The Holiday Inn Express® Hotel Photography Guide presents global standards for hotel photography that accurately represents the global Holiday Inn Express brand. This document is intended for use by property owners and professional photographers, to help them to succeed in visually representing Holiday Inn Express hotels in an attractive and informative manner.

The Guide outlines the criteria for creating hotel-specific photography that is consistent with the Holiday Inn Express brand in all regions: the Americas (North America, Central America & South America) Europe, Greater China, and AMEA (Middle East, Africa and rest of Asia Pacific)

Specifically, the Guide details:
• Basic review of brand standards most applicable to branded photography
• Detailed On-Brand / Off-Brand instructions to achieve consistency with the brand hallmarks

This criteria should be followed by property owners when creating photography for their hotel details pages to ensure that prospective guests have a consistent and positive experience while exploring properties online.
To ensure consistency, all imagery should follow these high level guidelines, which are incorporated in more detail throughout the document:

- Be professionally shot and well lit and conform to the technical standards set forth in accompanying documents
- Be consistent with global standards or standards specific to your region
- Convey a sense of the Holiday Inn Express brand values and brand personality
- Highlight the brand hallmarks
- Support that Holiday Inn is the best choice for Contemporary travelers – whether traveling for business or leisure, with or without the family.
- Show clean, uncluttered spaces
- Convey the full service experience
- Above all, the imagery shown should make a consumer want to book your hotel with confidence

Imagery used to support the Holiday Inn Express brand must be consistent
Things to avoid for Holiday Inn Express imagery

- Avoid any props and additional items that clutter the space and distract attention
- Avoid making the brand look dated or old fashioned
- Avoid shooting cigarettes or cigars. Alcohol can only be shot in a restaurant or bar scenario
- Avoid any obvious religious symbols or religious books in shots
Basic Brand Standards
As Applicable to Brand Photography
**INVITE External Signage**
The external signage should be representative of the signage scheme included in the Holiday Inn Express brand signage guidelines.

**Exterior Lighting**
There should be a minimum of 2, and maximum of 4, lights to accent the main hotel entrance with the approved Holiday Inn Express blue lighting. Please check the colors are correct in reality.

**Planters**
Two sets of three brand specified planters are present on either side of the primary entrance, positioned so that access to the building is not restricted. Non-Hallmark planters are acceptable if they are at other entrances or outside of the primary entrance area, which is 4.5m on either side.

**Plants**
- Planter plants are present, correct height, correct shape, color and are live and healthy.
- One small, medium and large planter; all planters must match in design and color.
## INVITE

### Bench
At least one brand specified bench is present at the primary entrance outside of the entrance door and to the outside of the landscape planters, so that access to the building is not restricted. Non-brand specified benches are acceptable if they are at other entrances or outside of the primary entrance area, which is 4.5m on either side.

### Ash Receptacle
At least one large brand specified ash receptacle, which includes a liner and lid, is used as a trash receptacle, is present at the primary entrance. Non-brand specified trash receptacles are acceptable if they are at other entrances or outside of the primary entrance area.

### Waste Receptacle
At least one brand specified ash receptacle is present at the primary entrance, although not directly in front of the entrance doors so that smokers do not gather at the entrance of the hotel. Non-brand specified ash receptacles are acceptable if they are at other entrances or outside of the primary entrance area.

