



# Get Started **Guide.**



## **Make a checklist of**

- Amenities
- Activities & attractions
- Availability & rates

## **Learn how to**

- Write the perfect headline
- Upload photos
- Research rental rates

## **Get tips on**

- Appealing to all types of travelers
- Taking property photos
- Turning inquiries into bookings

## **Ready to get started?**

*Have a pen or pencil handy to write down notes and ideas.*



## Writing Headlines

**Get noticed!**

- **Short and simple.** You have 12 words to capture a traveler’s attention. Imagine writing your headline on a highway billboard.
- **Stand out from the crowd.** Mention a unique amenity you offer guests to make them feel welcome. No two vacation homes are alike. Share what makes your home special.
- **Mention upcoming events.** Sporting events, art shows, music festivals, holiday parades, etc. Attract travelers who may be interested in attending a local event. Remember, you can change your headline anytime.

**Headline ideas:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

### Include keywords in your headlines:

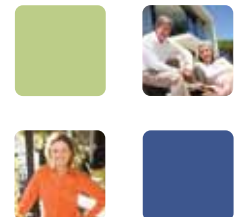
- Location
- Type of property
- Type of location (beach, downtown, etc.)
- Category (luxury, budget)
- Best amenities

## 2 Property Description

**It’s all in the details.**

- **Paint a mental picture.** What would it be like to stay at your home? Start by describing some of the best features inside your home. Sell your property first, and the local area attractions second.
- **Appeal to your ideal guest.** Communicate the benefits of your vacation home to a specific traveler type. Maybe it’s romantic couples, snowbirds, families with children or pet owners.
- **Help travelers find your property on the Web.** Use specific details in your description. Mention names of local leisure activities, tourist attractions, restaurants (example: use the word “Walt Disney World” instead of “theme park”).

**Property description ideas:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_



### 3 **Picture Perfect** *Photo Ideas*

■ **Show-off your property.** You can feature up to 12 photos on your HomeAway listing. Maximize your property's exposure!

■ **Remember, take photos of the following spaces:**

- View
- Living Room
- Exterior
- Kitchen
- Master Bedroom
- Guest / 2nd Bedroom
- Pool / Hot Tub

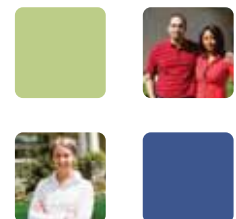
■ **Tips for taking photos.** Give it your best shot! If your photos are more than two or three years old, we suggest you take new ones.

- A standard landscape/horizontal format fit best. Our listing site requires a minimum of 400 x 300 sized digital photos. If your photos are larger, that's okay.
- Use JPEG digital image format **ONLY**. Using your photo software, choose File > Save As and save your photo as .jpg format.

**Photo ideas:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### **Photo Captions**

Once you've selected your photos, write captions of 7 words or less for each photo.



## 4 Put Your Pictures Online

### Uploading Photos

*Instructions if you have taken photos with a digital camera:*

- **Step 1.** You will see boxes for 12 photos. Think of them as slots in a photo album. Photo #1 will be the first photo travelers will see in your listing, #2 will be the second, etc. In Photo #1 box, click the [Upload a photo here](#) link.
- **Step 2.** On the Upload new photo screen, click the **BROWSE** button to locate where your photos are stored inside your computer. Once you find and select the photo, click the **OPEN** button.
- **Step 3.** Next, write a caption to describe the photo in the “Caption for this photo” box. Limit each caption to 5 - 7 words. Then, click the **UPLOAD PHOTO** button. Next, click the [Choose this photo](#) link to confirm placement.
- **Step 4.** Repeat Steps 2 and 3 until you have uploaded up to 12 photos.
- **Step 5.** If you wish, you can use the dark blue arrows to rearrange the order your photos will appear on your listing.
- **Step 6.** Click the orange **SAVE CHANGES** button to save your photos. It takes 2 to 3 business days for your photos to be displayed on your listing. Once your photos are approved, they will be published on your listing. The “Pending” labels will disappear.

