**TIPS:**

**LIVING IN PEACE WITH MY ROMMIE.**

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1. **Establish relationships**:

It’s important to realize that everyone comes from a different background and will have different “norms.” That is why it’s helpful to have open communication and share what is important to each of you. Within the first few weeks of living together, you will have a much better understanding of how your roommates live day-to-day, but having an open dialogue will make the process smoother. Don’t be afraid to ask questions and try to get a better understanding of the needs of each person in the home.

1. **Set schedules**:

Students follow different schedules between attending class, club meetings and other events around campus. It’s important to respect the timing needs of each roommate. If you have classes in the morning and your roommates don’t, try not to make too much noise that could wake anybody else. Along the same lines, if you are going out or having friends over in the evenings, you may need to keep the noise level low if your roommates are sleeping or studying for their classes. Consider writing everyone’s schedules on the refrigerator or other common area so everyone’s on the same page.

1. **Respect personal space**:

When you share a living space with others, personal space becomes very important. Most personal items will probably be kept in bedrooms, but some of your belongings may stay in the common spaces in your home – such as the living room or kitchen. If you would like your roommates to either ask permission to use these items or not use them at all, explain this from the beginning so that there is no confusion. Consider renting major items like living room furniture so there is shared responsibility for their care.

**Talk.**

Talking to your roommate seems easy enough. Surprisingly, some roommates spend days of awkward silence avoiding one another. Reasons roommates don’t talk may include a lack of commonalities, opposing schedules, or blatant uninterest. You don’t have to be bestie’s, nor do your conversations have to be the length of a Lifetime movie. It is important however to create a platform of comfortable conversation. Keeping the communication river flowing, tires rolling…you get it. [TALK!](http://conversationstartersworld.com/250-conversation-starters/) This will come in handy when you have issues, questions, concerns- anything really. If you can’t talk to your roommate it is likely to be a tense living situation at one point or another.

**Listen.**

Aha! There are two parts to that great conversation you and your roomie are having. Try not be that person who vents about their day then walks into their room. You just made your roommate suffer through an anti-climactic subway story, at least ask how their day was- oh, and be interested. Roommates tend to be peaceful when they feel they are listened to.

**Respect.**

 For their privacy, time, space, and everything in between, respect your roommate. Everyone has boundaries. When you live with someone you are sure to learn those quickly. Keep the peace and don’t cross any. If you do, make it up to them. Unlike other people you piss off, your roommate sleeps across the hall. An apology breakfast is always appreciated. Speaking of food…

1) **Clear Communication from the Get-Go**: Probably the most important tip for any relationship of any kind! As roommates, you'll be sharing a small space for a long time, and you'll need to respect each other's needs and preferences. What do you know about yourself already? Maybe you expect things to be cleaner than your roommate does. Maybe you like to play music while you study, but your roommate can't concentrate with it on. Maybe you need some quiet time each morning before starting your day. Don't assume that your roommate will just figure all this out; communicate these needs, preferences, and expectations as soon as possible! This will save you both a lot of conflict.

2) **Nip It in the Bud**: Solve problems while they're still small; don't wait until the problems are enormous! Is your roommate doing something that's bothering you? Borrowing your things without asking? Leaving the room a mess too often? Address these issues as soon as you notice them. It will be easier to address them in a calm and friendly manner this way. After all, your roommate may not even be aware that there's a problem. It's much easier to solve a problem when it's small than when it's become a big, entrenched habit.

3) **Don't Wait - Solve Big Problems Immediately**: Maybe you tried to follow step #2 and solve the problem when it was small, or maybe a huge problem just seemed to explode out of nowhere. Whatever the case, don't procrastinate, don't wait to see if it'll just go away. Address the situation immediately.

4) **Your Roommate's Stuff is Your Roommate's Stuff**: It seems obvious, but this is probably the most common problem that arises between roommates. Don't just assume he won't mind if you finish off his leftovers; he probably will. Always ask for permission before borrowing or using anything that belongs to your roommate!

5) **Be Cautious About Inviting People Over**: You might be an extroverted socialite who thrives in a group, but that might not be true of your roommate. Your roommate may need some quiet time to study, and bringing a group of friends or classmates into your room may be very irritating. Perhaps you can alternate who gets the room and who goes to the library. Talk to your roommate about this, and make sure you don't overstep any boundaries when inviting others over.

6) **Lock Up**: Imagine your roommate steps out for a moment to grab a snack, and forgets to lock the door. You come home to find your laptop and stereo have vanished mysteriously. How do you think you'll feel about your roommate after that? Locking the doors and windows is important for keeping you and your property safe. Remember: it's not just your own stuff that you're protecting, it's your roommate's as well.

7) **You Might Not Be BEST Friends, and That's Okay**: Be pleasant and friendly with your roommate, but respect each other's space. Trying to force a best-friend relationship will only cause strain and discomfort for both of you. Be friendly, but make sure you each have your own life and your own social circles.

8) **Keep an Open Mind**: Your roommate may have a background VERY different from yours. He or she may be from another culture, and may have an entirely different lifestyle, ideology, and perspective than yours. Be open to this new perspective, and respect the differences between you. If you do, you'll find the diversity this experience brings into your life to be very rewarding.

9) **The One Constant is Change**: College is a time for learning and growth, and both you and your roommate will likely change a lot during your time together. Be aware of the changes as they come, and don't cling to the past. New challenges will arise, and you may need to address new issues or come to new agreements. You may start out close and slowly grow apart, or the opposite may be true. Be open to this change, and go with the flow!

**Treat Your Roommate How You Want to Be Treated**: Having a roommate can certainly be challenging, and you may sometimes be unsure how to solve a problem between you. When in doubt, follow the Golden Rule, and treat your roommate how you would hope to be treated. That way, no matter what happens, you'll know that you treated your roommate respectfully, and you'll have no regrets.

Figure Out What it is About Them That Bothers You

Do you really hate your roommate, or do you just hate the way they leave their towel on the floor after they get out of the shower? Or the fact that they never take the trash out? When you let little things like this bother you day after day without actually doing anything about them, you can quickly build up resentment.

Avoid the path of leaving a passive aggressive note, but just casually mentioning something to your roommate could solve the problem. They might not even realize that what they’re doing is bothering you so much. Sometimes, when you fester emotions, they just keep building up because there is no outlet for them. If you just get it out in the open, you and your roommate will both feel better and you won’t feel like you have to tiptoe around each other.

On the other hand, maybe the issue is a little bigger**—**they steal your things or engage in illegal activities inside your apartment or dorm room. In this case, you might say something to your roommate, but you may also need to contact the authorities. No matter what, you always need to be safe and secure in your living space.