

FOR ARIZONA AGENTS AND OWNERS

The Vacation Rental Listing Guide

A guest picks a home from one photo, one price, and about thirty characters of title, on a phone, in about a second. This is how to build the Airbnb and Vrbo listing that survives that second, written line by line.

The 22-photo gallery order

Title and description templates

The first 30 days, dated

Every stat sourced



WHY THIS MATTERS

The listing card is the product

Airbnb says four things drive where a listing lands in search: quality, popularity, price and location (Airbnb Help Center). You cannot move the house, and price is a lever with a floor. Quality and popularity are the two you build, and both of them start with the photos.

★ Quality

Airbnb: higher quality listings with better ratings and reviews tend to rank higher, and high-quality photos and videos help attract attention and improve engagement, which can improve ranking.

[You build this](#)

📊 Popularity

Wishlist saves, bookings and guests messaging the host. Popularity is downstream of the card: nobody saves a listing they scrolled past.

💰 Price

Airbnb: listings priced below other comparable listings in the area with similar characteristics tend to rank higher. Underpricing a great listing is a strategy, not an accident.

[A lever, not a fix](#)

📍 Location

Fixed on closing day. It is the one factor the listing can only describe, which is exactly why the neighborhood photos at the end of the gallery earn their spot.

19%

more bookings claimed for listings that used Airbnb's own professional photography program

Airbnb, 2026

21%

increase in host earnings claimed against other hosts in the same area

Airbnb, 2026

85%

of those hosts are said to cover the cost of the shoot with one night's booking

Airbnb, 2026

HOW TO READ THOSE THREE NUMBERS

Airbnb publishes them to sell its own photo service, and labels the results as not guaranteed. Take them as direction, not as a promise. What they do establish is that the platform itself treats listing photography as a revenue lever rather than a nice-to-have. The same program delivers 15 to 25 retouched images in about a week (Airbnb, 2026), which is a useful benchmark to measure any shoot against: how many usable frames, and how fast.

THE PHOTOS

The gallery, in the order guests actually look

Guests do not browse a gallery, they swipe it until they are bored. Front-load the reasons to book, then walk them through the house the way they will walk through it in real life.

Airbnb Help Center, taking great photos of your listing

AIRBNB'S OWN FLOOR

At least 1024 by 683 pixels, and landscape: Airbnb's guidance is blunt about both. Photos in search results are all displayed in landscape, so vertical photos do not showcase the space, and when in doubt a bigger photo is better. It also asks for the interior, the exterior, the surrounding neighborhood, unique amenities and accessibility features. A phone held sideways clears the pixel floor. It does not clear the dynamic range of an Arizona window at noon, which is the actual reason most owner-shot galleries look flat. That is a bracketing problem, not a phone problem: one visit with HDR photography, aerial, video, 3D tour and a floor plan covers every frame in this gallery, and the photos come back within 5 hours of the end of the shoot.

1

The hero

One photo that answers why here instead of a hotel. Pool at twilight, the view, the courtyard. Pick it at thumbnail size next to the competition, not full screen on your own laptop.

2-5

The promise

The amenity they are actually booking, from three angles plus one wide. Heated pool, the shaded patio, the game room, the casita.

6-12

The walk

Front door, entry, living, kitchen, dining, in the order a guest moves through the house. Same walk every time, so the listing feels like a tour instead of a shuffle.

13-18

Sleep and bath

Every bedroom and every bathroom, one strong frame each, bed made and counters clear. Guests count beds in photos before they read the bed count.

19-22

The extras

Workspace, laundry, garage, EV charger, crib, grill, step-free entry. These are the frames that answer a filter and end a comparison.

LAST

The place

Trailhead, Old Town, the ballpark, the mountain at sunset. Location is the one ranking factor you can only describe, so describe it in pictures.

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Pool shot at twilight, lights on, water still | ☐ The patio at 3pm so the shade is visible, not implied |
| ☐ Misters or fans running, if the property has them | ☐ A thermostat or a vent shot for the summer skeptic |
| ☐ Every bed, made, with the actual linens guests get | ☐ Kitchen counters cleared to the coffee setup |
| ☐ The parking situation, including the garage and the street | ☐ Step-free entry, grab bars, and doorway widths if accessible |
| ☐ One frame of the view from the primary bedroom window | ☐ Neighborhood anchor: trail, ballpark, Old Town, golf |

THE TITLE

Fifty characters, and about thirty that count

Airbnb tells hosts to keep a title under 50 characters because longer titles get shortened in search results to fit smaller screens. On a phone card the visible part is closer to thirty. Write the thirty.

