through Airbnb's full list and tick everything that applies. Listings with 8-9 amenities get the biggest ranking boost.

- WiFi (mention speed if fast)
- Free parking
- Washing machine
- Kitchen/cooking basics
- Smart TV / Netflix
- Workspace / desk
- Iron & ironing board
- Hairdryer
- Baby cot / high chair
- Self check-in / lockbox
- Garden / balcony / patio
- Hot tub
- Pet-friendly
- EV charger

Also tick safety items: smoke alarm, carbon monoxide alarm, fire extinguisher, first aid kit. They're trust signals — guests see them and feel safer booking your place.

## CHAPTER 2

# Guest Messaging Templates

7 messages that run your hosting on autopilot

The best hosts don't write messages from scratch every time. They use a sequence of pre-written messages that go out automatically at exactly the right moment. Set these up once in Guesty, Hospitable, or Airbnb's own automation — and never think about them again.

Here are the seven messages we use for our own properties and our clients'. Copy them word for word, or adapt them to your style.

## Message 1: Booking Confirmation

*Send: Immediately when someone books*

Hey [GUEST NAME],

Thank you for booking with us! We're excited to host you and ensure you have a comfortable stay. If you have any questions or special requests before your arrival, feel free to reach out.

We'll share your check-in details 2 days before your arrival date. We require no security deposit — we just kindly ask that you take care of our property!

See you soon.

## Message 2: Check-in Instructions

*Send: 2 days before check-in*

We're excited to host you! Everything you need for your stay — check-in steps, WiFi, parking and more — is in your digital welcome guide:

[WELCOME GUIDE LINK]

Let us know if you need anything at all before arrival.

## Message 3: Day-of Check-in

*Send: 15 minutes before check-in time*

Your key is ready! Here are your access details:

[KEY SAFE CODE / COLLECTION INSTRUCTIONS]

Enjoy your stay — we're just a message away if you need anything.

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## Message 4: Mid-Stay Check-in

*Send: 1 day after check-in*

Hey [GUEST NAME],

Just checking in — hope you're settling in well and everything's been great so far! If there's anything you need or anything we can help with, don't hesitate to reach out.

Enjoy the rest of your stay!

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## Message 5: Checkout Reminder

*Send: 13 hours before checkout*

We hope you've had a great stay! Check-out time is at [TIME]. Here are the check-out details:

- Please turn off all heaters and lights
- Please wash any dishes you've used
- Make sure all windows and doors are locked
- [KEY RETURN INSTRUCTIONS]

Safe travels, and we'd love to host you again!

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## Message 6: Review Request

*Send: 5 hours after checkout*

Hey [GUEST NAME],

Hope you had a great stay! If everything met your expectations, we'd really appreciate a 5-star review on [PLATFORM] — it really helps us and future guests.

I'll also be leaving you a 5-star review for being a great guest!

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If you had any issues or don't feel comfortable leaving a review, please let me know privately — I genuinely value your feedback.

Thanks again and safe travels!

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## Message 7: Review Follow-up

*Send: 2 days after checkout (only if no review yet)*

Hey [GUEST NAME],

I just left you a 5-star review for being an awesome guest! If you enjoyed your stay, I'd really appreciate a 5-star from you too — it helps us so much.

Hope to host you again!

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The mid-stay check-in (Message 4) is the most underrated message. Guests who'd save a complaint for their review will mention it here instead — giving you the chance to fix it. This single message prevents more bad reviews than any other.

Never ask for a specific star rating ("Please give us 5 stars"). Guests find it manipulative and sometimes leave negative reviews in response. Frame it as helping future guests, not helping yourself.

## CHAPTER 3

# Pricing Strategy Guide

How to price so it books AND makes money

Most new hosts pick a nightly price, set it, and forget it. That's the single biggest revenue mistake you can make. The hosts who earn the most change their price constantly — not manually, but using a tool that does it for them.

