

Direct Booking Checklist for Hosts

More direct bookings for your guesthouse or holiday apartment in Tyrol

This checklist is for hosts in Tyrol who want more direct bookings and less commission going to booking platforms. Work through the points at your own pace and tick off what is already in place. Whatever is left unticked becomes your to-do list for the next off-season.

Photos and first impressions

- ☐ Have your rooms photographed professionally in daylight.
Good photos decide whether a guest keeps reading or clicks away.
- ☐ Show every area, including bathroom, kitchen, entrance and the view.
- ☐ Replace dark phone snapshots everywhere, including on Booking.com and Airbnb.
- ☐ Write down in two or three sentences what makes your place special, and use it on your website and in every profile.

Your own website

- ☐ Open your website on a phone and check that everything is easy to read and tap.
- ☐ Test the loading speed with Google's free PageSpeed Insights tool.
If the page feels slow on a phone, guests leave before they see a single photo.
- ☐ Make sure prices, phone number and email address are reachable within two clicks.
- ☐ Add a direct booking or enquiry option.
A simple enquiry form with preferred dates is enough to start with.
- ☐ Keep prices and season dates on the website up to date.
- ☐ Check that your website has an up-to-date legal notice (Impressum) and privacy policy.
Both are required in Austria, especially once you run an enquiry form and keep a guest list.

Getting found on Google and locally

- ☐ Create a Google Business Profile or claim the existing listing.
It is free and often the first impression before your website.
- ☐ Fill in the profile completely: photos, contact details and a link to your own website.
- ☐ Check that your property appears on Google Maps at the right location and with the correct name.
- ☐ Check your listing with the local tourism board and keep it current.

Booking, Airbnb and the right balance

- ☐ Complete your Booking.com and Airbnb profiles fully, every single field.
- ☐ Use the same professional photos there as on your own website.
- ☐ Add up how much commission you paid over the last year.
That number shows you what every direct booking is worth.
- ☐ Offer at least the same price on your own website as on the platforms, ideally a better one.
Rate parity clauses have been banned in Austria since 2017, so you are free to offer a lower price for direct bookings.
- ☐ Keep your availability in sync everywhere, with a channel manager or at least by blocking dates in all calendars right away.
This prevents double bookings when a direct enquiry and a platform booking arrive at the same time.
- ☐ Put a card with your website address in the room so platform guests book direct next time.

Reviews and guest communication

- ☐ Reply to enquiries the same day if you can.
On Airbnb, for example, fast replies also count towards your ranking.
- ☐ Ask happy guests for a review in person when they leave.
- ☐ Reply to every review, including the good ones. Two friendly sentences are enough.
- ☐ Prepare two or three standard sentences for replying to critical reviews.
That way you stay calm even with harsh criticism, and future guests will read your reply.

Repeat guests and local partners

- ☐ Ask your guests whether you may email them now and then, and note down their consent.
- ☐ Keep a simple guest list with name, email and stay dates. A spreadsheet is enough.
- ☐ Write to past guests once or twice a year.
For example before the summer and winter seasons, with a concrete reason to get in touch.
- ☐ Team up with businesses in your village, such as the ski school, cable car or local restaurant. Mutual recommendations cost nothing.

If you would like a hand with any of these points, Frankford's IT-Solutions in Innsbruck is happy to help, from the website itself to online booking.