

Hotel Front Desk Agent

Check guests in, fix what goes wrong, run the desk overnight. You can start the week after high school.

TYPICAL PAY

\$35,070

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$27k to \$45k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

up to 1 year

after high school

DEMAND

Moderate

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

**Hotels, resorts, casinos, motels,
conference centers**

How you get there

- 1 Finish high school** Grade 12
A diploma is what most hotels ask for. Any customer-facing job you have already had counts as experience.
- 2 Get hired at the desk** Start right away
Apply directly to hotels near you. Brands hire year round, and resort towns hire heavily before their busy season.
- 3 Learn the systems** 1 to 3 weeks
Paid training on the property management system, the software that holds every reservation, room status and bill. Then the phone system, the key encoder and the brand's loyalty program.
- 4 Take the overnight shift** Year 1 or 2 if you want it
The night auditor closes out the day's books alone between about 11pm and 7am. It pays more, it teaches you the whole operation, and it is how a lot of people get noticed.
- 5 Move up** 2 to 6 years
Front office supervisor, then front office manager. From there the ladder runs to assistant general manager and general manager.

Pros and cons

- + You can start immediately with no debt and no degree
- + Cheap rooms worldwide once you work for a big brand
- + A real ladder up to hotel management
- The pay is low and rises slowly at the desk itself
- Nights, weekends and every holiday
- Standing for eight hours and absorbing other people's bad days

Optional boosts

A front office certificate. A registered apprenticeship. Night audit experience. Revenue management basics.

Good to know

The books close at 3am

Every hotel in the country runs a night audit: one person balances the whole day's charges, payments and room revenue while the building sleeps, then rolls the date over. It is the only time the property is quiet.

Somebody works Christmas

Hotels never close. Not on Christmas, not in a hurricane, not at 4am on a Tuesday. Holiday shifts often pay extra, and in a lot of hotels the staff working them eat together in the back office.

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Hotel, Motel, and Resort Desk Clerks (43-4081.00)
American Hotel and Lodging Association
Apprenticeship.gov, United States Department of Labor
Minimum wage, Wage and Hour Division, United States Department of Labor

Numbers checked September 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in United States dollars, based on Bureau of Labor Statistics wage data and published pay scales. They vary by state, employer and experience. Tuition is for in-state students at public schools unless the card says otherwise. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/us/careers/front-desk-agent>



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