

Roommates 101

Why should you fill this out?

We know what you're probably thinking. You think you have better things to do than answer a whole bunch of questions that DON'T affect your GPA at all. You think you probably know everything about roommates. But for many of the students living on campus, it's their first time sharing a room with someone, and learning to live with other adults is an important skill to learn as a college student. Conflict may be inevitable, but what counts is how you respond to it. This guide will help you figure out how to handle this conflict. Plus, you know, it may actually be a good idea to talk to your roommate(s) to see how he/she/they feel about the room. Who knows? You might make a friend in the process!

What's in this packet?

- My Personal Preferences form (to fill out before meeting with your roommate(s))
- Roommate Agreement (insert to be filled out and signed by all roommates)
- Conflict Do's & Don'ts (something to help if things get rough)

Kic the Squirrel's Conflict Tips

Try not to assume that your roommate's actions are to annoy/bother you. He/She may not know how his/her actions are affecting you!



Welcome to the residence halls at Kent State University!

Congratulations on your choice to *live on campus*! Research shows that students who live on campus **do better academically, graduate sooner, and have more interaction with faculty and staff** than students who do not. I am confident that you will enjoy these benefits. In fact I am certain that this year is going to be an exciting one for you, but I also know that it will be challenging at times.

One of the biggest challenges you will encounter is learning to live with another adult. Conflicts are predictable. While some of you will be 'best friends for life' many others will really need to work at living together respectfully and won't become close friends — that is OK!

I have staff in place that were hired to help you navigate these conflicts before they start and when they occur! Your RA is going to be your biggest resource. Your RA will introduce you and your roommate to the roommate agreement. This agreement is designed to help you anticipate issues and resolve them when they arise. Please use the inside of this booklet to help you get started!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jill Church". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jill Church,

Associate Director, Residential Communities

jcchurch@kent.edu

330-672-7000

Department of Residence Services, Korb Hall

<http://www.kent.edu/housing>

Your source for resident student success!

Find information on:

How to get involved on-campus

Connect to academic support services

Find a job

Get in touch with your A/RHD, and more!

Step 1: My Personal Preferences

Fill this out before meeting with your RA and your roommate(s). You should feel comfortable sharing this information in that meeting

Section 1: At home, I lived:

- Alone
- With sibling(s)/family member(s)

What I liked most about that living arrangement was: _____

What I liked least about that living arrangement was: _____

Section 2: Guests

You may want to have friends over in your room. It's important to really think about what matters to you when it comes to guests. Please refer to the *Hallways Handbook* for the guest policies in your hall. Guests are to be accompanied by a resident student at all times.

Guests that I anticipate having visit (friends, family members, study partners, etc.): _____

In order for guests not to be a problem for me, I will need: _____

For what purposes are you comfortable having guests/

Social	Study
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Ask First	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Ask First

Visitors Allowed	Overnight Guests	Same Gender Overnight Guests?	Opposite Gender Overnight Guests?
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No			
<input type="checkbox"/> Ask First			

What are my guidelines for how my belongings are used/left while I am away and guests are present? _____



Kic says: "Two people can be very different from each other and still be good roommates. In fact, former Vice President Al Gore shared a room at Harvard with future Hollywood actor Tommy Lee Jones, and talk show host Conan O'Brian roomed with Ford Foundation chair Louis Urbinas. It's all about communication!"

Section 3: Cleanliness

Your room will quickly become your home on campus. It's important that you let your roommate know what you expect/prefer when it comes to your room so that you both can be comfortable coming home.

To be clean the room must be (check all that apply): vacuumed dusted belongings/books picked up clothes put away trash removed fridge/microwave cleaned

Other: _____

I don't like it when my room is (check all the apply): untidy too neat noisy quiet

empty overcrowded

Other: _____

In order to feel clean, I need: _____

Personal Hygiene: I bathe/shower every day few days week

I expect my roommate(s) to bathe/shower *at least* every day few days week

Section 4: Noise

Noise can be an important factor in determining how happy you are in your room.

FYI: there are 24 hour courtesy hours in every hall. Quiet hours on Sun-Thurs. nights, are 8 PM—10 AM. Friday and Saturday nights are 2 AM—10 AM. The general rule of thumb is that noise from your room shouldn't be heard more than two doors away.

Noise bothers me when: (check all that apply) I'm sleeping I'm studying I'm on the phone

I'm using my computer I'm napping I'm hanging out with a friend I'm relaxing in the room

Other (Explain): _____

I usually go to sleep at: _____ I usually get up at: _____

I am a morning night person

Noise includes: music talking computer use talking on the phone all noise

Other (Explain): _____

In order for noise to not to be a problem for me, I need:

Section 5: Study Habits

I prefer to study: (check all that apply)

in my room in the library in a lounge in a friend's room other : _____

Studying is an important part of your college experience. Your study habits might change over time, but it's important to discuss your studying needs with your roommate at the start of the year!