## What is dynamic pricing? (In plain English)

Think about train tickets. A Friday evening train from London to Manchester costs more than a Tuesday morning one. Same train, same seats — but more people want the Friday one, so it costs more.

Dynamic pricing is the same idea for your property. You charge more when lots of people want to stay (summer weekends, bank holidays, local events) and less when fewer people are looking (January midweek, off-season). A tool does this automatically — you set it up once and it adjusts your price every single day based on demand in your area.

The difference is massive. Hosts using dynamic pricing earn **36-40% more** than hosts with a fixed price. That's the difference between £25,000 and £35,000 a year from the same property.

## The biggest pricing mistake new hosts make

You look at established listings nearby with 200 five-star reviews and think "I'll charge the same." But without reviews, guests have no reason to trust you. They won't pay premium prices for an unproven listing.

This creates a death spiral: no bookings means no reviews, which means lower ranking, which means even fewer bookings.

**For your first month:** price 15-20% below comparable established listings. Use Airbnb's new listing promotion (20% off your first 3 bookings). Lower your minimum stay to 1-2 nights. Use a flexible cancellation policy. Focus entirely on getting those first 5-10

reviews. Then start raising prices.

Airbnb has a built-in Smart Pricing tool but most experienced hosts warn against it. Airbnb earns commission on every booking, so their tool pushes prices DOWN to maximise bookings — not to maximise YOUR income. Use PriceLabs (around £16-20/month) or Beyond Pricing instead.

## UK seasonal patterns

| Season                   | When                                                               |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Peak (+25-40%)</b>    | Late July to early Sept, Christmas, New Year, Easter               |
| <b>Shoulder (+5-15%)</b> | May bank holidays, October half-term, September                    |
| <b>Low (-15-30%)</b>     | January, February, November (outside half-term)                    |
| <b>Events (+50-200%)</b> | Edinburgh Fringe, London Marathon, local festivals, major concerts |

### Discounts that work

**Weekly discount:** 10-12%. Triggers strikethrough pricing in Airbnb search (eye-catching). Longer stays mean fewer turnovers and lower cleaning costs.

**Monthly discount:** 20-25%. Attracts corporate relocations and long-stay guests. Airbnb includes 20%+ monthly discounts in their email campaigns to travellers.

**Cleaning fee:** Keep it at 25-50% of your nightly rate. Airbnb now shows total price in search — a huge cleaning fee makes short stays look expensive and kills bookings.

## CHAPTER 4

# Photography Checklist

Take photos that make guests tap Book

About 90% of guests choose which property to book based primarily on photos. Your photos are doing more selling than everything else combined.

## The first 5 photos decide everything

Guests decide in 5-7 seconds whether to keep looking or scroll past. Here's the order that works:

- |                  |                                                                                                     |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Photo 1</b>   | Your single most impressive shot — usually living room or hero feature. Bright, wide, clutter-free. |
| <b>Photo 2-3</b> | Main living spaces: living room and master bedroom.                                                 |
| <b>Photo 4-5</b> | Key selling points: kitchen, bathroom, outdoor space, or workspace.                                 |
| <b>Photo 6+</b>  | Room-by-room walkthrough. All photos of the same room grouped together.                             |

## You don't need a professional photographer

Modern smartphones (iPhone 12+, Samsung Galaxy S21+, Google Pixel 6+) produce excellent photos. The critical factors are lighting, staging, and composition — not the camera.

That said, if your property earns or should earn over £2,500/month, the one-time investment of £150-300 for a professional is worthwhile. In London expect £200-350 for 25-40 edited images.

## The staging checklist

**Lighting:** Always shoot in daylight. Open every curtain. Turn on lamps. Turn OFF harsh ceiling lights. Overcast days are actually ideal — clouds diffuse light evenly.

**Composition:** Shoot from corners at chest height. Always landscape (horizontal). Use your phone's grid and keep vertical lines straight.

**Declutter:** Remove ALL personal items. Clear countertops. Hide bins, cables, remotes. Then add: fresh flowers, a coffee cup and book, folded towels, a throw on the sofa.

