

Roommate Resources

One of the most important parts of your off-campus living experience is your roommate experience. There are so many things to consider when you are living in an apartment, so you want to make sure the person you are living with is aware of the legal, financial and personal implications of a shared living experience.

Instructions for Registering and Posting a Listing on the Off-Campus Housing Site:

To look for a roommate:

- Click Roommates on the top menu bar of the [Emerson's Housing Site](#), and begin creating your "Profile"
 - Once you have created your profile, students will now be able to view your information and get in contact with you. At the same time, you should be looking over other students profiles as well.

It's a good idea to take the initiative and get acquainted with your potential roommate. Establish a comfort level that works for the both of you so you can be assertive about your individual needs, as well as respecting theirs. Engaging in healthy dialogues early on helps set the stage for honest and open communication. When you are able to appreciate and understand each other's needs, you will be ready to discuss expectations as roommates. Creating expectations and guidelines for living involves actively talking and listening to one another. Establishing a solid foundation in your roommate relationship from the beginning will help you to minimize or eliminate conflicts in your living environment.

Roommate Expectations

If you've never lived in an apartment or with a roommate before, it's likely there are millions of questions going through your head. There are obvious things to think about concerning budget, location and the apartment search process, but what about the actual living experience itself? Who will be in charge of the utilities? Who will buy the groceries? The following checklist contains discussion points and questions that may come in handy as you establish rules and guidelines for your living situation.

- How will the rent be paid? Does the landlord prefer one check, or do all roommates pay separately?
- What is your definition of loud and soft noise? Should quiet time be established?
- Are pets allowed? If so, who is responsible for this pet? Is anyone allergic?
- Is smoking permitted?
- What are your reactions to alcohol consumption? Are any roommates underage?
- Who is responsible for collecting/paying bills? In whose name will they be listed?
- How and who will buy groceries? May roommates borrow food from one another?
- Will sharing or borrowing of personal items be allowed?
- What are your thoughts on overnight guests? How often may they stay and for how long?

Actions Speak Louder than Words

You can talk to your roommate until you're blue in the face, but sometimes there are nonverbal clues that can illustrate a breakdown in communication. Actions speak louder than words, so keep your eyes peeled for these warning signs:

- Your roommates are not speaking
- They leave when you enter a room
- They complain to friends about you
- They get angry over trivial matters

The best way to deal with this is to confront the situation head on. Talk to your roommate(s) and try to understand what the problem may be. Chances are it could only be a small issue that could easily be resolved. However, if it's a larger problem rooted in deeper issues then all of you must work together to resolve it. The key to successful conflict management and resolution is communication on an equal level. Avoid behavior that will continue to break up communication.

Utilize "I" statements to clearly express how the conflict affects you and has made you feel. Take responsibility for keeping things set and hold the tone of the discussion by your calm and positive example. Everyone has an equal right to be heard, so create an open environment so everyone has the ability to speak freely.

Mediation and Conflict Resolution Resources

Emerson OCSS

120 Boylston St., 4th Fl.
Boston MA 02116
(617)-824-7863
OCSS@emerson.edu

Boston Rental Housing Resource Center

The Boston Rental Housing Center was created in 1995 to provide FREE advice, information and assistance to Boston landlords and tenants who have problems or questions about rental housing issues.

26 Court Street (1st floor)
Boston, MA 02108
617.635.4200

<http://dnd.cityofboston.gov/#page/BostonRentalHousingCenter>

****Create some form of a roommate contract when you move in with your roommate(s) to help you remember and clarify what was discussed and agreed upon. If conflict arises, it's easy to simply refer to the contract and revisit your mutually agreed upon guidelines.**