

The Face Behind Your Comfort

Housekeepers' Profile

In 2020, maids & housekeeping cleaners accounted for 1.12 million workers in the USA¹.

- Close to 86% are female
- On average, 45 years old
- \$21,000 in annual earnings (less than 37% of the mean US salary)
- Almost 3/4 are people of color; many are immigrants from the Caribbean, China, East Africa, the Philippines, Latin America, etc.

Their workload

The average hotel housekeeper is required to check or clean between 12 and 20 rooms in an eight-hour shift. That allows for only 20 to 30 minutes per room².

Between 40% and 60% of hotel's guests leave every day, meaning a lot more work for housekeepers. On average it takes half an hour to fully clean a room that is being released that day vs. fifteen to twenty minutes to clean a stayover room³.

Housekeepers carry out physically demanding tasks including stripping and remaking beds, cleaning and polishing toilets, taps, sinks, baths and mirrors, washing floors, removing stains and vacuuming.

Risks that housekeepers face

Housekeepers have a 50% higher injury rate than other hotel workers. They can get debilitating injuries, suffer pain and even require surgical intervention. They can also be in contact with bodily fluids that can endanger their health (e.g., while cleaning bathrooms). Because most housekeepers are overwhelmingly female, another possible risk is sexual harassment from male guests⁴.

¹ https://datausa.io/profile/soc/maids-housekeeping-cleaners?fbclid=IwAR1LsoTsl_pIVq_rvy9ixDEuVtKXEasAZ-PXOJF-AJw8Haim5ImD_sMtSk

² <https://www.rubbermaidcommercialasean.com/hospitality/how-long-should-it-take-to-clean-a-hotel-room-and-how-can-you-reduce-the-time-involved/#:~:text=The%20average%20hotel%20housekeeping%20worker,in%20the%20hotel%20housekeeper's%20shift>

³ <https://www.roomchecking.com/post/12-little-known-facts-about-hotel-housekeeping-and-maintenance>

⁴ <https://www.usatoday.com/story/travel/hotels/2014/11/24/hotel-housekeeper-maid/19347645/>

The lost and found

On a lighter note, when cleaning hotel rooms housekeepers come across different objects left behind by guests. As one might expect, the most common are chargers for cell phones and computer cables. Next come clothes and (feminine) underwear, jewels, books, eyeglasses, identity documents, credit cards and work documents.

Among more unusual objects are dentures (we can only wonder how a person can leave their hotel without their teeth 😊), wedding dresses, blank checks, and...sex toys.

Surprisingly, only 30% of guests contact their hotels to get their goods back. Objects that are not claimed are usually kept at the hotel for three months, then offered to the staff that found them, followed by other hotel employees and charitable organizations.

In conclusion, housekeepers, the face behind our comfort, have a tough job and low pay.

Tip&Go, through guests' generosity, increase their wages by up to 30% (\$5/hour). Therefore, it makes a lot of sense for hotels to implement it, the more so as they are experiencing major staff shortages.

Francis Léonard, CEO



