

Conversation Starters

Try using the go-around method when discussing things. This way everyone has a chance to share their opinion. Respect your roommate's decision to pass on a question if they do not want to share. Avoid making assumptions as to why they do not want to share, continue on to another question.

1. What are your hobbies?
2. What do you like to do for fun?
3. What things are you really good at?
4. What kinds of music do you like?
5. What are your favorite movies?
6. Did you share a room at home?
7. Where are you from?
8. How many siblings do you have?
9. Have you chosen a major already?
10. What really annoys you?

Communication Tips

Many conflicts that could occur are usually the result of a breakdown in communication. Here are some tips to keep your communication open with your roommates.

1. Make sure what you communicate is crystal clear.
2. Do not encourage gossip. If you have questions go to the source.
3. Make compromises and be flexible when trying to come to resolutions.
4. Avoid ganging up on one roommate, think about how you would feel in that position.
5. Go into a confrontation anticipating a successful outcome and don't forget to maintain respect.
6. Avoid using technology such as Instant message, text messages and e-mail to communicate important matters. They cannot simulate feeling or emotion and may be misinterpreted by the receiver.

Ways to create a friendly living environment

1. Take the Roommate Survey seriously. Be careful reviewing this document with your roommate(s), you can begin to set the boundaries and begin to get to know each other. Don't forget to sign it. It may seem like silly paperwork, but in fact, it is a contract in which all the roommates are agreeing to respect the environment.
2. Arrange the room together to create a comfortable living space for everyone.
3. Discuss what in the room can be shared. Are you all going to share snacks? Radio? Video Games? Make it clear up front to avoid conflict in the future. Don't get caught saying this famous line, "My roommate ate all my food", especially if you have discussed it with them.
4. Set up a message system. A location in the room for notes from people who are dropped by or phoned while you were away. Roommates also appreciate being alerted as to when they should enter the room with caution, ex. Someone studying for a big test, someone sleeping, etc.
5. Try not to hit the snooze button too much. If you can hear your alarm every time it goes off, so can your roommates.
6. Consider how guests in the room can affect your roommates. Consider going to the lounge or rec room with your guests. On the other hand, it is your room too so you should be able to have guests just like everyone else in the room. Just remember to be considerate and respectful.
7. Plan ahead when possible. If you know the game is coming on, talk to your roommates about inviting friends over in advance so they can either invite their friends too or make arrangements to do something else.
8. When in doubt ask. Never assume that your roommate knows what you are thinking, or that you know how your roommate will respond. Don't let your guest sleep in your roommate's bed even though she is not here, you cannot predict her reaction when she gets back.
9. If this could be on the list thirty times it still would not be enough: You must keep communication open.