



Communication Tips

How to talk with your roommate

- Don't wait – Address issues as soon as you notice them. It will be easier to address them in a calm and friendly manner. After all, your roommate may not even be aware that there's a problem.
- Use a private setting – Don't bring up issues in front of others.
- Make sure it's a good time to talk – If someone feels rushed or blindsided, they will not communicate effectively.
- Be clear and direct about what's bothering you – If you don't address the issue, nothing will get resolved.
- Discuss the behavior and not the personality trait – This tactic is less likely to put your roommate on the defensive.
- Make eye contact – This lets your roommate know you are paying attention.
- Don't multi-task when talking with your roommate – Ex: talking/texting on your phone, doing homework, playing games, etc.
- Use "I" statements – Ex: "Sometimes 'I' feel like your music is too loud when I'm trying to study. Could you please turn it down?"
- Be patient – Listen to your roommate and remember that there are two sides to every story.
- Each person should be given a chance to present what they feel the problem really is.
- Respect each other's differences – Everyone has different values, lifestyles, expectations and communication styles.
- Revisit your Roommate Lifestyle Agreement – Revisit the expectations that were set for the room and decide which guidelines are working and which ones need to be reconsidered.
- Contact your RA – If you have tried talking with your roommate and it wasn't successful, your RA will be able to help mediate difficult conversations.

Ways you shouldn't address a problem

- Text messages
- E-mail

- Post-it or other notes
- White board messages
- Social media
- Just assuming your roommate knows that you are upset with them

REMEMBER – *A solution will probably involve compromise. The solution may not be your ideal scenario, but it should be an improvement on the current state of things.*

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