

The Airbnb Review Dispute Kit

A guest leaves a review that shouldn't be there, unfair, biased, retaliatory, or worse. Here's exactly which reviews Airbnb will actually remove, and how to prove it.

HOW TO USE THIS

Find your situation among the 5 categories below, then go to that category's page for the exact qualifying test and a fillable dispute message. Page 2 covers documentation you should be doing on every stay, before you ever need it.

The 6 Reasons Airbnb Will Remove a Review

1 Irrelevant to the Stay

The review isn't actually about the reviewer's experience, complaints about weather, the neighborhood, or things the listing never claimed.

2 Fake Reviews

The review isn't based on a real reservation, no actual stay ever happened.

3 Extortion or Incentives

A guest threatens a bad review to get a refund, discount, or other compensation, or a review is traded for a favor in either direction.

4 Competitive Bias

The reviewer has a competing interest, a rival host, a personal conflict, unrelated to the actual stay.

5 Retaliation

A guest punishes you with a biased review specifically because you enforced a rule, charged a fee, or reported their violation.

6 Content Policy Violations

Discrimination, hate speech, threats, explicit or illegal content, or private information like a full name or address.

BEFORE & DURING EVERY STAY

The Documentation Checklist

This applies no matter which of the 5 categories your situation falls under. A dispute is only as strong as the paper trail behind it. If you work with a co-host or property manager, make sure they're following the same protocol.

- ☐ Photos or video of the property's condition before every check-in
- ☐ All communication with the guest kept inside Airbnb Messages, never text or phone
- ☐ A brief mid-stay check-in message ("Just checking in, is everything going well?"), it catches real problems early and creates a timestamped record
- ☐ Any rule violation documented the moment you notice it, a timestamped photo or a message to the guest
- ☐ Any fee, charge, or claim submitted through the Resolution Center, never handled informally
- ☐ No mention to the guest that a claim or charge is coming until after they've left their review
- ☐ If no review has posted yet, wait until close to the 14-day review window closes before submitting your claim and posting your own review

An Important Clarification

A review mentioning your dispute or a fee you charged isn't automatically retaliatory or in violation of any category. Airbnb's own policy states that discussing the facts of a Resolution Center claim doesn't by itself break the rules. What makes a review removable is a specific violation, bias tied to competition, extortion, retaliation, irrelevant content, or a Content Policy breach, not just an unfavorable mention.

CATEGORY 1

Irrelevant to the Stay

This applies when a review isn't actually about the reviewer's experience with your listing, weather complaints, neighborhood opinions the listing never claimed, or a review from a reservation that was cancelled or never happened.

DISPUTE TEMPLATE

[Guest name] 's review references **[the irrelevant detail, e.g., weather, a cancelled reservation, an unrelated complaint]** , which has no bearing on their actual experience with **[listing name]** . This content doesn't relate to the stay itself and violates Airbnb's requirement that reviews reflect the reviewer's real experience with the host, guest, stay, or service.

CATEGORY 2

Fake Reviews

A review is fake if it isn't based on a real reservation. This covers reviews submitted without an actual stay ever taking place, or from someone who wasn't a genuine participant in the reservation.

DISPUTE TEMPLATE

The review from **[reviewer name]** dated **[date]** isn't based on a real reservation at **[listing name]** . **[Describe why, e.g., "no reservation exists in my booking history for this account" or "the stated dates don't match any confirmed stay"]** . This violates Airbnb's policy that reviews must be submitted by or on behalf of someone who genuinely participated in the reservation.

CATEGORY 3

Extortion or Incentives

Guests may not threaten a negative review to obtain compensation, a refund, or any other incentive, and reviews can't be traded for discounts or reciprocal praise in either direction.

DISPUTE TEMPLATE

[Guest name] messaged me on **[date]** stating **[quote the threat, e.g., "leave me a refund or I'll leave a bad review"]**. This is a direct attempt to obtain compensation by threatening a negative review, which violates Airbnb's policy against extortion and incentivized reviews. I have the message thread as evidence.

CATEGORY 4

Competitive Bias

Hosts and guests may not leave reviews of listings they're directly affiliated with or in direct competition with. This covers rival hosts reviewing a competitor's property, or reviewers with a personal conflict unrelated to the stay itself.

DISPUTE TEMPLATE

[Guest name] has a competing interest in this review: **[describe the conflict, e.g., "operates a competing listing in the same market" or "has a documented personal conflict with the host unrelated to this stay"]**. This violates Airbnb's policy against reviews from parties with a competitive or conflicting interest.

CATEGORY 5

Retaliation

Airbnb only considers a review retaliatory if 3 things are true, in this order: the guest violated a real policy or house rule, you notified them of that violation, and their review followed that notification with biased content clearly tied to it.

THE CATCH

If the review mentions even one real, unrelated detail, an amenity, the neighborhood, Airbnb can call the whole review "relevant" and leave it up. Your dispute has to isolate the retaliation clearly.

DISPUTE TEMPLATE

[Guest name] stayed at **[listing name]** from **[dates]** . During the stay, they violated **[specific house rule]** , which I documented on **[date]** via **[photo/message/timestamp]** . I notified the guest of this violation on **[date]** , and **[submitted a claim/charged a fee]** on **[date]** . Their review on **[date]** stated **[quote the retaliatory portion]** , left in direct response to being held accountable for their own violation.

CATEGORY 6

Content Policy Violations

Reviews may not contain explicit, discriminatory, harmful, fraudulent, or illegal content. This includes hate speech, coded discriminatory language, threats, and private information like a full name, address, or phone number.

DISPUTE TEMPLATE

[Guest name] 's review contains **[quote or describe the violating content]** , which violates Airbnb's Content Policy prohibiting **[discriminatory language / threats / private information / fraudulent claims]** . I'm requesting removal on this basis.

THE PROCESS

How to File Any of These

- 1 Open the review from your Airbnb host dashboard
 - 2 Click "Report review" and select the category that matches your situation
 - 3 Paste your filled-in template, keeping every date and detail specific
 - 4 Attach or reference your documentation, message threads, timestamps, claim numbers
 - 5 Submit. You get up to 2 dispute attempts per review, use the first one fully documented
 - 6 If it's auto-declined, that's common. Call Airbnb support and ask specifically to escalate to a supervisor
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What Not to Do

- ✗ **Don't argue a review is "unfair" in general terms.** Name the specific category and violation instead of describing your overall feeling about it
 - ✗ **Don't dispute more than twice on the same review.** You get 2 attempts. Make the first one count
 - ✗ **Don't wait weeks to file.** Respond and document while the timeline is fresh and verifiable
 - ✗ **Don't skip the Resolution Center step.** An informal charge or side conversation outside the platform weakens your case
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IF REMOVAL DOESN'T HAPPEN

If It's Still Denied

A calm, factual public response to the review is visible to every future guest who reads it, and a professional reply builds trust even when removal doesn't happen.

If Airbnb still won't budge after a properly documented dispute, there's a real next step. As of 2026, the American Arbitration Association (AAA) is Airbnb's official dispute provider for US users, with fee caps that keep a claim viable for a single host. File a Pre-Dispute Notice with Airbnb first, then take it to AAA if that doesn't resolve it.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Removal isn't guaranteed, even with a strong case. But documentation done in the right order, before the review, inside the platform, tied to a real violation, gives you the best real shot at getting it removed.

Want more help protecting your listing? Book a free strategy call with the Host Camp team at hostcamp.com.