

## **Tips to Keep Your Room and Personal Property Safe**

- Do not give out your room combination.
- Make sure no one is looking over your back when you are entering in your combination.
- Take the time to get up and open your door, instead of yelling the combo to someone to let themselves in.
- If you believe that someone has your room combination, contact your area coordinator or CA know.

## **A Guide to the First Phone Conversation with Your Roommate**

It is the first chance to start building a relationship with your roommate and setting the groundwork for you to successfully live together. The conversation should be more than who is going to bring the television, you need to take the time to talk and start to learn about each other.

### *Step One: Getting to Know Each Other*

The basics: Hometown? Possible Major? Talents? Hobbies? Family? Favorite Foods? Why did you choose Simpson?

### *Step Two: Going a Little Deeper*

Have each person tell their life history in about 5-minutes. In this short amount of time you can start seeing what is important to each other and what events have helped shape their life to this point. It will also give each of you things to go back and ask each other questions about.

### *Step Three: How to Set Up the Room*

Talk through everything and do not assume anything. This should be a thorough conversation where you talk about everything that will be in the room. You should make sure you talk about what items you are willing to share and which ones you want to keep private. Do not assume that just because your roommate is bringing a computer that you will be able to use it or if they buy food that you will be able to eat it. Also ask and make sure that your roommate is comfortable with items that you may want to bring.

### *Step Four: Stay in Contact*

Set-up other times to talk before you come on campus, the more often you talk to your roommate the more comfortable you will be with them when you start living together. If at all possible, you should arrange a time to get together and meet face-to-face. It will make the first day on campus much better knowing that when you arrive you will see a familiar face.

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# Roommate Survival Guide

## **Roommate Expectations and Responsibilities**

*All roommates have the right:*

- To privacy
- To respect
- To open communication
- To mutually clean living quarters
- To personal safety
- To freedom from physical harm and harassment
- To security of possessions
- To comfortable sleep and study conditions
- To be asked before possessions are used
- To stay true to their own values
- To agree and disagree
- To ask residence life staff for assistance when needed
- To be treated civilly
- To a comfortable living space
- To free access to one's room
- To a room free of policy violations

*All roommates have the responsibility:*

- To respect one another's privacy
- To respect themselves and others
- To communicate openly with their roommate and discuss potential conflicts before they get out of hand
- To keep their living space neat and clean
- To assure security of the room
- To maintain a comfortable environment for sleep and study purposes

- To treat one another's possessions with care and ask before borrowing personal items
- To respect differences
- To compromise
- To enlist the help of the residence life staff when a difficult roommate situation arises
- To be kind and civil with no intent to harm
- To check with one another before having guests
- To pass on messages to their roommate in a timely manner
- To abide by all residence hall rules and regulations
- To take ownership and responsibility for the actions of guests
- To comply with all reasonable requests from residence life staff

### **Steps to Resolving a Roommate Conflict**

Speak to your roommate(s) directly. State your issues neutrally. Replay feelings. Offer resolutions. Be prepared to listen. Be willing to reach a compromise.

Refer to the roommate contract agreed to by the roommates. This is a form that the roommates will sit down and complete together early in the first semester. Its purpose is to open up communication about common issues and get the roommates to think about possible issues that will arise throughout the year. It is a document that is meant to be flexible and adjusted when all of the roommates see fit to make changes.

If the talking with your roommate(s) yourself does not work, ask your CA (Community

Advisor) to intervene by meeting with all roommates to mediate the discussion. His/her role is that of a neutral mediator to guide the discussion and work to reach a compromise to resolve the problem.

In more severe situations, the Area Coordinator or Director of Residence Life may step in to help mediate the conflict and, as a last resort, set forth regulations to ensure a safe and comfortable living environment and resolve the conflict.

### **Five Tips to Help Prevent Roommate Issues**

- Communicate with each other – start discussing issues regarding which items you are willing to share and what items you want to keep private before you arrive on campus.
- Take the roommate contract seriously – it is a tool that will only help you if you are honest and expect conflict to occur, because it will.
- Do not expect that your roommate will be your best friend – while there is potential that your freshman roommate will turn out to be a good friend, the odds of two random people becoming best friends is just not always possible.
- Be considerate of each other – think about how your actions impact your roommate(s), if there is any question in your mind at all, just ask.
- Be open and honest – if something your roommate does bugs you, let them know. The longer that you let the issues go, the more frustrated you will get, and the harder it will be for the annoying behavior to be stopped.