

Roommates Tips & Hints

Talk to your roommate! *Communication* is the key in building any successful relationship. Get to know your roommate -- what they like and don't like, what they are interested in, what hobbies they enjoy. As you start to see different sides to your roommate, the added contextualization you'll gain will help you work out differences in perspectives or any disagreements that may arise. Even if your roommate is your "best friend," you will be surprised to find out some things you did not know about him/her. If something is bothering you, the sooner you talk about it, the sooner it can be resolved.

Establish Ground Rules work out agreements and compromise if necessary. If you and your roommate must agree to disagree, then the best you can do is negotiate a written agreement, in which both sides may need to make concessions. This can be especially useful for household chores like cleaning, splitting costs of utilities, how food should be shared, working out repairs, etc. Come up with a cleaning schedule or decide in advance which conditions to be met. For especially controversial disagreements, bring in a third-party mediator if necessary.

Communication Do's

- Talk it out. Share your concerns BEFORE things get out of hand.
- Be open to compromises
- Be honest and assertive, also stand up for yourself
- Establish Ground Rules work out agreements and compromise if necessary
- Be a part of the solution, not a part of the problem.
- Always ask permission if it's not yours.
- Be genuine and straightforward.
- Respect each other privacy
- Listen carefully. Try to see things from the other person's viewpoint.
- Be sensitive to different backgrounds and perspectives.
- Chill out. If you are getting angry, remove yourself from the situation until you are calm.

Communication Don't

- Don't wait until things build up inside of you and/or get out of hand.
- Don't be antagonistic, arbitrary, or rude.
- Don't use profanity or make fun of your roommate(s).
- Don't be Judgmental.
- Don't interrupt when others are talking.
- Don't assume the worst. Most people are not "out to get you."
- Don't spread gossip or rumors about your roommate(s). If there is a problem, talk it out with your roommate(s).
- Don't IM or use online diaries to complain to, gripe about, or talk about your roommate(s)

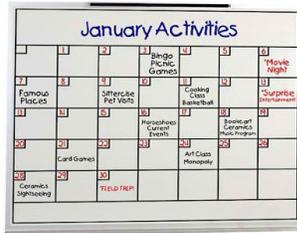
Ask Dispute resolution services for advice. They are trained to help mediate conflict!

The Kitchen: Only eat your food unless it is noted that it would be shared. To prevent conflict of knowing who's food belong to who's then here's a tip.

- Buy either a colorful or shape sticker to place on the container of the food to show the food belongs to whom.
- Assign who have which sticker to prevent from eating another person food. You could also get bigger stickers to write your name and stick it on the container.



The Schedules: Create a calendar to let others know what is happening when! Let your roommates as well as they can let you know when you have classes, or work; you can also post date of exams, birthday, going home, projects or anything you might want to alert others. This is to let other know what you expect of them and vice versa.



Here is what you'll need (you can get these at Wal-Mart or even the dollar store):

Whiteboard calendar: Post it month by month

- Dry Eraser markers: preferably different colors -- assign everyone different colors),
- Magnets: to post your fixed schedule so you don't have to re-write them every time
- Sticky Notes: Incase the board get crowed you can add more notes with it.

Room Privacy: There are times you or your roommates doesn't want to be bother. To prevent others from "accidentally" bothering you, invent a doorknob hanger

Supplies: (you can purchase the supplies at Wal-Mart)

- 1 thick piece of paper (poster board type)
- Scissor
- Drawing/writing utensil (color pencil, markers, crayons, and etc.)
- Ruler (you can also use your textbook it's going to be needed as a straight edge)

Direction:

1. Using the ruler or straight edge and the pencil, draw a 4 inch by 8 inch rectangle onto one side of the poster board.
2. Locate any small circular object that is about 3 inches in diameter. This could be a cookie cutter, a drinking glass or a small dish, a can, basically anything you can find.
3. Place the circular object at the top of the rectangle, centering it between the long sides so there is about a half inch between the edge of the circle and the pencil line of the rectangle on either side of it. Also place it half an inch away from the short side. Trace the circle with your pencil.
4. Create a crease inside the circle by folding the paper softly, use the scissor to snip that piece then cut the inside of the circle out.
5. Design your door hanger with your chosen message. Be creative! You can make multiple doorknob hangers with different message or place difference messages on both sides.

