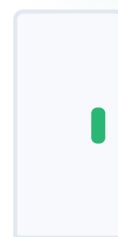
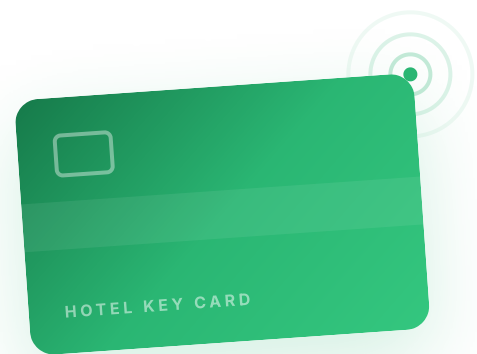


# Hotel Key Card Design & Procurement Kit

A practical guide to designing, selecting, and ordering hotel key cards — from brand design to vendor evaluation.

- ✓ Design Checklist
- ✓ Material Comparison
- ✓ QR Code Ideas
- ✓ Print Specifications
- ✓ Vendor Scorecard
- ✓ Pre-Print Approval



## Before You Order: Ask These Questions

Many hotels order key cards based on price alone, only to discover compatibility issues, poor durability, or missed branding opportunities. Before requesting quotations, complete this section.

### Property Information

HOTEL NAME

NUMBER OF ROOMS

NUMBER OF PROPERTIES

OPENING DATE (IF NEW)

### Existing Lock System – Vendor

☐ VingCard ☐ Onity ☐ Salto ☐ Dormakaba ☐ Häfele ☐ Godrej ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

### Technology

☐ Magnetic Stripe ☐ RFID ☐ NFC ☐ Mobile Key Compatible

### Frequency (for RFID / NFC)

☐ MIFARE Classic ☐ MIFARE DESFire ☐ ISO 14443



#### IMPORTANT

Verify lock compatibility before ordering cards. Mismatched frequency or technology can render an entire batch unusable.

HOTEL PROCUREMENT NOTES

# Hotel Key Card Design Checklist

Ensure your key card design covers all essential branding, operational, and guest communication elements before sending artwork to print.

 Front Side

|                                                                                        |                                                                                       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Hotel Logo</b><br>High-resolution, vector format preferred | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Brand Colors</b><br>Pantone or CMYK values confirmed      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Property Name</b><br>Full hotel name, correct spelling     | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Contact Number</b><br>Front desk or main reception        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Website URL</b><br>Direct booking page recommended         | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>QR Code</b><br>Digital directory, menu, or feedback       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Social Media Handles</b><br>Instagram, Facebook, etc.      | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Loyalty Program</b><br>Membership branding or sign-up CTA |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Emergency Contact</b><br>Safety or security number         |                                                                                       |

 Back Side

|                                                                                     |                                                                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Wi-Fi Details</b><br>Network name & password            | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Checkout Time</b><br>Standard checkout hour                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Reception Number</b><br>For in-room dialing             | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Breakfast Timing</b><br>Hours and restaurant name            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Restaurant Hours</b><br>All F&B outlet timings          | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Spa Details</b><br>Booking info or QR code                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Safety Instructions</b><br>Emergency exits, fire safety | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Sustainability Message</b><br>Green initiative or eco-pledge |



**PRO TIP**

Use the back of your key card to promote amenities like the spa, restaurant, or direct booking website. It's a marketing touchpoint every guest interacts with daily.

HOTEL PROCUREMENT NOTES

# QR Code Ideas for Hotel Key Cards

Instead of wasting the back of your key card, use QR codes to connect guests with useful hotel services and drive ancillary revenue.

| QR CODE DESTINATION | PURPOSE                                                  | INCLUDE?                 |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Mobile Check-in     | Reduce front desk queues and wait times                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Hotel Directory     | Replace printed room folders with a digital version      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Restaurant Menu     | Digital dining — update menus without reprinting         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Spa Booking         | Increase ancillary revenue through easy booking          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Feedback Form       | Collect reviews before guests leave the property         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| WhatsApp Concierge  | Faster guest communication and service requests          | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| City Guide          | Local recommendations for dining, attractions, transport | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Direct Booking      | Encourage repeat bookings and bypass OTA commissions     | <input type="checkbox"/> |

 **PRO TIP**  
Use dynamic QR codes that can be updated without reprinting cards. Change promotions, menus, or feedback links seasonally while keeping the same physical key card.

