

The following has been adapted from the Canal du Midi bike website:

<https://www.canaldumidi.bike/index.html>

French Hotel Star System Overview

Hotels in France are rated by a government agency that gives them stars. However, this system is flawed. It's flawed because a high star rating DOES NOT mean a high quality establishment. First of all this system is OPTIONAL and not required. Thus there are many hotels that do not have any classification. Once the hotel is rated, this rating will be good for 5 (five) years. After 5 years, the hotel can decide to get checked, again starting the whole procedure over again. Thus during this 5 years, the hotel can drop all its requirements for being a 4 star hotel, for example, and run their establishment like it was a 3 star hotel. This is of course the reason many people complain about their 4 star hotel actually being more like a 3 star hotel or less: the hotel is unchecked for 5 years! But note that a hotel that does not stay up to par risks a 15000 euro fine!

Difference between a 1 star and a 2 star hotel

- Independent and private hotel entry
- WIFI or other internet network with enough speed to at least check email
- Room bigger than 9.75 m²
- Color TV with remote
- Do Not Disturb sign available
- Table or desk
- Lift if more than 4 floors
- Website in at least 2 languages
- Reservations verified by email or mail
- Local tourist information made available
- Hotel staff in direct contact with clients must speak at least one other European language besides French
- Languages spoken by staff must be quickly identifiable by means of a badge on the person or a panel in the hotel

Difference between a 2 star and a 3 star hotel

- Facade of building is in good condition
- Existence of bar and welcome space with at least 4 chairs and a low table
- Room bigger than 11.5 m²
- Flat screen TV
- Light on the desk
- Telephone

- Room directory listing all services of the hotel in each room
- Iron and board available by demand
- Lift if more than 3 floors
- Power plug adapter available (1 per 15 rooms)
- Bar

Difference between a 3 star and a 4 star hotel

- Separated bathrooms for men and women
- Outside area illuminated
- Room bigger than 14 m²
- TV with international channels
- At least 2 power outlets in the room
- Central light switch close to bed
- At least 6 clothes hangers
- At least 2 chairs in each room
- At least 1 bedside table per person
- Luggage rack in the room (foldable or not)
- Full length mirror with legs
- Trashcan for paper
- Safe located in the room
- Air conditioning
- Sound proof rooms
- Room directory listing all services of the hotel in each room in at least one foreign language
- Stationary and writing utensils such as a pen or pencil
- Sewing kit
- Hair dryer
- At least 3 different newspapers in the reception area
- Able to make hotel reservations online
- Lift if more than 2 floors
- Reception must be open 24hr/day if more than 29 rooms
- Hotel staff must have local tourist attraction knowledge
- Hotel staff must carry your luggage

- Hotel must provide secure luggage storage
- Hotel staff in direct contact with clients must speak at least 2 other European languages besides French and including English
- Clothes cleaning service
- For breakfast at least 2 local products, or 2 bio products, or 2 "fair trade" products
- Breakfast served in the room on demand

Difference between a 4 star and a 5 star hotel

- Facade of building decorated with plants or flowers
- Luggage cart in good working condition
- Climate control in restaurant
- Room bigger than 20 m²
- Radio in every room
- Available option to get an extra large bed
- Bathrobes for each person
- Minibar in the room
- Wireless phone that can be called directly from outside the hotel
- Fax or printer available in the room by demand
- Water boiler including two cups, tea bags, sugar, and coffee.
- Computer available in the room by demand
- Shoe shine kit
- Available upon demand toiletries such as toothbrush, comb, etc.
- At least 4 different newspapers in the reception area including one in English
- Lift if there are more than 50 rooms
- Website for hotel must be responsive to fit all screen sizes
- Website in at least three languages (more points if more than 3 languages)
- Reservation possible by telephone 24 hrs a day, 7 days a week
- Client must be accompanied to his room
- Concierge
- Valet parking if the hotel does not have private and secure parking
- Turn down or tuck in service
- Restaurant open for lunch and/or dinner if hotel has more than 60 rooms

- Room service
- Full service bar

Furthermore, the following items are required for ANY star rating:

- Hotel sign must be in good condition
- Clothing of the staff welcoming the clients must be clean
- Heating
- Freely available telephone to make emergency calls.
- Rooms, walls, floors, furniture in good and clean condition
- Clean bathroom in good working condition
- Light above the bathroom sink
- Power outlet for electric shaver close to the sink
- Available upon demand: baby bed, extra pillow, extra sheet, extra towel
- Clean sheets
- Lights over the bed to read a book
- A chair in the room
- A bedside table
- 5 clothes hangers
- Mirror
- Curtains or similar for windows
- Wake up service or alarm clock
- Soap and shower gel in each room
- Trash bin close to the sink
- Hook to hang clothes from
- Baby equipment available upon demand in the room
- At least 2 different newspapers in the reception
- Internet site for the hotel itself
- Website up to date
- Voicemail giving at least the hotel's opening hours
- Reception open at least 8 hours a day
- First aid kit in hotel

- Credit card accepted
- System to receive and deal with complaints; this system is not necessary if the hotel responds to negative reviews on public internet sites such as tripadvisor
- Breakfast room
- Breakfast with at minimum: Hot beverages (coffee, chocolate, tea) compulsory, fruit juices, fresh fruit, deli meats, hot dishes, milk products, cereals, cheese, jam and butter, pastries, bread, dried fruit or compote.

And the following items are NOT required for any star rating:

- Air-conditioning in the halls and breakfast room
- Free internet
- Peep-hole in the door
- Secondary security locks on the door
- Double-paned glass
- Espresso machine
- Computer tablet (like ipad)
- Valet
- Kitchen in the room
- Extra large bathroom
- Toilet separate from bathroom
- Bidet
- Magnifying mirror
- Towel heater
- Garage or private parking
- A place to store bikes
- Private hotel bus
- Gym
- Pool
- Spa
- Billard table
- Game room
- TV room

- Mini golf
- Business corner
- Conference room
- Exchange money
- Satisfaction survey
- Massage
- Pets allowed
- Child care
- Hair dresser
- Wheelchair on demand

Verifying Hotel Status

You can easily verify the current status of a hotel by going to this page:

<https://www.classement.atout-france.fr/hebergements-classes>