### GREET Entry Door Vinyl Graphic
The Primary Entrance is to have brand specified vinyl graphics on door – Vinyl arc graphic and vinyl square graphic should be present. Graphics must include a Holiday Inn Express® logo square and solid squares. Logo square version must be applied to two center doors and to all rotating doors.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INVITE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Check-In/Desk Lighting</strong></td>
<td>Check-In desk has a minimum requirement of two Hallmark lamps. If check-in desk is longer than 4.5m a third lamp should be present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Welcome Mats</strong></td>
<td>Two-toned blue brand-specified mat with the Holiday Inn Express® arc should be placed in vestibule. Where there is no vestibule or an inlay mat in the vestibule, place in the lobby, adjacent to entrance doors. If the mat cannot be accommodated in the vestibule or the lobby, due to space or when multiple floor types would be beneath the mat, place the mat at exterior entrance of the building. Mat must be the largest size that can be accommodated and purchased from authorized suppliers. The use of square vinyl door graphics and the Arc Welcome mat is permitted at secondary guest entrances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Signature Back Wall</strong></td>
<td>Signature Full Back Wall or Art Wall is present and is in good condition and lighting is working. Existing wall finish around the Full Back wall or behind the Art Wall is neutral (or an IHG approved color or texture) and is in good condition.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS BRAND GUIDELINES

### INVITE

#### Clutter Free Check-In Desk

The check-in desk must be free of all brochures, awards, accent décor, and any other paraphernalia, whether Holiday Inn branded or other. The only collateral item permitted is the IHG Rewards Club enrollment form which must be displayed in an IHG approved display holder. Any existing IHG Rewards Club mats and barrier ropes are to be removed from the reception area.

#### RELAX Bedding Basics Standard Compliance

The duvet cover, pillow cases and fitted sheet are white. Two flat sheets, one fitted sheet. All bedding is clean and free from any imperfections. Mattress protectors are in use.

#### Clutter Free Guestroom

All table and desk surfaces are free of clutter. Only brand-specified items, IHG Rewards Club, HSIA instructions, and the In-Room Directory are permissible, to be displayed in an IHG approved display holder.

#### Bed Throw

A bed throw must be present at the end of the bed. The throws consist of IHG approved fabric, are clean and free from any imperfections. The bed throw is folded in half and shows a strip of color at the end of the bed.
<table>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Embroidered Pillows/Soft or Firm</strong></td>
<td>Two pillow cases with “soft” embroidery and two pillow cases with “firm” embroidery should be present. Flaps featuring the embroidery must be visible on the outer sides of the bed. King beds should feature king pillows; Queen/standard beds feature Standard pillows.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>REFRESH</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hallmark Shower Curtain (Not applicable for glass shower doors)</strong></td>
<td>The shower curtain features an Arc shaped sheer window on a white curtain with a box tone on tone pattern. The shower curtain is clean and free from any imperfections. Unless glass doors are in place. Shower curtain to remain closed when shooting images.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shower Rail (Not applicable for glass shower doors)</strong></td>
<td>The shower rod is curved/crescent shaped. (Unless glass doors are in place).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hallmark Amenity Tray</strong></td>
<td>The Amenity Tray is present if the hotel doesn’t have dispensed products, and is clean and in good condition.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Holiday Inn Express Photography
On-/ Off-Brand Guidelines
Composition and Cropping

On-Brand
- Capture the most detail that the guest would experience in each room/area.
- Include brand hallmarks, where applicable, in each shot.

Off-Brand
- Tighter, more abstract shots. Cropping that makes room features awkward, unrecognizable, or tangent.
- Generic shots that do not include brand hallmarks.
On-Brand
- Guest room window coverings should be open. Sheers should be drawn if outside view is limited and/or unattractive.
- Natural reflections of room and room details in mirrors.

Off-Brand
- Fully closed window coverings. Distracting, unattractive views through window sheers.
- Trademarked signage visible through windows.
- Reflections of camera equipment and/or photography crew. Awkward room reflections.
Composition and Cropping continued

**On-Brand**
- Shooting from eye-level angle to give shots a sense of authenticity and reinforce a sense of productivity.

**Off-Brand**
- Skewed or distracting angles that could be perceived as too ‘abstract’ or artistic.
Lighting

On-Brand
- Lighting should be light and natural with no heavy shadows.
- Lighting that’s appropriate for the guest room or common area that is being shot. Exteriors should be shot at “Magic Hour” (the brief period at dusk or dawn when the sun is either just above or below the horizon), featuring hallmark accent lighting.

