

How to use Roommate Agreements – A Short Guide

Please read:

Participating in open communication about subjects and issues prior to situations arising, increases the probability that the issue/situation will be resolved in a quick and equitable manner. This is an exercise for all roommates – regardless of if you have known each other before living together.

You may be both excited, and nervous, to live in with roommates. Please keep in mind that all roommates are individuals, and many experiences, cultures, identities, and preferences influence us all.

Engage in this process with open minds and truthfulness.

This roommate agreement will generally cover items such as:

- Cleanliness of individual and common spaces, and general standards of cleanliness
- Noise (music level, sleeping hours, etc.)
- Academic Success – what you need to help support studying, etc
- Guests
- Safety and security (i.e., allergies, medical conditions)
- Physical property/personal belongings
- Other information.

Everyone should actively engage and determine the contents of your agreement and endorse it. This Agreement will be used during any conflict resolution processes should they be needed. You will be expected to uphold the decisions documented within the Agreement, so you are encouraged to take this process very seriously and to make sure your concerns and/or issues are represented during the discussion.

Before completing this form together:

1. Read the rules in your lease.
2. Think about your personal preferences.
For example; when you like to sleep, when and how you like to study, what you are willing to share, and what you are not, cleanliness preferences, etc.
3. Set up a time that works for all roommates.
4. Living in with roommates involves sharing space and respecting each other's privacy. This is an exercise in consensus building and collaboration. If you only want to get your way, you will not be a good roommate.

Grounding Strategies for the Roommate Agreement:

- Use “I feel” statements.
 - I-feel statements are a communication tool that removes blame-based statements and can lead to more open and compassionate communication. For example, if you are upset about unkept dishes you could say “you keep leaving dirty dishes in the sink and need to stop” but the I-Feel version, “I feel disrespected when there are dirty dishes left in the sink, in the future can we ensure we clean the kitchen after use?”, this change removes blame and focuses the conversation on how the action impacts you.
- Embrace the discomfort.
 - It can be challenging, and uncomfortable to speak with people you’ve just met about living preferences, especially since some living preference questions that cause the most conflict are topics that can be taboo to speak about. Such as substance use, sexual behavior, and guests. It is important to embrace the discomfort with these conversations to help prevent conflict going forward.
- Be clear and honest.
 - It is important to be true to your preferences. It is better to be clear and honest rather than agree to something that isn’t honest with your preferences. For example, if you feel uncomfortable with smoking cannabis in the apartment it is important you are clear, honest, and open with your roommates so you can come to a compromise.

STRATEGIES FOR RESOLVING ROOMMATE CONFLICTS

1. **DISCUSS** the concern with your roommates(s). They may not be aware that you have a concern. Make sure that you raise your concerns in a timely manner.

Be specific about your concern. Use “*I statements*” and avoid statements of blame, judgement. For example:

“I did not appreciate my iPad being used without my permission. It was in our roommate agreement to ask.”

Versus

“You’re such a jerk, I told you to ask to borrow my stuff.”

OR

“You know you’re not allowed to use my iPad without asking!!”

2. **COMPROMISE.** Discuss the concern(s). Determine if the original agreement needs to be revised – this may happen, and it is part of ongoing relationship building.

How can you compromise to reach a new agreement or reinforce the original agreement?

The roommate agreement can be re-visited as needed during the year and is a resource that roommates can use for working through challenges.

Roommate Agreement

Roommate Names:

It is each roommate's responsibility to identify differences in living preferences, make compromises and establish expectations. The roommate agreement will generally cover such items as:

- Cleanliness of individual and common spaces and standards of cleanliness
- Noise (music level, sleeping hours, etc.)
- Guests (overnight or during quiet hours)
- Safety and security (i.e. allergies, medical conditions)
- Physical property
- Other information

The above roommates have come together to create this agreement to identify differences in living preferences, make compromises and establish expectations. The expectations are outlined in this document, this agreement can be re-visited as needed throughout the term and is used as a resource to work through challenges. This document will be used to mediate all disputes between roommates.

House Meetings

House meetings with all occupants of your home are a good way to prevent conflict and ensure clear, open, communication between those living in space. We recommend you host regular house meetings and have a plan for if someone is unable to attend a meeting. Don't wait until there is a problem, be pro-active and set up regular house meetings.

House meetings will occur

- Bi-Weekly Weekly Monthly

House meetings will occur on

- Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday
 Thursday Friday Saturday

During the regular house meeting we will speak about

- Upcoming chore cycle General hygiene
 Roommate schedules Shared items/supplies
 Roommate concerns

If we want to hold a roommate meeting to address a concern we will....

