

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Below is a comprehensive set of questions that are often asked by our holidaymakers. Please look below (alphabetised by main subject) before [contacting us](#) with any questions but of course we are always happy to talk to anyone so if there is any aspect of a property or a booking you wish to discuss please contact us, we will do our best to give you a prompt and accurate answer.

Who do we contact in case of EMERGENCY?

In the event of an emergency you should in the first instance call the management company. We will have provided you with their details and they should also be highly visible within the home. Of course in the event of a fire or a medical emergency contact the emergency services in the first instance, use the phone provided in the property. If you are still unable to get help please [contact us](#) at head office, but bear in mind we are not open 24 hours so use either an electronic form of messaging or be prepared to leave a voice message if we are unobtainable.

When do I receive the ADDRESS of the property?

For security reasons we are not free to release the full address until a point reasonably close to your date of departure. If you will be traveling and it may be hard to reach you for a few days before your arrival at the home then do please let us know and we will arrange to give you full details.

What APPLIANCES and SUPPLIES will I find in the property?

All of our properties have a fully equipped kitchen with oven, microwave, fridge, dishwasher, kettle, laundry facilities etc. They also all have hair dryers in at least one bathroom. Check with us if there is anything vital for your stay. Some properties have a safe, some have wi-fi, but not all. Again check if this is vital.

If you need a cot (crib) and/or high chair then you are invited to point that out in your original enquiry or with your booking form, we can always provide these, sometimes for a small nominal charge.

All towels and linens are laundered and prepared for your arrival.

Properties in the US will not be equipped with any consumables such as salt, pepper, any food or even laundry products. Those in Europe are more likely to have a modest supply of such items, you may even find an occasional can of beer! We just ask that if you use something you consider leaving a similar volume of supplies for the next visitor if in Europe, no point if you are in the US.

If you think you are reliant on any particular item then do please ask us at the outset. We have a record of what should be in each property. After all you will not want to be away for long without a hair dryer!

How do I BOOK A HOME?

We provide a booking form that either you complete and return or if the technology fails you can simply provide the same information via an e-mail. You can download a booking form [here for a rental home located in America](#), or [here for a rental home located in Europe](#). On receipt we will confirm the details and arrange for your deposit to be collected.

What if I CANCEL my holiday?

When you first make a booking you pay a deposit for us to reserve this in our system and we then turn away any further enquiries for the period in question, we put in place an order to have the property prepared for you and set up the records to manage your time on holiday. This deposit is non-refundable.

A cancellation at any time will result in the loss of this deposit.

Ten weeks before you move into the property you pay us the balance. We reserve the right to retain all of these funds if we are unable to sell the time in that property for a sum equal to that balance. We will do our best to recover the sum for you but with limited time to spare it is seldom possible to obtain a suitable booking, the exception being during high season and peak times. We are not obliged to return any funds to you so long as the property in question is made available to you and is as advertised, but we want you to be happy with our service so that you come back to us so we will try really hard on your behalf to minimise the angst that may ensue from a cancelled holiday.

We STRONGLY advise you to take out holiday insurance. In the event of your being able to make a claim on a policy you must advise us that this is the case. It is not our function to underwrite the insurance companies!

Are you able to arrange flights, CAR HIRE etc?

We do not arrange flights at this time although we are happy to share with you our own experiences as we travel to visit these properties very regularly. We are able to offer car hire, please click [here](#) to see our car hire offering.

Are my CARD DETAILS secure?

Yes, all card details are transmitted securely and none is stored any longer than is strictly necessary. If you are uncomfortable with transmitting your card details then do please [contact us](#) and we will take down the details over the telephone.

What time is CHECK-IN /CHECK-OUT? Can this be changed?

You are welcome to arrive at the property at any point after 4.00 pm. The cleaning team will do their utmost to be finished and out of your way before then but of course they can't predict the state they will find the property in that morning so please be understanding if they have not quite finished.

Because typically someone is checking in the day you check out we require that much as with a hotel you vacate the premisses before 10.00 am on the date of departure.

It is sometimes possible to accommodate a holidaymaker's request for an early check-in or more likely a late check-out, but you MUST discuss this with us first as we need to make changes to the standard arrangements. We will if at all possible help you in this regard but of course this will not be possible if this is a back to back booking, there will be insufficient time to do everything we need to do.

NOTE: If your request is for a large proportion of a day we may ask you to pay for an extended day as we must then pay the cleaner's overtime, but this must be agreed in advance.

Are there any additional COSTS?

The prices we quote cover the use of the property for the agreed size of party, power, clean linen etc. on arrival, applicable taxes. We do not include air fares, any food etc. If more guests arrive than was originally agreed we reserve the right to charge a supplement. (You will not be charged if you have a sensible number of guests visit for the course of the day, but they should not remain overnight for important licensing reasons)

All properties are cleaned before arrival and after departure, if you want additional cleaning services you need to advise us and you will be charged for these. You will also be charged a supplement if on departure the property has been left in an exceptionally dirty state. NB this is particularly the case if anyone smokes within a property, a thorough clean will have to be commissioned and this can be expensive. The result of just one cigarette smoked within a property will remain evident for some considerable time and is not acceptable to either the

owner or the next holidaymaker using that property.

Where do I collect the KEYS from? How do I CHECK-IN?

Dealing with check in first – there is no real check in as such. at some point after you are due to arrive one of our representatives will be in touch to ensure everything is OK. Of course feel free to [contact us](#) before then if you find anything not to your satisfaction.