Off-Brand
- Unnatural lighting, glare, reflection, and/or heavy shadows.
- Flat lighting set-ups that result in bland, washed out images.
- Lighting that is inappropriate for the time of day.
Lighting continued

On-Brand
- Lighting should provide a sense that it is coming from the windows and fixtures within the room. Restaurants and lounges should be shot at a time minimizing disruption in guest services. Guest rooms and all other interior areas should be shot during daylight.

Off-Brand
- Lighting set-ups that are overly dramatic and feel staged and unnatural.
Focus

On-Brand
- Shots that have a clear, clean focal point.
- Good depth of field, showcasing the entire room as the guest would experience it.

Off-Brand
- Shots without any clear focus. Use of selective focus.
- Overly shallow depth of field, blurring elements in the room beyond the focal point. Focusing in on specific detail in a room.
**On-Brand**
- Shots that capture most of the room and/or common area as the guest experiences it when they enter the area. Natural, non-distorted perspective.

**Off-Brand**
- Wide angle shots that make the rooms appear larger or smaller than they are. Awkward angles that make the area look distorted, "Photoshopped". Images that have tweaked depth perception.
On-Brand

- Rooms and common areas should appear exactly as the guest would find them. No additional props are necessary.
- Uncluttered appearance – follow global standards for guest rooms, common areas, and exteriors.

Off-Brand

- Adding props to guest rooms and common areas and distracting from the brand hallmarks.
- Cluttering guest rooms and common areas with excess props. Materials that are not part of Holiday Inn Express' global standards and/or Holiday Inn Express' branded items.
Propping continued

**On-Brand**
- No recognizable brand names. Turn water bottles so the label cannot be read. No images on TV screens and/or monitors.

**Off-Brand**
- Easily recognizable brand names and/or logos that are not of the Holiday Inn Express’ brand or brand hallmarks.
People

On-Brand
- Guests and employees who are “natural” and “caught in the moment,” such as guests in the lobby, restaurant, or pool areas or employees at Registration Area. One or two people at most.
- If employees are in the shot, they should always be in full uniform, according to brand standards.
- Where employees and/or guests are recognizable, model releases must be obtained. Otherwise, to avoid issues with model releases, guests and employees should be unrecognizable through use of angle, crop, or blurred motion.

Off-Brand
- Models and “staged” guests and employees who are the main subject matter of the shot and/or detract from brand hallmarks. “Crowd scenes” or more than two people.
- Employees who are not in full uniform.
- People looking directly into the camera.
How to capture the mandatory shots

To achieve consistency, engage guests and convert to bookings, each hotel must have the following shots, which convey the look and feel of the brand to the guest and incorporate the feel of the brand hallmarks.
How to capture the mandatory shots

On-Brand
- Depict the "Magic Hour" when the dramatic, brand hallmark color beams illuminate the exterior and entrance, yet with enough golden daylight to make the building glow.
- Capture an exposure that properly renders the brightly lit Holiday Inn Express monogram. If necessary, shoot an additional exposure that is correct for the overall hotel exterior.

Off-Brand
- Daylight shots. Shooting the façade at night without the color beams illuminating the entrance.
- Shots that include old signage and/or logos.
- Showing the parking lot, nearby restaurants, and/or other attractions that will require written releases/permission to be shown in the photograph.
How to capture the mandatory shots

Check-In Interior Shot
Lobby/Great Room & Front Desk
“Welcome Experience”

On-Brand

• Showcase a stylish and welcoming space. Capture a feeling of spaciousness and comfort. Check-in counter is visibly and physically clean, uncluttered and welcomes guests with positive and efficient check-in experience.
• No brochures, awards, décor accents or other items in the registration area. This applies to Holiday Inn Express branded materials as well.
• Be sure to show the new Holiday Inn Express logo on Signature Back Wall, and capture as much of the check-in counter as possible.
• Depict one employee, wearing the brand standard uniform at the desk – shot in focus.
• In a separate shot, capture a close-up of the entire front desk, without any people.
How to capture the mandatory shots