*Instructions if you have taken photos with a regular camera.*

- **Step 1.** Send us your photos in the mail. We will scan your photos into the computer and upload them to your listing.

*Please include your name and property number and send them to:*

#### **HomeAway**

3801 S. Capital of Texas Highway, Suite 150  
Austin, TX  
78704

*Be sure to include a self-addressed stamped envelope so we can return your photos.*

#### **Need Help?**

- Need help uploading your digital photos?

HomeAway  
Customer Service

- Not comfortable uploading digital photos?

Use our easy-to-use online form to send us your digital photos:  
<http://support.homeaway.com/>



## 5 Vacation Home Checklist

**Activities.** Mark the activities, attractions and amenities that are relevant to your property. Remember to answer any questions about availability and rental rates!

### Local Area

How many miles are you from the nearest:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Ferry
- \_\_\_\_\_ Airport
- \_\_\_\_\_ Train Station
- \_\_\_\_\_ Highway

### Leisure Activities

#### What to see?

- Antiquing
- Art exhibits
- Sight seeing
- Theater shows
- Movies

### Sports

#### What to do?

- Sailing
- Snorkeling
- Bicycling
- Diving
- Swimming
- Surfing
- Horseback riding
- Bird watching
- Tennis
- Golf
- Fishing
- Skiing
- Hiking
- Hunting

### Services

#### What's available?

- Babysitting
- Pet sitting
- Massage therapy
- Spa/beauty

### Attractions

#### Where to go?

- Theme parks
- Water parks
- Museums
- Historical sites
- Botanical gardens
- Shopping
- Casinos

### Conveniences

#### What's around?

- Restaurants
- Grocery stores
- Coin laundry
- Religious services
- Pharmacy
- ATM/Bank
- Auto repair
- Dentists
- Hospitals

### Contact Info

- Your phone, fax #
- Your email address
- Foreign languages you may speak

### Entertainment

- TV
- CD player
- DVD player
- Books
- Board games
- Video games
- Kids' toys

### Communication

- Phone
- Computer MAC/PC
- Internet access
- Dial-up
- ISDN
- Broadband
- Wireless

### Kitchen

- Refrigerator
- Microwave
- Oven
- Dishwasher
- Coffee Maker

### Dining & Living

- \_\_\_\_\_ # of guests dining table seats
- \_\_\_\_\_ # of guests living room seats

### Indoor Comforts

- Climate control
- Central heating
- Air conditioning
- Ceiling fans
- Bedrooms
- \_\_\_\_\_ # of bedrooms
- Type of beds (twin, double, queen, king)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Total # of guests can comfortably sleep in your home
- Type of bathrooms (half, full, etc.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ # of bathrooms





## 6 Size Up Your Competition

### *Research Rental Rates*

- **Set the right price.** Search HomeAway.com for properties that are similar to your own to determine a competitive rate.
- **When to lower rates.** The less expensive property of two apparently similar properties will be booked first. If filling your bookings early is important, quote lower rates.
- **Toot your own horn.** If your rate is higher than other properties in your area, communicate the value of a higher price in your photos, amenities, location or other special features.
- **Know the area.** Check out nightly hotel rates in your area. Next to vacation homes, hotels are your biggest competitor.

## 7 Ready, Set, Rent

### *Turn inquiries into bookings*

- **Early bird gets the worm.** Reply to all email and phone inquiries within 24 hours. HomeAway research shows that booking rates increase for property owners who respond within 24 hours of receiving an inquiry.
- **Quick Tips:**
  - Thank the traveler for inquiring.
  - Boast about your vacation home's best features to influence a traveler's decision.
  - Include a link to your listing, personal website and/or your online photo album.
  - Provide contact information.
- **Update your calendar regularly.**
  - #1 Travelers can identify availability before contacting you.
  - #2 Listings with calendars that are regularly updated appear higher in search results.

