



Dorms.com™
Hostels Worldwide



A guide to hostel photography-
how to photograph your dorms



Angles

While you can be a little creative in terms of artistic angles and slanted shots outside your hostel, when you are photographing the inside, keep it simple. Shoot straight on and avoid dramatic angles. Use the architectural framework of the room as a guide when choosing your shots. If you have a grid in the viewfinder or screen of your camera, then use it to line up everything straight. High or low is not an issue, but having the camera straight will make a huge difference. Ensure that the vertical lines are straight up and down. This is the most important correction, because if the vertical lines of the room are narrower at the top or bottom, it will give the appearance of the room falling away and it is not pleasing to the eye. Shooting straight with strong vertical lines will make for a more balanced photo with more cropping options further down the line.

To really open up the space, shoot from the corner of the room. Positioning the camera as far into the corner as possible gives you the widest perspective. This means that you can capture more of the room and its character. If you can get the camera higher, but still straight, it will make for a grander shot, particularly in larger communal areas. Also, think about capturing the room through the doorway from another room if it gets you a better shot.

Tripod

To keep your camera level, use a tripod. The tripod will stay steady when hands cannot so you can get a crisp, clean shot. They come with a spirit level built in ensuring a straight shot. Using the tripod will also allow for slower shutter speeds and more room to play with the aperture.

Aperture

Knowing your aperture will enable you to get a better depth of field in your photos. The lower the aperture number (f-stop), the larger the hole and vice versa. If you are shooting a closeup, then you can use a low f-stop to get focus on the main item, but a blurred background. If you are shooting a whole room, then make sure your f-stop is high for sharply focussed shots. This will enable you to tell the story you want by highlighting the elements you want people to notice in each photograph.

Format

Most people tend to shoot in JPEG format, which means you lose a lot of data, as it is a compressed file. If you want to get all of the photographic data for post-production, then switch your camera settings to shoot in RAW. RAW is an uncompressed file type that keeps all of the raw data from the shot without pixelation. The benefits of shooting in raw are that it gives you a lot more control over the image when you process it. You will find that RAW allows you to retrieve the data from blown-out or underexposed images and manipulate it a lot better than in a JPEG. Photoshop and Lightroom both are excellent for working with RAW and will give you a JPEG output after processing.

Post production

Many people worry about using post production software such as Photoshop. When it comes to making your hostel shots really exciting, manipulating the images will give them a professional look. Since photos often don't come out looking like you expect, you can play around with highlights, shadows, saturation, vibrancy and levels. You can crop the photo and make it look just like you want it to. You should not, however, rely entirely on post production to correct everything. Setting up the shot before shooting will make the post production a simpler operation.

When you add your hostel to an the Dorms.com inventory, be sure to include large, high quality images, and follow the tips above to ensure your dorms are presented in the best possible way to customers.

