

How to.... Live with a Roommate

Why you should learn to live with a roommate:

Most emerging adults will find themselves in a situation where they may be living with a roommate for the first time, or with a roommate who is not a relative. It can be difficult learning how to share your space and remembering to be respectful of your roommate at all times. It is important to learn to live with a roommate because it will make your living experience an enjoyable one, and can really impact your daily mood and activities if you are unhappy in your living situation.

How to Live with a Roommate

- Be Respectful of your roommate at all times

This means being conscious of your actions in relation to her actions. If you know your roommate has a paper due at 9AM tomorrow morning, it is very disrespectful to be blaring your music and talking on the phone until all hours of the night. While it is your living space as well as hers, a little bit of consideration goes a long way when keeping the peace between roommates

- Discuss Living Habits

It's important to discuss your living habits as soon as you move in, that way you can be clear about how you feel without offending your roommate. If you absolutely can't sleep with the television on, make sure your roommate knows this and work out a compromise so you are both happy. This may mean that you have to do work in the library between the hours of 7PM-10PM, but after 10PM the room will be quiet so you can do your work in the room or go to sleep if you wish.

- Make a list of joint expectations

If you discuss your expectations along with your roommate's expectations at the beginning of the year, it will be a lot easier as the year goes on to bring up little idiosyncrasies that may be bothering you. Along with discussing your living habits, it's important to agree upon a set of expectations that you have for your room and for your experience in your room. An example of joint expectations may be that you both agree that on weekday evenings the room should be quiet and studious, but on weekends it's okay to have friends over to socialize in a relaxed atmosphere.

- Decide your room's "state of affairs"

It can be very frustrating for both roommates if one roommate is extremely messy and the other is very clean. The messy roommate can feel under pressure to keep the room up to the other roommate's standards, while the neater roommate may feel angry that the other roommate's clothes are scattered all over the floor. It's best to make a mutual decision of how you would like your room to look, and it's also important to be conscious that it may not be up to your standards all of the time. Good compromises can include agreeing to clean the room one day a week and if one roommate wants to "throw" their clothes all over the place, to designate an area to keep them such as a bin in the closet or under the bed.

Resources

Tips for how to live with a roommate:

<http://www.vjc.edu/campuslife/index.aspx?id=2346>

<http://www.residentassistant.com/advice/roommate1.htm>