Airbnb Resource Center, guidelines for writing your listing title

- 1 Lead with the most important thing.** Airbnb's own instruction. The first three words are the ones that survive truncation on a phone, so spend them on the reason to book, not on the word beautiful.
- 2 Do not repeat the search card.** The card already shows the city, the bed count and the price. Every character you spend restating them is a character you did not spend on the heated pool.
- 3 No emojis, no symbols.** Airbnb says they can be confusing or misleading, and calls out repeating characters for emphasis, like exclamation points or asterisks, as something to avoid.
- 4 Do not capitalize every word.** Airbnb's guidance is that lowercase tends to be easier to read. Sentence case looks like a person wrote it, and title case looks like a listing service did.
- 5 Name one differentiator, not three.** A title that promises the pool, the view, the location and the remodel promises nothing. Pick the one that would make you book it, and let the photos carry the rest.

THE FORMULA

[The hook] + [the amenity that closes it] + [the anchor]: The hook is the feeling or the format, the amenity is the thing they filtered for, and the anchor is the place or the reason they are in town. Two of the three fit in thirty characters, and all three fit in fifty. Write five versions, then read them at phone size on the search page next to your competition. The one you would tap wins.

TEN ARIZONA TITLES YOU CAN ADAPT

"Heated pool, mountain views, sleeps 8"

"Casita and heated pool near Kierland"

"Desert modern home with a fire pit"

"Shaded patio near South Mountain"

"Foothills retreat with a heated spa"

"Old Town walkup with a private patio"

"Quiet cul-de-sac with a shaded yard"

"Golf casita, Cactus League 10 minutes"

"Red rock views from the back deck"

"Bike-to-campus bungalow with a pool"

THE DESCRIPTION

Write to the part they actually see

Channel partners that publish the field limits list a 500-character description with roughly the first 295 visible in the app before a guest taps show more (Guesty for Hosts and SuperControl channel documentation, 2026). Airbnb does not publish the number itself and it has moved before, so write to the tighter one and you are safe either way.

THE OPENER, WRITTEN TO THE VISIBLE LIMIT

"[Wake up to the mountain and swim before breakfast.] This [3-bedroom] [Mesa] home has a [heated pool], a [shaded patio built for July], and [covered parking for two]. [Old Town is nine minutes; the trailhead is four.] Fast wifi, a real desk, and blackout shades in every bedroom. Sleeps [8] in [4] real beds, no air mattresses. Check in yourself, any time after [4pm]."

THE FULL DESCRIPTION SKELETON

"Line 1, the promise: the one sentence that would make you book it. Line 2, the proof: bedrooms, beds, and the amenity you filtered for, in plain numbers. Line 3, the anchor: two distances that matter to the guest you want, in minutes rather than miles. Line 4, the friction remover: wifi, parking, check-in, and the one thing people always ask you. Line 5, the honest note: the thing that is not perfect, named before a review names it for you."

THE HONEST NOTE, THREE EXAMPLES

"The pool is heated for an extra [\$35] a night from November through March, so nobody is surprised at check-in." · "We are on a [busy street]; the bedrooms are on the [back] side and we supply a white noise machine." · "There are [three] steps at the front entry, and no step-free route into the house."

WHAT TO CUT

Three things burn the visible characters and earn nothing: The renovation story, the house rules in capital letters, and the closing paragraph that hopes the guest enjoys their stay. Rules belong in the rules field, where guests actually agree to them, and the renovation story belongs in the photos. Every character you spend before the show-more break should answer a question a guest is asking while their thumb is moving.

AMENITIES AND THE LEGAL LINE

The filters run before anyone browses

Most guests narrow before they look. An amenity the property has but the listing did not check is an amenity the property does not have, because the listing was filtered out three screens earlier.

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Pool, and whether pool heat is included or extra | ☐ Hot tub, and whether it is actually available in summer |
| ☐ Air conditioning, plus ceiling fans and any misters | ☐ Wifi, listed with the real measured speed |
| ☐ Dedicated workspace, with a chair someone can sit in | ☐ Free parking on premises, and how many spaces |
| ☐ EV charger, and which connector it is | ☐ Washer and dryer, in unit |
| ☐ Crib, high chair, pack-n-play, pool fence | ☐ Step-free entry, wide doorways, grab bars |
| ☐ Grill, outdoor dining, fire pit | ☐ Self check-in, and the method |

THE LINE THAT IS NOT OPTIONAL

Arizona cities may require the number in the ad: State law lets a city require the permit or license number, or the transaction privilege tax license number, to be displayed on advertisements (A.R.S. 9-500.39(B)(7)), and Phoenix requires the short-term rental permit number on each advertisement (City of Phoenix). That means the listing itself, not just the file. Put it in the description or the field the platform provides, and confirm the current city rule before publishing. This is not legal or tax advice; the owner's attorney and CPA get the final word.

