Tips for Living in the Residence Halls, and Living with a Roommate

A good way to start getting to know your roommate is to get in contact with them before you get to school, and decide who will bring what for your room. Try your best to accommodate their needs. If you can work together before you even get to campus, it will set a good tone for the rest of the year.

The resident assistants in your hall will almost always be holding one program or another, and these programs are a great way to meet the other people who live in your hall. (Not to mention there’s often free food!) Go to as many programs as you can, meet new people, and have lots of fun.

Have an open mind about new things. Your roommate may be from a place you’ve never heard of, have a different lifestyle or religion than you, or even speak a different language. Be open to the new ideas and experiences they can show you, because it can be a great learning experience, and after all, you’re at college to learn new things.

There are important rules in the residence halls, the main rule being that there are no drugs or alcohol allowed anywhere on campus. If you live in Miller, you’re not allowed to open the fire door in your room or use the balconies unless there is a fire. Every night there are quiet hours in all the halls, and when it is not quiet hours it is courtesy hours. There are more rules in the halls that your RA will review at the hall meeting at the beginning of the semester.

Talk to your roommate to decide how you want your room to look, and come to an agreement that meets both your needs. There are several different ways you can set up your room, so explore your options and settle on the one you both agree works best.

Everyone has their own habits and routines. Luckily there’s an easy way to let your roommate know about yours. Your RA will give you a roommate contract, and you’ll need to talk to your roommate and agree on everything from sleeping and study habits to rules for visitors. By setting rules from the beginning, you’ll have something to look back on in case any issues arise.

Discuss a schedule for cleaning the room, taking out trash, etc. with your roommate. If you live in Miller or Hughes, discuss times for shower and bathroom time in the morning. Don’t monopolize the bathroom when you and your roommate both have class at 8 am, and both have to get ready. You may want to discuss a bathroom schedule with your suitemates as well, to avoid tension between the four of you.

When it’s time to do laundry, be courteous to the other residents in your hall. There are a lot of people in your building who need clean clothes too, so set an alarm or timer for yourself, so you don’t forget to get your clothes out of the machines so others can use them.

Lock the door to your room. Even if you’re only going to be gone for a couple minutes, it is still possible for someone to get into your room and take something from you or your roommate. Locking your door is an easy way to keep yourself and your belongings safe.

Always respect your roommate’s stuff, and ask before borrowing any of their things. Even if you don’t think they’ll mind, get their permission. You and your roommate may decide to share
groceries and soda, and maybe even movies and clothes, just make sure you outline the rules for borrowing each other’s things from the beginning.

Address issues when they’re little, so they won’t become big problems. Addressing the little things that bother you while they’re still small can help solve problems, and may even fix something your roommate isn’t even aware is a problem. It’s a lot easier to address smaller issues than it is to tackle them when they’ve built up and become bigger issues over time.

And don’t forget the golden rule – always treat your roommate like you’d like to be treated.