**Bedrooms:** Well-made bed as focal point. White/neutral linens. Bedside lamps on. No personal photos, clothes, or storage visible.

**Bathrooms:** Clean gleaming surfaces. Fresh folded towels. Tidy toiletries. Close the toilet lid. No personal products.

**Kitchen:** Clear countertops. Coffee setup or fruit bowl. Key appliances visible. No dirty dishes, clutter, or fridge magnets.

Aim for **20-30 photos total**. Every room guests can access needs at least one photo. A missing room creates suspicion.

## CHAPTER 5

# Cleaning & Turnover Guide

The checklist that prevents bad reviews

Cleanliness is the #1 reason for bad Airbnb reviews. Guests arrive with hotel-level expectations. A single hair on a white sheet makes them question the entire clean. Getting this right is non-negotiable.

## Realistic turnover times (2-person team)

| Property | Time            |
|----------|-----------------|
| Studio   | 45 minutes      |
| 1-2 bed  | 1 - 1.5 hours   |
| 3 bed+   | 2 hours maximum |

Set checkout at 10-11am and check-in at 3pm or later to give your team enough time.

## Room-by-room checklist

### FIRST 5 MINUTES:

- Strip all beds and start the wash
- Gather dishes, start dishwasher
- Full walkthrough for damage and left-behind items
- Open windows to ventilate

### KITCHEN

- Wipe all countertops
- Clean inside microwave, oven, fridge (empty fridge completely)
- Clean kettle, toaster, coffee maker inside and out

- Wash and put away all dishes
- Clean sink and check drain
- Sweep and mop floor
- Fresh dish towels and new sponge
- Restock: bin bags, washing-up liquid, tea, coffee, sugar, kitchen roll

## **BATHROOM**

- Scrub toilet inside and out including base and behind hinges
- Clean bath/shower including grout and door
- Polish mirrors and taps — check under natural light
- Clean sink, mop floor
- Restock: toilet roll (with spare), hand soap, shampoo, conditioner, body wash
- Fresh towels — hotel-fold them

## **BEDROOMS**

- Make beds with fresh linens — white is industry standard
- Dust all surfaces including bedside tables and lamps
- Check drawers, wardrobes, and under bed for left items
- Vacuum everywhere including under the bed

## **LIVING AREAS**

- Dust all surfaces
- Wipe TV screen and disinfect the remote control
- Vacuum sofa including under cushions
- Vacuum or mop floors

## **FINAL WALKTHROUGH**

- Walk in as if you're a guest arriving for the first time
- Open fridge, microwave, oven — check they look and smell clean
- Check mirrors under natural light for streaks
- Test WiFi, all lights, and thermostat
- Take photos of key areas — protects you against false complaints

## What guests complain about most

**Hair** — in bathrooms, showers, and on sheets. One hair on white bedding makes the guest feel the whole property is dirty. **Dirty bathrooms** come second: toilet stains, grimy grout. **Kitchen residue** is third: food in the fridge, grease on the hob, crumbs in the toaster.

Don't use a regular domestic cleaner for turnovers. Domestic cleaning maintains a lived-in home. Turnover cleaning completely resets a property to hotel standard under time pressure. Find specialist short-let cleaners through Turno, local host Facebook groups, or Checkatrade. Always have a backup cleaner — if your only cleaner is ill on a same-day turnover, you have a serious problem.

## CHAPTER 6

# UK Compliance Guide

Tax, rules & insurance — what you need to know

This is the chapter nobody wants to read but everybody needs to. The UK has tightened short-let regulations significantly and the consequences of getting it wrong range from fines to criminal prosecution. Let's keep it simple.

## The 90-night rule (London only)

If your property is in **Greater London** (any of the 32 boroughs), you can let out your entire home for a maximum of **90 nights per calendar year** without planning permission.

Key things to know: this only applies to entire-home lets (not if you're living there). The 90 nights are cumulative across ALL platforms — Airbnb, Booking.com, and direct bookings combined. Airbnb automatically blocks your listing when you hit 90 nights, but YOU are responsible for tracking the total across platforms.

