

Hotel Manager

Run the building, the staff and the money, and answer for everything that goes wrong in it.

TYPICAL PAY

\$69,250

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$40k to \$129k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

4 to 8 years

after high school

DEMAND

Moderate

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Hotels, resorts, motels, casinos, the front desk and the back office

How you get there

- 1 High school diploma** Grade 12
Get a job at a hotel, restaurant or resort now. Front desk, housekeeping, bussing tables. It all counts and it is what interviewers ask about.
- 2 Degree, or not** 0 to 4 years
A four-year hospitality or business degree is what large hotels prefer. A two-year associate degree or no degree at all still works at smaller properties if you have the hours.
- 3 Work every department** 2 to 4 years
Front desk, housekeeping, food and beverage, sales. Good managers have done all of it, because you cannot supervise a job you have never worked.
- 4 Supervisor, then department head** 2 to 3 years
Front office manager, executive housekeeper or food and beverage manager. This is where you learn schedules, budgets and firing people.
- 5 General manager** After 5 to 10 years total
You are responsible for the whole building, the profit and every guest complaint that gets escalated.

Pros and cons

- + You can start with no degree and no debt
- + Real responsibility young, often a department by 23
- + Travel perks and the chance to work almost anywhere in the world
- Nights, weekends and holidays, permanently
- You are on call for floods, fights and power cuts
- Pay at small properties is mediocre for the hours

Optional boosts

Certified Hotel Administrator. Supervisor and department certifications. Food safety manager certification. Alcohol server and manager permits.

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Lodging Managers (11-9081.00)
American Hotel and Lodging Educational Institute
American Hotel and Lodging Association
Cornell Nolan School of Hotel Administration

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/hotel-manager>

Good to know

A university runs a real hotel

Cornell's hospitality school has a full-service luxury hotel, the Statler, on its own campus, plus a student-run restaurant. Students do not practice on a simulation, they practice on paying guests.

Rooms are priced like airline seats

Big hotels change their room rate several times a day based on how full they expect to be. The people who do that, revenue managers, often came up through the front desk and now never see a guest.



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