

Star Rating Systems

What do you understand by the term 5* hotel? Write down a few words that come to mind;

Why do you think hospitality outlets are rated using this star system?

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How does it help the guest?

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How might it help the hotel?

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Research Task

Go onto the website; www.discovernorthernireland.com and have a look at the hotel section.

Choose 2 3* hotels and note down the following information;

3* Hotels

Name of hotel	
Number of bedrooms	
Are all rooms ensuite	
What facilities do you see in the bedroom?	
Restaurant facilities	
Does it have a pool?	
Are there any other noticeable products or services they provide?	
Write down three words they use to describe themselves in the information	

Repeat this exercise for three 4* hotels and three 5* hotels;

4* Hotels

Name of hotel	
Number of bedrooms	
Are all rooms ensuite	
What facilities do you see in the bedroom?	
Restaurant facilities	
Does it have a pool?	
Are there any other noticeable products or services they provide?	
Write down three words they use to describe themselves in the information	

5* Hotels

Name of hotel	
Number of bedrooms	
Are all rooms ensuite	
What facilities do you see in the bedroom?	
Restaurant facilities	
Does it have a pool?	
Are there any other noticeable products or services they provide?	
Write down three words they use to describe themselves in the information	

Below is an extract from the Northern Ireland Tourism Office;

In Northern Ireland, accommodation providers can choose to be associated with Tourism Northern Ireland's Star Grading Scheme.

We use a five level star grading system to indicate the standard of customer care, quality, condition and range of facilities on offer at participating establishments.

The awards focus on a range of key areas including the standard of the welcome and hospitality in serviced accommodation, as well as cleanliness, standard of bedrooms, bathrooms and, where applicable, food. The number of stars awarded to a property indicates the standard visitors can expect of the property:

- * 1 star: clean and tidy, a fair and acceptable standard
- ** 2 stars: a good overall standard
- *** 3 stars: a very good standard
- **** 4 stars: an excellent standard
- ***** 5 stars: an exceptional standard

An inspector will call to the business and take a tour of all areas of the hotel to look at;

Cleanliness

All hotels regardless of star rating are expected to be cleaned to a high standard. Therefore, any slip in this area may result in a hotel losing a star when the inspector calls

Area	One star	Five star
Bedrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cleaned daily and checked• Beds made daily• Good temperature and ventilation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bed linen changed at least every two days• Appropriate temperature set in advance• Evening house service provided, beds turned down, bins emptied, curtains pulled, towels tidied

Service

Area	One star	Five star
Luggage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help may be available on request to carry bags • There may be an area to store luggage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hotel takes control of luggage from arrival carrying it up to the room. • A secure area for left luggage
Reception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receptionist may have to be called • Directions to room given • Brief explanation of hotel features 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 hour reception • Highly skilled staff • Valet parking offered • Offered an escort to bedroom • Escort outlines important information
Booking service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All prices quoted must be accurate • Information regarding facilities will be given • Booking available during day and evening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bookings able to be made 24/7 • Confirmation made • Account presented in envelope or folder
Staff appearance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tidy and well groomed • High standard of personal hygiene 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impeccable presentation and uniform

Food and Beverage

Area	One star	Five star
Room service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No requirement for breakfast • May have limited choice where provided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A wide choice of substantial hot and cold dishes
Alcohol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol available if licensed • May have an honesty bar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alcohol served 24/7 • Comprehensive range of drinks • Table service provided
Lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lunch service not required • Snacks available day and evening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lunch served in formal restaurant • Snacks available in public areas 24/7 • Afternoon tea available
Meals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceptable quality • Some evidence of fresh produce • Prices on menus clearly visible • Self-service or buffet style is acceptable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All meals prepared with excellent level of skill • High quality and large range of international cuisine • All courses served at table

Bedrooms

Area	One star	Five star
Bedroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All bedrooms to have an en suite bathroom or shower room to include a toilet • Enough space to allow guests to move around the room • No suites necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All bedrooms to have an ensuite bathroom with thermostatically controlled shower • Bedrooms very spacious to allow leisure and dining in comfort. • A number of permanent luxury suites available
Bathrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceptable quality and condition. • Sufficient size to allow ease of use • Provision of soap • Basic towels – hand and bath 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent quality and condition • Luxurious standard of fittings • Spacious in size • Range of expensive toiletries • Range of towels including bath sheets robes and face clothes of excellent quality

Hospitality/Welcome

All guests should be greeted and acknowledged in a friendly efficient and courteous manner no matter if it is a one star or five-star hotel.

A five-star hotel will provide excellent guest service and welcome giving guests the impression they are being cared for by highly trained professional staff.

Staff should have excellent social skills.

Multi lingual staff will be available in some five star hotels with an international market.

Why are star rating systems for hotels beneficial?

- Star rating systems are easy to understand and helpful for customers or guests when deciding what level of accommodation (bedrooms and bathrooms) they wish to use.
- It will also serve as a guide to the price the guest will be expected to pay, e.g. a high star rating hotel will attract customers who are willing to pay more money.
- The hotel will have to provide the services and standard of accommodation that matches their star rating and this will give guests an indication of what facilities such as a gym and a pool there will be.
- It will help guests know what level of service they can expect
- Guests will have an indication of the standard of cleanliness they can expect
- A star rating will also provide some indication of what level of fixtures and fittings the hotel should have.
- Star ratings will also be a guide as to what is available for the serving of food and beverages and the type of service of these they may expect.
- The ease of access into a building may be included in the rating as might the views and surrounding areas.
- Hotels can use the star rating system as an advertising tool to help the hotel attract new customers.
- A star system may allow the hotel to have a unique selling point (USP) in their location.

Drawbacks of Star Rating Systems

- Expensive to provide a high standard of service and accommodation to match a high star rating e.g. en-suite facilities or leisure facilities.
- Smaller hotels unable to achieve a high star rating as a result of size or location of hotel.