



Living with a Roommate

Welcome to college! Now that you're finally here, you have so much to think about: classes, new friends, meeting your advisor AND living with a roommate or two. You may already know your roommates or may be just meeting them for the first time, but either way, the key to successfully living with someone else is setting a few ground rules and being willing to compromise.

Students Talk about Roommate Trouble:

"Sharing the phone didn't work out. He was always on the phone and I couldn't get on even to just tell a friend to meet me at the student center. We finally got separate lines."

"If you're sharing a single bathroom, you know that you eventually start using each others items. You need to put aside a small amount of money for necessities for the bathroom. Toilet paper, toothpaste, shampoo and things that one needs for personal hygiene. I know it sounds stupid but trust me, these things become an issue!"

"I haven't slept for days. I mean, doesn't she ever go to bed?"

"My roommate is a slob. He leaves dirty dishes and clothes everywhere. It drives me crazy!"

Creating a Roommate Agreement:

A good way to prevent roommate problems, or to stop them once they've started, is to talk about what you expect of one another and then set a few ground rules. This allows you to share your expectations and to hear your roommates' needs. Also, together you can determine what rules are really important to you and what are areas for compromise.

Before you sit down, remember:

- DO stay calm and be patient.
- DO keep roommate issues between your roommate and you.
- DO listen carefully to your roommates' thoughts and concerns.
- DON'T bring up past problems.
- DON'T force your roommate to agree to a rule that he or she finds intolerable.
- DON'T be afraid to ask for help from a third party (e.g., an R.A. or mutual friend).

Here are some things to consider in drafting your roommate agreement:

1. *Cleanliness:* Who does what cleaning chores and when?
2. *Household supplies:* Will you share laundry detergent, bathroom supplies, food?
3. *Guests:* Do you want to have limits on when and for how long a guest can visit?
4. *Personal belongings/space:* Will you allow your roommate to use your personal belongings? Can they sit on your bed or use your desk?
5. *Noise/Parties:* Will you set "quiet" hours?
6. *Bills:* What proportion of shared bills will each roommate pay?

A sample roommate agreement is provided on the next page. Also, your hall staff and residential life office are excellent resources to help with roommate concerns.

Roommate Agreement

This roommate agreement is made by the following roommates: _____

Together, we agree to the following terms:

1. *Cleanliness:*

We have discussed sweeping/vacuuming, emptying trash, dusting, picking up/tidying room, cleaning bathroom, doing dishes and have agreed to divide our cleaning chores in the following manner:

Each of these chores will be completed (how often/when) _____

2. *Household supplies:*

We will share (circle each item you will share):

Laundry Supplies

Bathroom Supplies (specify: _____)

Food (specify: _____)

Other (specify: _____)

We estimate these shared goods will cost _____ per week. Each roommate will put \$_____ in the shared money jar per week for these supplies.

3. *Guests:*

Visitors will be allowed in our room (circle one) YES NO

Visitors may be (circle one) MALE FEMALE EITHER

If yes, visiting hours will be _____

Visitors may stay _____ hours/days

4. *Personal belongings/space:*

My roommate may borrow any time (list items): _____

My roommate may borrow with permission (list items): _____

My roommate may not borrow (list items): _____

5. *Noise/Parties:*

We will agree to allow parties in our room (circle one) YES NO

"Quiet" hours in our room will be: _____

6. *Bills:*

We will agree to pay (on time) our share of bills for services we both use (circle one)

YES NO

The bills we will pay our share of are:

Bill	% of payment (share of the bill)	Date due
Ex. <i>Cable</i>	<i>50% of bill</i>	<i>11th of the month</i>

By signing and dating this document, we indicate our agreement to these terms:

Signed: _____
Signed: _____

Date: _____
Date: _____