

What Cleaners Wish Every Host Knew

An honest look at what separates a consistent five-star property from the rest — **it is almost never the property, it is the clean.** Hosted by Tannika, professional short-term rental cleaner.

4.8+

Airbnb Superhost needs a 4.8+ overall rating; cleanliness feeds it

4.9+

Guest Favorite sets the bar higher, and search now favours it

First

Cleanliness is among the first things guests judge

60s

Guests react on arrival — before they inspect anything

The first minute shapes the review

A strong first impression buys goodwill for the whole stay. A poor one sends guests hunting for faults. They read several things at once: **smell, entry cleanliness, temperature, lighting, and whether it matches the photos.**

1 The three zones guests audit first

- **The bathroom** — water spots, hair in the drain, soap scum. They judge every other room by this one.
- **Kitchen counter & sink** — even non-cooks scan it. Crumbs or a dirty sink signal a rushed clean.
- **The bed** — wrinkled sheets, a stain or a single hair triggers doubt about the whole property.

2 The small details that win reviews

- A **fresh, neutral scent** — no bleach, no heavy fragrance
- Streak-free mirrors and glass; no fingerprints on stainless
- **Ceiling fans dusted** — guests look up on entry
- Towels and toilet paper folded hotel-style; remotes aligned
- Bins lined and clean; nothing of the last guest left behind

3 Consistency beats perfection

- The gap between **4.2 and 4.8** is not cleaning harder — it is removing the misses guests notice.
- One cleaner scrubs the grout, the next skips it → **5 stars one week, 3 the next.**
- A property-specific checklist is what holds the line — not talent or goodwill.

4 The system that protects your rating

- **A written, property-specific checklist** — the same standard on the 10th turnover as the 1st, even with a substitute.
- **Photos after every clean** — timestamped, by room. Quality control, not hope.
- **Enough time** — tight windows cause more bad reviews than any single fault. Build a 30-min buffer.
- **Same-day flips**: start laundry & dishwasher the moment you walk in — they run while you clean.
- **Scheduled deep cleans** — preventive maintenance, booked into quiet periods, not a surprise cost.

5 The cleaner's pet peeves (and why guests care)

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| ✗ Hair in the bathroom | ✗ Dusty ceiling fans |
| ✗ Smudged mirrors | ✗ Sticky cupboards |
| ✗ Dirty rangehood | ✗ Hair behind the toilet |
| ✗ Pink shower mildew | ✗ Used-looking kettle |
| ✗ Dirty BBQ | ✗ Under the beds |

The most complained-about misses are almost never the slow jobs — they are 2-5 minute tasks skipped under time pressure.

6 Guests don't inspect — they feel

- The smell on the doorstep. The hair in the shower. The sticky handle.
- Guests react **emotionally** to cleanliness cues. Your job is to give them the right ones, every single time.

"The difference isn't the cleaner — it's the system."



Get the full guide & printable checklists

Scan for the complete **Five-Star Cleaning Systems** report: turnover & deep-clean checklists, cleaner communication template, presentation standards, and the 10-point arrival inspection.
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