

Roommate Resource

Pre-Year Questions - Logistics:

1. How do you feel about guests?
 - asking permission? _____
 - being there to host at all times? _____
 - spending the night? _____
 - opposite gender guests? _____
 - end time? _____
 - frequency? _____
2. How do you want to handle borrowing each other's things?
 - asking permission? _____
 - kitchen stuff, clothes/accessories, toiletries (e.g., shampoo, toothpaste, makeup), food? _____
 - expectation on condition of item upon returning (e.g., wash clothes, fill car with gas)? _____
3. What are your typical sleep hours?

4. What is your preferred temperature (day/night)?

5. Is there anything specific you need to be able to sleep?
 - complete darkness? _____
 - complete silence? _____
 - fan? _____
 - TV? _____
 - night light? _____
6. Policy on coming in when roommate is already asleep -- can you turn lights on, etc?

7. What is your best study environment?

8. Do you listen to music often? Does music playing bother you?

9. Do you like to talk when you get home or do you need quiet time?

Pre-Year Questions - Relational:

1. What are things that people can do to make you feel loved/appreciated?

2. What are things that people can do to make you feel unloved/not valued/have hurt feelings?

3. What is your favorite pick-me-up food?

4. When you are upset, would you rather be left alone or around people/talk about it?

5. What are your pet peeves?

6. What are your goals/expectations for living in this house this year?

Chore Recommendations:

Set up dish/trash days

- discuss expectations for dishes (e.g., leaving dishes in sink vs loading immediately)

Set up weekly chore schedule

- sweep and mop hard floors
- vacuum carpet
- clean bathroom
- wipe down kitchen counters/clean out fridge

Ways to be a considerate roommate:

Be attentive to your roommate

- if they seem down, overwhelmed, etc.

Ask questions.

Greet your roommate when he/she comes home.

Acknowledge their efforts - with chores, changing habits, etc.

Keep your things picked up.

If you make a mess, clean it up. If you see someone else's mess, clean it up.

Be considerate with how much fridge/pantry space you are using. Be sure to throw out your old food.

Don't have a standard of minimums when it comes to chores or keep tabs on who's done what. Plan to do more chores than your roommates.

Look for opportunities to serve.

- Lay out/fold laundry left in the dryer
- Do extra dishes

Encourage your roommates.

Listen well.

Remember important events in their life and follow up.

Invite them along to group events.

Have lots of grace for your roommate.

Helpful Questions:

Consider asking your roommates these periodically (i.e., once a month):

1. What made you feel loved this month?
2. What frustrated you?
3. Is there anything that I do consistently that bothers you?
4. How can I be a better roommate? Friend?
5. How can I encourage you?
6. How can I serve you this week?
7. In what ways do you want to grow? Is there anything I can help keep you accountable to?

Tricky Definitions:

Messy vs. Dirty	
<u>Messy</u> = things aren't picked up or orderly; untidy	<u>Dirty</u> = accumulation of filth (e.g., sticky, dusty, crusty, moldy, crumbly, smelly)
People have different expectations for a "clean" home. Be sure to understand your roommate's expectations.	

Thoughtlessness vs. Ill-will	
<u>Thoughtlessness</u> = lack of consideration for others	<u>Ill-will</u> = intending to cause harm
Err on the side of giving the other person the benefit of the doubt (i.e., don't assume his/her actions were out of ill-will).	

Asking vs. Informing	
<u>Asking</u> = seeking out information from the other	<u>Informing</u> = communicating something that you have already decided or already done
If you agreed to ask for permission (e.g., when having guests over or borrowing things), be sure to give your roommate the option to say "no."	

Addressing vs. Nagging	
<u>Addressing</u> = to deal with or discuss an issue	<u>Nagging</u> = to find fault or complain
Always begin with asking questions, seeking to understand the other's perspective. The tone with which you confront an issue is important and will affect your conversation. Test your motives. Are you driven by selfish ambition or helping him/her to grow?	

Assuming vs. Knowing	
<u>Assuming</u> = drawing conclusions based solely on your own perception	<u>Knowing</u> = having a clear and complete idea of something through inquiry, observation, and gathering information
Don't assume the worst in your roommates. Ask questions if you aren't sure. Misunderstandings cause a lot of avoidable conflict.	

Playing vs. Teasing	
<u>Playing</u> = joking in a way that is funny to both people	<u>Teasing</u> = joking in a way that isn't funny to the person it's directed toward
This is an easy line to cross because everyone enjoys/can tolerate different amounts of joking. If you ever feel like you may have crossed the line with someone, be sure to apologize, explain your intentions, and adjust your future joking with them.	

Private vs. Closed off	
<u>Private</u> = choosing not to share thoughts and feelings with others	<u>Closed off</u> = unwillingness to engage with others
Some people are naturally more private than others. It's good to respect each other's needs but sometimes it's <i>best</i> to challenge your natural tendencies. For example, sometimes it is beneficial for a private person to choose to be vulnerable with a friend. On the other hand, if you're naturally more open, don't assume that someone is being closed off because they don't share as much as you.	

Interested vs. Intrusive	
<u>Interested</u> = demonstrating your care and concern for another by giving attention or asking questions	<u>Intrusive</u> = demanding an inappropriate amount of information from another
Showing interest is valuable and essential to building friendships but be sure to know your limits. Make sure you aren't driven by curiosity alone.	

Allowing yourself to be served vs. Taking advantage	
<u>Allowing yourself to be served</u> = humbly accepting others' efforts to serve you	<u>Taking advantage</u> = intentionally (or even, thoughtlessly) not taking care of something because you know someone

	will do it for you
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When we grow to constantly expect others to serve us, we fall into many bad habits (e.g., leaving out dirty dishes, leaving our laundry in the washer/dryer). These may not seem significant in the moment, but can end up sticking with us forever (even into marriage!). We ought to be doing more than our fair share and that takes thought and extra effort. On the flip side, we should accept our roommate's efforts to serve us. Don't let pride inhibit your ability to accept others' help and be sure to communicate your appreciation.