You will be told in advance of your arrival as to how you will gain access to the property. If you have not heard from us then do contact us but because sometimes access involves code numbers it may not be until a couple of days before your departure that we can be sure of these numbers. Most of our properties have a 'key box' by the front door. You will be provided with a code that will release this box so that you can access the key. Some properties require no key, they simply use a code number within a door lock. Other properties require a traditional key that may be collected from a convenient location, close to the property. Again, you should be provided with all these details close to the time of your departure.

What am I expected to do before I LEAVE the property?

Very little. We ask that you ensure you leave the key for the property back in the lock box or wherever you have been asked to leave it. We also expect that before leaving the property you do a quick tidy up to ensure you are not leaving anything behind and that if anything has been broken you can discover it now and tell us, as this is very much appreciated when you do so.

Turn off any electrical appliances

On occasion it may be 24 hours before the cleaners can visit your property. We ask that any perishable items be sensibly dealt with, disposed of in the waste bins provided. In the US all food items left behind will be disposed of so we discourage leaving something for the next guest, it will have been removed before they arrive.

Do we have to bring our own LINEN / TOWELS?

No, see the other answer about what is included, we provide all clean linen and towels, you need bring nothing like that.

Is there a MINIMUM or MAXIMUM stay?

Because of the high cost of cleaning a house there is an effective minimum of four days, sometimes stretchable to three. Below that we believe it is certainly more sensible to stay in an hotel. With the property on Sanibel Island there is an imposed one month minimum stay, imposed by the local county office. With European properties there is certainly a preference for Saturday to Saturday bookings but this is rarely imposed.

As for a maximum stay we do offer increasingly generous discounts the longer the stay, again because we are saving on cleaning and handover costs, but beyond a period of say three or four months and you will probably find you can obtain a better rate in a different sort of resort, one less focused on holidaymakers.

Are you the OWNER of the property?

We do own some of these properties but the vast majority are owned by private individuals, for the most part British and Irish families who use the property themselves for a part of the year but are happy to let it out for the rest of the time as they are grateful for the contribution this generates towards their running and ownership costs.

When is PAYMENT due?

A deposit is due at the time of booking, this depends on which country the property is in. For the US the minimum is greater of 10% or £100 / \$150 / €150. For a European property the percentage is 25% and the minimum is double this level at either £200 / \$300 / €300. The

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balance is then due ten weeks before the holiday commences. Failure to pay this on time might result in a loss of your deposit if you fail to inform us.

At the same point you pay the balance please make arrangements to cover the breakages deposit by whichever means best suits you.

What forms of PAYMENT does TravelOwl accept?

We are pleased to be able to accept debit or credit card (not American Express) as your means of payment. We expect to soon add PayPal, and of course we can accept a cheque made out to 'TravelOwl Ltd.

We accept payment in US\$, GB£ and Eu€

Will I need the POOL HEATING?

In Europe the pools would be too expensive to heat sensibly so this option never really arises. In Florida we suggest that yes (assuming you plan to use the pool) it is worth heating the pool at least during the period September to April inclusive. See the answer given below about the effectiveness of pool heat. It is certainly regarded as a 'must have' during the winter months.

What does the SECURITY DEPOSIT cover?

There are a couple of ways of paying the security deposit. Either as a returnable deposit before you go on holiday or as a smaller non-returnable sum funding an insurance premium. This insurance does not give unlimited cover, just to an amount 10 times that of the sum paid.

The security deposit covers breakages and loss from the property. When the property is being cleaned after your stay, or if you notify us yourself, we will receive a report of any breakages that have occurred during the time you were responsible. Most of the time we hear of no damage. In the event that something has been damaged or lost we will notify you of the cost and either withhold that sum from your deposit and return the balance (within two weeks) or we will ask you for an additional sum if the cost is greater than either the insurance policy covers or the amount of returnable deposit paid.

Do you allow SMOKING or PETS?

The rules are set by the owner but it is rare for an owner to permit either smoking or pets, indeed at present there is not one that allows smoking, just a few that permit pets. Do please [contact us](#) if you wish to take your pet on holiday with you and we can tell you what is available.

How important is it to have a south facing pool when booking a villa in Florida?

Certainly a south facing pool will result in more hours of sunshine beside your pool, and possibly slightly warmer water. Is this important? In the height of the summer this is certainly not important. The sun is so high that shadows are short in any case and another factor to consider is that some shade can be very attractive. Even a north facing pool will catch the sun for a part of the day, the further it faces from north the more hours of sunshine you can expect.

What is the TEMPERATURE of the POOL during the winter months in Florida?

This is too difficult to be able to give much guidance. Pool heat makes the difference between being able to use the pool and not being able to use it, but on the coldest days the air temperature is likely to put you off swimming in any case and when it is really cold the systems will simply not be able to function and you may feel there is no benefit. The pool will not be warm as such, just warmer than it would otherwise have been. 99.9% of holidaymakers take pool heat between the months of October and April, some people even take it outside these months. If the weather has been particularly cold in the recent weeks then such a large

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volume of water will take some heating, so the benefit will not be immediately felt. Note that due to recent substantial energy costs owners tend to lose money on this element of the rental rate but they recognise it is an expensive proportion of the holiday so are doing their best to hold down this charge, just be glad you are not paying the bills!

If the owner has provided a pool cover USE IT, particularly during colder weather. This makes a huge difference to your enjoyment of the pool. It takes just a few minutes to install it after a swim and then the next time you decide to swim the pool will be several degrees warmer as a result.

Not found the question you want an answer to? OK, please just [contact us](#), we will endeavour to answer your question and then may add that question to this list. If you question the content of any response shown above do please let us know