Check-In Interior Shot
Lobby/Great Room & Front Desk
“Welcome Experience”

Off-Brand
- Cluttered, distracting registration area. Brochures and other items on the check-in counter.
- Shots that include old signage and/or logos. Employee in non-brand standard dress and/or shot out of focus.
- Lamps that do not meet Holiday Inn Express global standards.
How to capture the mandatory shots

The Beds
King Standard & Double Standard
“Guest Room Experience”

On-Brand
• Showcase a visually and physically clean and uncluttered space, evoking a simple, positive, and efficient experience.
• Tables and desk surfaces are free of clutter.
• Beds must be prepared to the global standard. All linens, throws and tags must be smoothed and wrinkle-free. Shot must depict “turned down” bed with pillows, top sheeting, duvet blanket and bed throw.
• For Double Standard rooms, both beds must be prepared in the same manner.
How to capture the mandatory shots

The Beds
King Standard & Double Standard
“Guest Room Experience”

**Off-Brand**
- Cluttered or unclean guest rooms
- Using tables and desk surfaces as “display” spaces
- Rumpled or wrinkled lines. Visible stains defects, and/or signs of wear. Sheeting that is not white.
- Beds not prepared to global standards
- Showing a bed without a throw
- Inconsistency between King Standards and Double Standard Guest Rooms
- Double beds that do not match
How to Capture the Mandatory Shots
(For hotels with these features) – Express Breakfast Bar
“Welcome Experience”

On-Brand
- In the first shot, depict the entire Breakfast Bar area with a full food set-up. If possible, include several tables and chairs to suggest the eating area.
- Food must be freshly prepared and neatly arranged. In a separate close-up shot, depict the Breakfast Bar fully stocked with food.
How to Capture the Mandatory Shots
(For hotels with these features) – Express Breakfast Bar
“Welcome Experience”

Off-Brand
• Showing only a portion of the Breakfast Bar.
• No food on the Bar, and/or messy food arrangements.
• Food that looks stale.
How to capture the mandatory shots

Restaurant or Lounge

On-Brand
- Full shot that captures the entire space.
- Chairs and seating areas are neatly arranged and organized. Seating areas look comfortable and clean.
- Clean, uncluttered table surfaces. Tables should be set as guests would see them when they arrive.

Off-Brand
- Focusing on one detail or aspect of the space.
- Messy seating. Too many chairs around the table. Damaged and/or worn chairs.
- Table surfaces with food. Menus, newspapers, etc. in the shot.
How to capture the mandatory shots

The Amenities – Meeting Room

**On-Brand**
- Depict the angle in the room that has the most interest.
- Shoot the room from eye level, as the guest would see it.
- Room is well lit, business-like, and functional.

**Off-Brand**
- Dull, uninteresting angles. Shooting from above or below eye level.
- Images that depict a poorly lit and crowded room. Stacks of chairs in the back of the room.
- Uncovered tables. Table surfaces that appear cluttered or have unsuitable props.
How to capture the mandatory shots

The Amenities – Pool

On-Brand
- Focus on the pool itself, shooting from inside the fencing. OK to show deck chairs and/lounges and umbrella tables on the pool deck. Where possible, limit deck chairs and/or lounges to 10 or fewer.
- For outdoor pools, shoot pool area prior to 10 am local time or after 3 pm local time. Indoor pools may be shot at any time of day to achieve natural daylight.
- Pool water should be clean and clear.
- Avoid mid-day natural light. Pool water color should be saturated and inviting.