HOTEL PROCUREMENT NOTES

# Card Material Comparison

The material you choose affects durability, guest perception, sustainability credentials, and total cost of ownership.

| MATERIAL     | BEST FOR                         | LIFESPAN | COST   | SELECT                   |
|--------------|----------------------------------|----------|--------|--------------------------|
| PVC          | Most hotels — industry standard  | Medium   | \$     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| PET          | Eco-conscious hotels             | High     | \$\$   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Wooden       | Luxury & boutique properties     | High     | \$\$\$ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Bamboo       | Sustainable & eco-resort brands  | High     | \$\$\$ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Recycled PVC | Green initiatives & CSR programs | High     | \$\$   | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**BEST PRACTICE**

Wooden or bamboo key cards create a memorable first impression and reinforce your environmental commitment from the moment of check-in.

## Print Specifications

Share these specifications with your card vendor or printing partner to ensure accuracy.

**CARD SIZE**

☐ CR80 — 85.60 × 53.98 mm  
Industry standard (ISO/IEC 7810 ID-1)

**THICKNESS**

☐ 0.76 mm (standard)  
☐ 0.80 mm (premium feel)

**FINISH**

☐ Gloss  
☐ Matte  
☐ Frosted  
☐ Metallic

**PRINT**

☐ CMYK  
☐ Pantone  
☐ Double-sided

**Premium Extras**

☐ UV Coating

☐ Spot UV

☐ Signature Panel

☐ Foil Stamping

☐ Embossing

☐ QR Code / Barcode

HOTEL PROCUREMENT NOTES

# Hotel Key Card Vendor Comparison

Score each vendor across the criteria below. Rate each criterion from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent).

| EVALUATION CRITERIA            | VENDOR A             | VENDOR B             | VENDOR C             |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Compatible with lock system    | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| RFID / NFC support             | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| Minimum order quantity (MOQ)   | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| Lead time / delivery speed     | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| Printing quality               | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| Eco-friendly material options  | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| Cost per card                  | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| Shipping & logistics           | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| Warranty & after-sales support | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| Sample card quality            | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| TOTAL SCORE                    | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |



Vendor Contact Details

VENDOR A

COMPANY

CONTACT

EMAIL

VENDOR B

COMPANY

CONTACT

EMAIL

VENDOR C

COMPANY

CONTACT

EMAIL



BEFORE YOU DECIDE

Always request physical sample cards before placing a bulk order. Test them with your existing lock system to confirm compatibility, print quality, and durability.

HOTEL PROCUREMENT NOTES

# Pre-Print Approval Checklist

Before approving artwork for production, verify every item below. Catching errors at this stage saves time, money, and avoids reprinting thousands of cards.

|                                                                              |                                                                             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Logo resolution checked (min 300 DPI)    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brand colours verified (Pantone / CMYK) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All text proofread for accuracy          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> QR code scanned and tested              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lock compatibility confirmed with vendor | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Physical sample card approved           |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Printing finish approved (matte / gloss) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Card thickness confirmed                |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Order quantity verified                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Delivery timeline confirmed             |

## Annual Key Card Cost Estimator

Estimate your annual key card spend and plan your procurement budget effectively.

|                      |                      |                      |                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| NUMBER OF ROOMS      | CARDS PER ROOM       | REPLACEMENT RATE (%) | ANNUAL CARDS NEEDED  | EST. COST PER CARD   |
| <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |

Estimated Annual Key Card Spend

\$



**PRO TIP**

Hotels with 100+ rooms typically see 15–25% annual card replacement rates. Switching from magnetic stripe to RFID can reduce replacements by up to 40% due to improved durability.

