The Shortlet Starting Map

Find your next step in the shortlet business, whether you want to start, improve, evaluate a property, manage for owners or build a remote service career.

ONE USEFUL OUTCOME

Finish this map with one goal, one practical action and a clear piece of evidence to collect. You do not need to own a property to begin.

Understand the business first

A shortlet is furnished accommodation offered for short stays. Airbnb is one platform through which guests may find it. The business also includes choosing the right offer, preparing the property, serving guests, controlling costs and keeping reliable records.

Choose the goal that fits you now

01 **Start a shortlet business**
Choose an entry route before committing money.

02 **Improve an existing business**
Find one problem you can measure and improve.

03 **Evaluate a property you own**
Compare possible uses before choosing shortlets.

04 **Manage or co-host for owners**
Define the service and the responsibility.

05 **Build a remote service career**
Choose one useful skill and show what you can do.

Use pages 2-3 to explore your goal, then complete the two-page worksheet. Your goal can change as you learn.

Start with the decision in front of you.

You do not have to solve the whole business today. Choose the next decision you can support with evidence.

01. Start a shortlet business

First decision: Which entry route fits your time, skills, available resources and responsibilities?

Try this: Compare two routes: for example, operating a property and providing a defined service to an owner. List what each requires.

Keep as evidence: A one-page comparison: permissions, costs, work involved, risks and information still missing.

Avoid: Signing a lease, buying furniture or assuming a revenue-share arrangement is suitable before checking the terms and demand.

02. Improve an existing business

First decision: Which problem is hurting the business most, and how will you measure it?

Try this: Choose one: booking enquiries, guest complaints, cleaning quality, recurring faults or a cost you cannot explain. Review a consistent period.

Keep as evidence: A simple baseline and one proposed change. For example: late check-ins during the last four weeks, the causes and a revised arrival checklist.

Avoid: Treating more bookings as proof of more profit, or changing several things at once without recording the result.

03. Evaluate a property you own

First decision: Which use deserves further investigation: shortlet, mid-term or annual letting?

Try this: Describe a likely guest or tenant, then collect comparable evidence for each use that is practical for the property.

Keep as evidence: Dated comparable listings, actual quotes where available, likely operating costs, restrictions and unanswered questions.

Avoid: Treating advertised nightly rates as achieved income or assuming every available night will be sold.

Choose a skill, a service or a test.

04. Manage or co-host for owners

First decision: What service will you take responsibility for, and what stays with the owner?

Try this: Draft a service scope covering tasks, access, reporting, approval limits, fees and how the arrangement ends.

Keep as evidence: A sample owner report and one checklist. Use fictional property details until you have permission to use real information.

Avoid: Promising complete management when you only provide selected tasks, or committing an owner to costs without authority.

05. Build a remote service career

First decision: Which one support skill can you demonstrate clearly?

Try this: Choose one task: improve a listing description, organise a reporting sheet or draft guest-message responses for review.

Keep as evidence: A sample brief, your finished work and an explanation of your choices. Use fictional details and label it as a practice sample.

Avoid: Offering every service at once or putting private guest information, passwords or access codes into a portfolio.

EXAMPLE: A SPECIFIC FIRST ACTION

Goal: provide remote listing support.
Action: review one fictional listing and improve its description.
Evidence: the original, the revised version and three reasons for the changes.
Review date: a date you can realistically meet.

Your next step

Complete the worksheet on pages 4-5. If you want to help shape The STR Operator programme, visit thestroperator.com and choose Start Your Shortlet Journey. Already registered? Use Resume your survey. Registration records interest; it does not enrol you in a paid course.

Educational guidance only. This map does not establish property suitability, professional competence, guaranteed earnings or employment. The STR Operator is independent of Airbnb.

Choose your next move.

Use this page for one current goal. Write on a printed copy or keep your answers in your own notes.

My current goal

My starting point: what I already have, know or can do

The decision I need to make next

One action I will take

When I will do it

MAKE THE ACTION SMALL ENOUGH TO FINISH

Instead of “start my business”, write “compare two entry routes”. Instead of “get clients”, write “prepare one clear service scope and a practice sample”.

Collect evidence. Then review.

Complete this after your first action. An unanswered question is useful when it tells you what to investigate next.

Evidence I will collect, including its source and date

What I still need to confirm or get permission for

What I found after taking the action

My next decision: continue, adjust, pause or ask for help - and why

My review date and next learning topic

Keep private client and guest information out of this worksheet. Use anonymised or fictional examples for practice.