Off-Brand
- Shooting from outside the fenced area. Too many deck chairs, lounges, and or umbrella tables, making the pool area appear cluttered and crowded.
- Shooting pool area during the brightest mid-day sun.
- Cloudy water. Washed out colors.
- Messy areas. Unclean floors or outdoor surfaces. Towels, trash, and/or other items scattered around. Pool cleaning equipment in the shot.
How to capture the mandatory shots

The Amenities – Exercise Room

On-Brand
- Show the Exercise Room in a simple and smart way. Show the best marketing features, such as TV monitors in equipment or a pleasant view out the windows.
- Avoid shooting directly into mirrors and capturing reflections of the photography crew.
- The exercise room should be clean and organized. Try to incorporate the full variety of available equipment into the shot without making the room appear crowded (if necessary, remove one or two duplicate pieces). Equipment should line up neatly, with plenty of space between machines.
- Shots that depict clean and organized areas. Floors and surfaces should be freshly vacuumed or swept.

Off-Brand
- Shooting individual equipment and/or just one area of the Center. Equipment that appears to be disorganized.
- A very crowded and cluttered space. Messy areas. Unclean floors.
- Towels, trash, and/or other items scattered around. Shooting directly into mirrors.
How to capture the optional shots

How to Capture the Optional Shots
Front Entrance Brand Hallmarks

**On-Brand**
- Showcase the unique Brand Arc Entry Door, including the logo squares and solid squares. Also, capture the brand hallmark Welcome Mat and Entry Landscape Planters with global standard plant materials.
- Shoot straight on, from the outside looking through into the Lobby area. Avoid reflection of photographer lights in the door.
- Lobby/Great Room lights are on and can be seen through the door.

- Landscaping is freshly trimmed and cleaned. Entry is freshly swept and clear of debris.
- Signature Landscape Planters and global standard plant materials. Landscaping is freshly trimmed and cleaned.
- Focus on the entrance area only to avoid getting written release/permission from other brands and businesses.
- Doors may be open or closed – shoot what is most inviting for the entryway.
How to Capture the Optional Shots
Front Entrance Brand Hallmarks (cont’d)

Off-Brand
- Focusing on just one part of the front entrance.
- Angled shots. Photographer lighting reflected in doors.
- Shots that include old signage and/or logos.
- Plant material that is inappropriate for the local market and/or not on the global standard matrix. Overgrown, dying plants. Landscaped areas with visible debris.
- Showing the ash receptacle and/or outdoor seating, even if it meets global brand standards.
How to capture the optional shots

Unique Property Features

On-Brand

- Showcase those special elements of your hotel that are unique to your location and your best marketing features.
- These include features such as:
  - Gardens and/or attractive grounds
  - Fountains (indoor or outdoor)
  - Courtyards, verandas, covered walkways
  - Spa and/or spa services
  - Gift shop
  - Children's play areas
  - Shuttle and/or limo services
  - Special design and/or historic details in your property
  - Scenic views you can see looking out from the hotel
- When shots of special features include recognizable people, you must obtain the appropriate model release.
How to capture the optional shots

Unique Property Features

Off-Brand
- Features that do not distinguish your hotel and/or location.
- Depicting any features that do not align with the global brand standards.
  - Specific events such as:
    - Weddings
    - Banquets
    - Customer business meetings
    - Staff business meetings
    - Staff team building events
- Shots of views that include highways.
- Not obtaining model releases when people are used in the shot.
How to capture the optional shots

Local Attractions

On-Brand
- Local attractions (within close proximity) that are major drawing points for your property.
- These include:
  - Shopping, dining and cultural centers
  - Entertainment and amusement parks
  - Natural attractions (public parks, gardens, walking paths, etc.)
  - Downtown business areas
  - Dramatic cityscapes
- Since many attractions may be trademarked, you MUST obtain written permits and trademark releases from the building and/or attraction owners/manager prior to shooting any non-Holiday Inn Express attraction.

Off-Brand
- Local attractions that are major drawing points for your property.
- These include:
  - Fast food restaurants
  - Strip malls
  - Unsightly cityscapes
  - Areas that do not look clean and safe
- Not obtaining permits from the owner/manager of the attraction prior to shooting.