- Wait until the next regularly scheduled roommate meeting
 Schedule a special meeting to address the concern

Important Allergy/Medical Information for Roommates (i.e celiac, asthma, and emergency contact info)

Rental Temperature

The shared Rental temperature (day and night will be)

If we want to change the temperature of the shared space for a short period of time, how will we let each other know?

Study Time

The study time in the apartment will be:

During study times, the television is:

- On Off

During study times, music is:

- On Only with Headphones Off

During study times, video games are:

- On Only with Headphones Off

Are guests allowed during study times:

- Yes Only if roommates are asked No

How much notice needs to be provided

Is kitchen/cooking time allowed during study time

- Yes No

**if you need more space for any section please continue on a sheet of paper, label the section, and attached to the agreement*

Cleanliness

The common areas should be:

We will each

Always Clean Sometimes Clean

Take care of our own mess (dishes/garbage/etc.)

Alternate who is cleaning common areas

Clean together at specified time

Other:

Buy cleaning supplies for individual use

Rotate buying cleaning supplies for communal use

We will each

Other:

If buying communal supplies and, we are unable to afford cleaning supplies, how will we let each other know?

Dressing/Bathing Times

The dressing/bathing time in the apartment will be:

Yes No Not if another gender

Quiet Hours and Sleeping Times

Times for quiet and sleeping in our apartment are:

During quiet/sleep times, the common lights are:

On Off

During quiet/sleep times, the common windows are:

Open Closed

During quiet/sleep times, the common TV is:

On Off

During quiet/sleep times, music is:

On Only with Headphones Off

During quiet/sleep times, showering is:

Allowed Allowed if quiet Not Allowed

During quiet/sleep times, gaming is:

Allowed Allowed if quiet Not Allowed

During quiet/sleep times, guests are:

Allowed Not Allowed

Not if another gender

During quiet/sleep times, overnight guests are:

Allowed Not Allowed

Not if another gender

If required how much notice should be given for overnight guests:

Is there anything else related to quiet/sleep times that has been discussed during this agreement?

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Kitchen Use and Cooking Times

Kitchen use and cooking time will be pre-set for each suitemate

Yes No

If yes specify times for each suitemate
morning, afternoon, and evening

During kitchen use and cooking time will meals be made together

All meals Some Meals 1 Meal Per Week No Meals

If all or some meals, please specify

Are there any food allergies, or sensitivities roommates need to be aware of?

Yes No

If yes, how can we ensure we are cooking and eating safely for our roommates (cooking/storage)

During kitchen use and cooking time, dishes are:

Leaving dirty dishes, utensils, and food scraps left sitting in the kitchen can attract cockroaches, mice, or other pests. It is important to be hygienic in your living and ensure food waste is not left out.

- Are cleaned immediately after cooking
- Are cleaned the same day, but when sink or dishwasher is full
- Can be cleaned the next day
- Can be cleaned the next day, but when sink or dishwasher is full
- Can be cleaned the next day ONLY if other roommates are notified

During kitchen use and cooking time, guests are:

Allowed Not Allowed Not if another gender

If required how much notice should be given for guests during kitchen use and cooking time:

During kitchen use and cooking time, guests should:

- Bring own food Bring food for meal Only bring food if asked
- Help clean the kitchen Not help clean kitchen
- Can eat shared food/beverages Not eat shared food/beverages
- Only eat shared food/beverages if asked

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Personal Property

It is okay for roommates to use...

Use Legend to Complete:
Allowed (A), Ask First (AF), Only Together (OT), Never (N)

Roommate Initials						
Speaker(s)						
Gaming Console(s)						
Clothing (includes shoes)						
Computer						
Camera						
Cookware						
Food						
Dishware						
Books						
Toiletries						
Cleaning Supplies						

Guests may use the following:

How will we handle damage to each other's belongings? _____

Guests

How much notice is required for having guests?

How many nights a week are we allowed to have guests? _____

If we want guests to leave, how will we let each other know? _____

Each roommate's individual time, where guests and other roommates are to leave them to themselves is:

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Other

How will we discuss pets/acquiring pets if lease permits:

Other issues we have discussed and agree on are:

Some of our pet peeves we should be aware of are:

If we have roommate conflicts, how will we handle them?

Where will we store the roommate agreement?

We have discussed the above items. We agree to abide by our mutual decisions and will call a house meeting if we need to make any further contract revisions.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date Of Agreement: _____

**if you need more space for any section please continue on a sheet of paper, label the section, and attached to the agreement*