



ROOMMATES

ROOMMATE BILL OF RESPONSIBILITIES

As a roommate, I have the responsibility to:

- Maintain a clean living area.
- Respect my roommate and my roommate's belongings.
- Respectfully communicate face-to-face with my roommate.
- Take an active role in resolving conflicts, with or without the aid of Residence Staff.
- Allow my roommate to live and learn in our room free from undue interference (unreasonable noise or other distractions) that inhibit these activities.
- Allow my roommate to sleep without disturbance from noise, guests, or other disruptions.
- Allow my roommate free access to our room and our shared facilities.
- Provide my roommate with privacy.

- Allow my roommate to be free from fear, intimidation, and physical and emotional harm.
- Ensure that my guests respect the privacy and rights of my roommate.
- Be private and discreet, especially with intimate relationships.

Prevent roommate misunderstandings by discussing the following as soon as possible:

- Using one another's belongings.
- Studying in the room.
- Sleep schedules.
- Cleanliness and neatness preferences.
- How comfortable you are with guests and visitors.
- Room temperature preferences.
- Noise levels from stereos, TVs, telephones, and computers.
- Using the room for socializing.

- Storage space use.
- Lifestyle.
- Disposing of food, recyclables and garbage.
- Appropriate hours for online video calling with family or friends.

All residents will be directed to the "Living Together" guide by their Residence Staff member. This guide assists students with the creation of a Roommate/Suitemate Agreement.

The guide can be found online via rezlife.uwo.ca/roommates_roommates_agreement.pdf

Resolving differences

Sharing a room is just like any other relationship: it requires openness, flexibility, and respect to be effective. It's important to communicate openly with your roommate right from the start. Learning to live with other people, to acknowledge and respect each other's differences, and allow one another the space to grow are some of the most valuable parts of the residence experience.

You have to take an active role in resolving your differences.

It's important to communicate your needs clearly and openly. Your roommate probably doesn't realize their behaviour is bothering you. Show your roommate respect by speaking with them in person, not by leaving notes via text messages, or through social media. Focus exclusively on how their behaviour is impacting you, not on their character.

It's crucial to speak with your Residence Staff member promptly if speaking with your roommate doesn't improve the situation. Your Staff member can coach you on effectively communicating with your roommate and will follow up to monitor how your discussion with your roommate goes. Let your roommate know that you're getting advice from your Staff member, particularly if you'd like your Staff member to speak with your roommate. Your Staff member will speak with your roommate to gain more insight into your relationship with your roommate. University employees cannot discuss roommate conflicts with parents without your explicit consent to do so.

Roommate mediation

Your Staff member will recommend a roommate mediation if your roommate difficulties persist after you've followed the steps previously outlined. A roommate mediation is an assisted dispute-resolution process where you and your roommate can discuss your needs and concerns respectfully and openly. A Residence Staff member will act as a mediator to ensure there's a safe and neutral environment for you to speak about your feelings, thoughts, and needs. Residence Staff are trained to work with disputing residents to create a mutually satisfactory solution. Needs may not be negotiable but solutions certainly are. This process will help you create clear expectations and specific steps necessary to carry out the agreed-upon solution. We're committed to resolving roommate disputes through mediation and we expect residents to make an honest and sincere attempt to reach a resolution.

Room changes

Room changes are arranged by Residence Managers only as a last resort after all other options have been exhausted. There is little to no room availability to make switches during the first several weeks of the academic year.

Room changes create a dilemma: neither roommate may wish to continue living together but both may wish to stay in the room. Living apart requires one or both residents to leave their friends and floor community. The Residence Manager may force one or both roommates to move in exceptional circumstances. Thankfully, mediation is successful in the majority of roommate disputes. While getting along may not always be easy, it's certainly worthwhile.

