



# Be a Happy Roommate!

**Sharing your living space with other people can be very hard! Diverse lifestyles & personal habits often aren't easily integrated in such close quarters without mindful effort and clear, respectful communication.**

**Not all roomies will become best friends - this is normal - nevertheless your roommate relationships are very important! Establishing a healthy, functional relationship can be the difference between thriving and feeling stressed to your limits.**

## **Healthy Roommates:**

- **Start by getting to know each other personally**
- **Maintain a friendly demeanor, respect differences, and practice compromise as a status quo**
- **Fairly share responsibilities**
- **Establish and respect boundaries**
- **Allow for privacy and personal space when needed.**
- **Bring up potential issues before they occur when possible**
- **Avoid placing roommates in potential danger, such as by doing drugs, keeping illegal contraband or otherwise breaking Bentley rules in or outside the room.**
- **Don't nitpick, but speak up when issues become recurrent**

**It is important to communicate openly, respectfully and honestly with your roommate about what kind of living environment works best for you and learn more about what would help them thrive. You want your dorm room or apartment to be a space where both of you can peacefully unwind at the end of the day.**



# Ways to Practice

**Create a 'Roommate Contract' early on to discuss preferences and agree on rules. Revisit often to remind yourself or make changes.**

**Talk about your lives to build a supportive working relationship, but don't pry, your roommate also needs privacy and space.**

**Talk face-to-face about important topics. Texting is not the place to hash out your differences! It often leads to misunderstandings.**

**Don't gossip about your roommate to your friends, or vice versa. Keep the room a 'no gossip' zone.**

**If you would like to strengthen a friendship, invite your roommate out, but try not to be offended if they decline. Roommates are not obligated to be friends.**

**When raising concerns, do so directly in private, when emotions are calm. Try asking "Is now a good time to talk about...," and using 'I statements' such as "I feel cold when the window is open," rather than accusatory statements like "you never close the window!"**

**Make sure to listen mindfully and actively. Rephrase your roommate's words back to verify understanding.**

**Practice compromise - if you both give up a little, you can gain a lot. Fair trades build a sense of teamwork, and good faith efforts often lead to some 'leeway' when you ask for favors!**

**Respect difference by seeking to understand, rather than judge. Avoid assumption. Be sensitive as your experiences, beliefs and worldviews will certainly differ.**

**Practice forgiveness and apologize often! We all make mistakes.**

**Sometimes we all need support. Remember you can ask for help or offer it when needed. Residence Life, the Counseling Center and all Bentley Staff are here to support you when you ask!**