Times I study: WEEKDAYS: _____ AM/PM to _____ AM/PM WEEKENDS: _____ AM/PM to _____ AM/PM

Describe your ideal environment for studying—a sensory guide

Sight (light level): _____

Sound (background noise/music): _____

Touch (overall environment, including location): _____

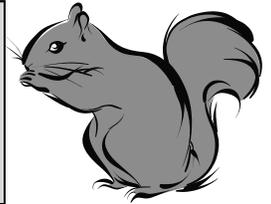
We're on Facebook, too!

<http://www.facebook.com/ksuhousing>

Your hall has a Facebook page as well. "Like" it to follow hall events and announcements

Kic the Squirrel's Conflict Tips

Roommates are like acorns (my favorite food). Sometimes you have to work a little to break open that protective covering—know that it takes time! Ask questions, keep an open mind, really get to know your roommate(s) and you'll really appreciate what's inside.



Section 6: Technology

You may love to use social media to connect to your friends, but everyone prefers different levels of openness on social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, FourSquare, LinkedIn, etc. It's also important for you to continue to think about how you are portrayed online.

If I leave my cell phone in the room, my roommate(s) can answer the phone on my behalf if it rings.

Yes No It Depends (describe situations where it is okay): _____

Do you have a webcam? Yes No If so, what do you use it for? _____

What are your expectations for how your roommate(s) use their webcam(s)? _____

My roommate(s) can post information about me on social media sites in the following ways

Pictures	Videos	Status Updates	Check-Ins/Locations	Other: _____	Other: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No					
<input type="checkbox"/> Ask First					

In order for technology to not be a problem, I need: _____

Section 7: About Me

You are a unique individual, unlike anyone else! So while it's easy to think that everyone thinks the same way you do about certain things, that may not be the case. It's important to share those unique characteristics with your roommate(s) so they can begin to see things from your point of view.

What are my pet peeves? _____

If I have done something that they consider a pet peeve, how would I like my roommate(s) to let me know? _____

Things that you may want to think about sharing: (check all that apply)

Clothing	School/Art Supplies	Food/Drinks	Computer/Printer	TV	Other: _____	Other: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No						
<input type="checkbox"/> Ask First						

In order for personal items to not be a problem, I need: _____

Other things about me that would be important or interesting for my roommate(s) to know about me: _____

Conflict Do's & Don'ts

Do's

- Go directly to the person when there's a problem
- Be willing to fix the problem... even when you find that it's on your end
- Be quick about bringing up issues
- Listen! Chances are there's a problem on their end too!
- Look for answers so everyone gets what they need
- Talk about your feelings

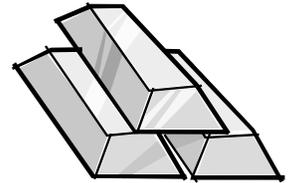
Don'ts

- Gossip about your roommate(s)
- Attack the person, rather than the problem
- Bring up old issues
- Plan your response before the other person finishes talking
- Look for ways to get even
- Use superlatives like "always" or "never"
- Make excuses



Kic the Squirrel's Conflict Tips

It IS okay to change your mind! You're an ever-growing and changing student and your preferences on one day may not be the same as they were the day before. Be sure to keep your roommate(s) up to speed of these changes by taking time to regularly re-visit and revise the roommate agreement as needed.



Golden Rules for Getting Along with Roommates

- ▶ Take time to get to know each other—share information about yourself and ask questions but remember, roommates don't have to be best friends. Being respectful to each other is all that is necessary.
- ▶ Be open, ask, listen, discuss. Don't wait until things get out of hand. If you are not open with your roommate, your frustrations may keep building until you blow up and say things you really don't mean.
- ▶ Weird (awkward, uncomfortable) talks are necessary and important. Remember that problems can't be solved by only talking to your parents. Tell your roommate in a mature fashion what is bothering you and help them understand why.
- ▶ Be sensitive to each other's moods. Everybody has bad days, so try to understand when your roommate has one too.
- ▶ Sharing: share what you can & clearly state what you are not comfortable sharing.
- ▶ Remember making fun of someone's music (religion, heritage, hometown, clothing) is making fun of them. When there are problems stick to the issues at hand.
- ▶ When things can't be worked out between the two of you, seek assistance from someone else, your RA, ARHD, or RHD.
- ▶ Roommates can be fun and they can help you get to know people on campus. Share successes, say thank you, show common courtesy, and let the other person know when things are going right, as well as when they aren't!