HOTEL PROCUREMENT NOTES

# How to Choose the Right Key Card System

Beyond the card itself, the system behind it matters. Use this evaluation framework to assess key card solutions.

| CONSIDERATION     | WHAT TO LOOK FOR                                                    | PRIORITY                 |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Hotel Size        | Small: basic RFID. Large: cloud-based centralized access control    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Budget            | Upfront hardware + ongoing maintenance, software, card replacements | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Security          | Encrypted RFID or NFC with time-based permissions and audit logs    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| PMS Compatibility | Automated activation, deactivation, and room assignments            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mobile Key Ready  | Smartphone access support or easy upgrade path                      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Vendor Support    | Installation, training, updates, and after-sales support            | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Energy Saving     | Integration with energy-saving key card switches                    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Scalability       | Grows with your business — more rooms, properties, features         | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## Hotel Key Card vs Mobile Key

The future is choice, not replacement. Many modern hotels now offer both options.

| FEATURE         | HOTEL KEY CARDS                        | MOBILE KEYS                          |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Access Method   | Physical RFID, NFC, or magnetic stripe | Smartphone app or digital wallet     |
| Convenience     | Simple and familiar for all guests     | Contactless, no physical card needed |
| Hardware Cost   | Lower initial investment               | Requires compatible smart locks      |
| Replacement     | Easy and inexpensive                   | No physical replacement needed       |
| Security        | Encrypted RFID / NFC                   | Advanced encryption + remote mgmt    |
| Best Suited For | Budget, mid-scale, independent         | Luxury, lifestyle, tech-forward      |



### RECOMMENDATION

Choose a system based on your future operational needs, not just today's budget. A hybrid approach (physical cards + mobile keys) provides the greatest flexibility.

### HOTEL PROCUREMENT NOTES

## Quick Reference: Key Card Technologies

Side-by-side comparison of the four main hotel key card technologies.

| TECHNOLOGY      | HOW IT WORKS      | SECURITY  | DURABILITY | COST     | BEST FOR           |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------|------------|----------|--------------------|
| Magnetic Stripe | Swipe             | Basic     | Moderate   | Low      | Budget & legacy    |
| RFID            | Tap (radio freq.) | High      | High       | Medium   | Most modern hotels |
| NFC             | Tap (two-way)     | Very High | Very High  | Med-High | Smart & mobile     |
| Hole Card       | Punched holes     | Low       | Moderate   | Low      | Legacy systems     |

## Common Key Card Problems & Solutions

Quick-reference troubleshooting guide for front desk teams.

| PROBLEM              | LIKELY CAUSE                 | SOLUTION                             |
|----------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Card stops working   | Expired, incorrectly encoded | Re-encode at front desk; verify PMS  |
| Card won't read      | Dirty reader, damaged card   | Clean card, try again, or replace    |
| Demagnetization fear | Magnetic stripe near magnets | Upgrade to RFID; keep from magnets   |
| Works after checkout | PMS not synced with locks    | Verify auto-deactivation enabled     |
| Lost or stolen card  | Guest misplaced card         | Deactivate instantly; issue new card |

## What's Actually Stored on a Hotel Key Card?

Hotel key cards do **not** store personal or financial information.

✓ **TYPICALLY STORED**

✓ Encoded card ID

✓ Room access permissions

✓ Check-in / check-out validity

✓ Authorized area access

✓ Encryption credentials

✗ **NOT STORED**

X Guest name

X Credit / debit card details

X Passport or ID information

X Home address or contacts

X Reservation history

HOTEL PROCUREMENT NOTES



BUILDING A SMARTER HOTEL

## Planning to Upgrade Your Hotel Technology Stack?

If you're evaluating hotel key card systems, it's also worth reviewing the technology that supports reservations, distribution, and revenue management. AxisRooms helps hotels connect it all.

- ✓ Channel Manager
- ✓ PMS Integrations
- ✓ 100+ OTA Integrations
- ✓ Web Booking Engine
- ✓ Revenue Management
- ✓ Payment Gateways

[Book a Free Demo →](#)

No commitment required · Takes less than 2 minutes