If you exceed 90 nights without planning permission, fines can reach **up to £20,000**. To go beyond 90 nights, you need to apply for planning permission from your council.

This rule does NOT apply outside London. If your property is in Manchester, Liverpool, Bristol, or anywhere else in England — there is currently no night cap. But other rules still apply.

## England's new registration scheme

A mandatory registration scheme for all short-term lets in England is coming. When it launches, you'll need to register on an online portal, get a unique registration number, and display it on all your listings. The government describes it as "light touch and low cost." Keep an eye on GOV.UK for the launch date.

## Scotland: you need a licence

If your property is in Scotland, you must have a **short-term let licence** from your local council. This is mandatory and has been since October 2022. Operating without one is a **criminal offence** — fines up to £2,500 and a one-year ban from applying.

## Tax: what you owe

All short-let income is taxable. Since 2024, Airbnb reports your earnings directly to HMRC — they already know what you've made.

If your rental income is **£1,000 or less** per year, you don't need to tell HMRC (property allowance). Above that, register for Self Assessment. You can either deduct the £1,000 flat allowance OR deduct your actual expenses — not both.

If you rent a room in your own home (where you also live), the **Rent-a-Room scheme** lets you earn up to **£7,500 tax-free**.

### Expenses you can deduct:

- Cleaning costs
- Airbnb/Booking.com service fees
- Specialist insurance
- Utilities (business proportion)
- Repairs and maintenance (like-for-like only)
- Replacement items (new toaster replacing a broken one)
- Safety certificates
- Guest supplies (towels, toiletries)
- Travel to the property for business

The Furnished Holiday Let (FHL) tax regime was abolished on 6 April 2025. Any guide online still talking about special FHL capital allowances or enhanced mortgage relief is out of date. Holiday let income is now taxed like normal rental income.

## Business rates vs council tax

If your property is available for short-term letting for at least 140 days per year and actually let for at least 70 days, it can be reclassified onto business rates.

Why this matters: Small Business Rate Relief means if your property's rateable value is £12,000 or less, you pay **zero business rates**. Many small Airbnb properties qualify — saving £1,000-2,000+ per year.

## Insurance: this is critical

Your normal home insurance **does not cover short-term letting**. If you host guests without telling your insurer, your entire policy could be voided — for everything, including fire and flood.

You need specialist short-let insurance covering: buildings, contents, public liability (minimum £1-2 million), and loss of rental income. Providers include Pikl, Schofields, and Homeprotect.

Airbnb's AirCover provides some protection but it only covers Airbnb bookings (not Booking.com), the claims process can be difficult, and Airbnb themselves say it shouldn't replace proper insurance.

## Safety certificates you must have

- **Gas Safety Certificate:** Annual. Required if you have any gas appliances. Must be done by a Gas Safe engineer.
- **Electrical Condition Report (EICR):** Every 5 years. Checks wiring, sockets, fuse box.
- **Energy Performance Certificate (EPC):** Valid 10 years. Must be rated E or above.
- **Fire safety:** Smoke alarms on every floor. Carbon monoxide alarms in rooms with fuel-burning appliances. Fire blanket in kitchen.

# You're Ready

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That's everything. You've got the listing copy, the messaging, the pricing strategy, the photography checklist, the cleaning guide, and the compliance knowledge. Your property is ready for guests.

Don't forget — your purchase includes access to the **Hosty Welcome Guide Generator**. Head to the link in your purchase confirmation email, fill in the form about your property, and you'll have a beautiful digital welcome guide your guests can access on their phone — no design skills needed.

## Need someone to do all of this for you?

If you've read through this and thought "I'd rather just pay someone to handle it" — that's exactly what Hosty does. We set up your listing, configure your pricing, automate your messages, build your welcome guide, and get you live on Airbnb and Booking.com. Done for you.

Visit **hostyuk.com** to learn more.

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