



Hosting: Practical Tips for Hosts & Guests

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- If you're the host, **contact** your guest ASAP – to let them know that you are excited to host them and confirm their arrival/departure details, etc. *If you're the guest, nothing stops you from initiating contact – to thank the host for having you, communicate arrival and departure details, etc.*
- If you're the host, ask your guest whether they have any **dietary requirements/food allergies**. *If you're the guest, be considerate of any possible constraints on your host, such as finances, time, health etc. and that they may not be able to cater for your food preferences and plan accordingly.*
- If you're the host, make **your guest's room** as welcoming and comfortable as possible, some ideas include providing a welcoming card, small chocolate, flowers from your garden, etc. Put a fresh towel in their room (or show them where they can find towels), and also think of a fan (in Summer) or extra blankets (in Winter). If you're hosting a lady, a mirror in the room is always helpful! (Do not let the size of your house or room stop you from hosting. Many people have given up their own or their children's rooms and slept in the lounge to have the privilege and joy of hosting).
- If you have **Wi-fi** and are happy for your guest to connect to your Wi-fi, let them have the password on arrival. If your Wi-fi is limited and you would prefer your guest to have restricted use (e.g. WhatsApp only), please communicate that. *If you're the guest, do not assume internet access in the home. First, ask about connectivity and any restrictions – for instance, in South Africa, internet access is not guaranteed, is very limited, can be very slow and is expensive. If you need to work while being hosted, check this before your arrival, so you can arrange your own roaming connection or locate a nearby Wi-fi zone at a restaurant or Internet Café.*
- **"House rules"** and **any complex/estate rules** – make sure to chat this through soon after your guest's arrival. If the host and/or guest has children in the house, it is good to communicate expectations or "rules" regarding the children, access to certain rooms, pools, sharing toys, kitchen items etc.
- As the host, try to **get an idea of your guest's schedule and plans**, i.e. if they are planning to get together with other people or not be around for a meal. *And if you're the guest, communicate this to your host as soon as you know your plans, and immediately let them know if your plans change.* As hosts, let your guest know meal times, when they need to be ready to leave the house for a meeting (or will be picked up by someone else), etc. *If you're the guest, also find out about your host's schedule and plans, e.g. if they're planning to get together with other people, when they go to bed, etc. Keep in touch with them about your plans, and remember that they are thinking and planning ahead for meals, transport, time to go to sleep, or wake up, etc.*
- As the host, **keep doing what you always do**, for example, if you meet up for dinner or have a meal with someone else. Don't think you must "entertain" your guests or cannot see other people. Just make sure to communicate to them if you will be out – and, if over a meal time, that you have

made meal arrangements for them. *If you're the guest, feel free to join your hosts in their daily activities. Being hosted is about more than attending a Conference or Equip, but experiencing the reality of living church and family life together.*

- As a host, familiarise yourself with popular **sights-seeing locations** you can take or send your guests to. Check the cost before going or committing to this, as it may not be within your budget. If so, then tell your guest the estimated cost and let them know you won't be joining in on this. *If you're the guest, don't expect your host to take you or pay for you to see the attractions - not every host has the money, or time, to do so. If you really want to go, communicate this with your hosts and invite them without expecting them to pay for you (or that you should pay for them). Alternatively, make your own plans, but please ensure to communicate this to your hosts.*
 - As a host, if you're unable to drive your guest around, consider options for **(inexpensive and safe) public transport**; for example, in Cape Town, we have the MyCiti bus. Alternatively, if you know of another who will be making their way to the same venue, consider arranging a "lift-share" (DO keep in mind, however, that it may not be desirable to have a male drive with a female on their own, and vice versa). *If you're the guest, please don't expect your host to provide you with transport or drive you around - many may be working while hosting you or even be catching public transport themselves. Ask your hosts about the different options for public transportation, and if you've organised your own transport or "lift-sharing", remember to communicate this to them.*
 - Very often, guests want to give their hosts a **gift**. Be humble in receiving these gifts, but do not refuse or expect them either. *If you're the guest, there is no expectation on you to give a gift. However, consider writing them a thank you note or an encouraging card and giving them a chocolate to go with it - it will go a long way in showing a heart of thanks for the hospitality and kindness shown to you during your stay.*
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