💰 Price is a ranking input

Airbnb states that listings priced below comparable listings with similar characteristics tend to rank higher (Airbnb Help Center). On a brand-new listing with no reviews, a deliberate opening discount is how you buy the first bookings that create the popularity signal.

[Raise it once reviews land](#)

📅 Arizona runs backwards

Winter is the season here. Scottsdale listings averaged 59% occupancy across the year at \$389 a night (AirDNA, July 2026), and the spread between the winter months and the summer months is the whole game. Price the calendar in seasons, not one nightly rate.

THE FIRST 30 DAYS

A new listing has no reviews, so buy signal cheaply

Popularity is a ranking factor and a new listing has none of it. The first month is not about margin, it is about generating the saves, bookings and reviews that the algorithm reads as quality.

Airbnb Help Center, guest favorites and highlights

DAY 0

Publish complete

Full gallery, every amenity checked, title under 50 characters, description written to the visible limit, permit number in place. A listing published half-built spends its launch window ranking on a half-built version.

DAY 1

Open below the comps

Set the opening rate under the eight to twelve listings you compared against, and say in the description that it is an introductory rate. You are buying the first three bookings, not setting the price.

WK 1

Answer in minutes

Response speed is a host-controllable signal, and instant bookability can rank higher because responses are automatic (Airbnb Help Center). Turn on instant book if the owner is comfortable, or answer like it is on.

WK 2

Fix what the first guest bumped into

The first stay always finds one thing: a lock, a missing pan, a shade. Fix it that week, before the second guest writes the review that mentions it.

WK 4

Reprice on evidence

Three bookings and two reviews is enough to move the rate. Raise it in small steps and watch the calendar rather than the dashboard.

D 30

Reshoot the weak frames

By now you know which photo people stop on. Replace the three that nobody reaches, and move the strongest one to the front.

THE REAL GUEST FAVORITE BAR

It is a reliability test, not a popularity contest: Airbnb describes Guest Favorites as homes rated above 4.9 stars on average, with high marks for check-in, cleanliness, accuracy, communication, location and value, and a record of host cancellations and quality-related service issues below 1% (Airbnb Help Center). Eligibility needs at least five reviews in the last four years, with one in the last two. Nothing on that list is bought. All of it is operations.

THE CHECK-IN MESSAGE

"Hi [name], you are all set for [day]. Door code is [code], and it works from [4pm]. Parking is [in the driveway, two spaces]. The [pool heat] is on and it takes about [an hour] to feel it. My number is [number] if anything is off, and I would genuinely rather hear about it now than read it later. Enjoy [Mesa]."

THE REVIEW ASK, SENT THE MORNING AFTER CHECKOUT

"Thanks for taking such good care of the place, [name]. If the stay worked for you, a review helps a lot: we are still new and reviews are how new listings get found. And if anything fell short, tell me first and I will fix it before the next guest."

PRINT IT, PIN IT, RUN IT

The listing checklist

- ☐ Hero photo chosen at thumbnail size, next to the competition
- ☐ Every photo landscape and at least 1024 by 683 pixels
- ☐ Description written so the first 295 characters can stand alone
- ☐ Every amenity the property owns actually checked in the amenity list
- ☐ Opening rate set below the comp set, with a date to revisit it
- ☐ Gallery ordered: promise, walk, sleep and bath, extras, neighborhood
- ☐ Title under 50 characters, best three words first, no emojis, sentence case
- ☐ One honest note included, so no review gets to break the news
- ☐ Permit or license number, or TPT number, displayed in the listing
- ☐ Day 30 review booked: reprice, replace the three weakest photos



ListerPros

ListerPros has photographed Arizona real estate since 2013, for thousands of agents across Phoenix and Tucson. One visit captures photos, vertical video, aerials, 3D tour and floor plan, and everything is back within 5 hours of the end of the shoot. Guaranteed.

Every stat in this guide is sourced: the research named where it appears, 2019 to 2026. Sources on request. © 2026 ListerPros · Mesa, AZ

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