

## Housing & Residence Life

# Roommate Conflict – Resolution Tips

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Throughout life one will experience many conflicts and disagreements. Perhaps the most significant types of conflicts that young adults encounter are roommate conflicts. Conflicts among roommates can be described as a state of disharmony between incompatible ideas, interests, or sometimes persons. As a student living in Housing & Residence Life, one might experience this type of conflict and it is necessary that residents are equipped with adequate tools to combat these conflicts while promoting healthy communities within their room assignments. Below are items to keep in mind when addressing conflict within the space.

### **Approach your roommate in private**

These issues do not need to be public knowledge. Make sure that you are able to have these conversations in a private, safe place.

### **Set a time and neutral place for discussion**

Make sure that all parties can be present and willing to engage in the conversation. Don't try to resolve the conflict when you or the other person is angry. It's okay to take a time out or agree to meet again at a later time (24-48 hours). Understand your biases and triggers.

### **Establish rules for the discussion**

Ensure that all have an equal opportunity to share their concerns. Establish that each person should describe the conflict and what cause it (from their perspective). Establish that everyone will only speak for themselves (i.e., "I feel...", "I want...").

### **Refer back to the Roommate Agreement**

Students are given the opportunity to this tool through the StarRez Housing Portal as a way to set the standards agreed upon within the space.

### **Use active listening skills**

Clarify to get more information. Restate what you heard the other person say, including their feelings.

### **Listen carefully and respectfully while the other person is talking**

While discussing the conflict, be sure to be open to what the other person has to say. Though you may not agree, as you expect to be heard, the other person(s) should have that same opportunity and respect. Be honest and open-minded to try and understand the other person's point of view. Remember there are two sides to every story. Don't interrupt and be patient.

### **Attack the conflict itself, not your roommate**

When voicing concerns, focus on the problem and not the person. Respect each other's differences. Everyone has different values, lifestyles, expectations, and communication styles.

### **Validate your roommate's position on the issue**

Let your roommate know that you understand their point of view as well as the importance of them understanding your point of view.

### **Provide positive feedback**

It is always good in these moments to state positive actions moving forward (i.e., "Thank you for sharing your concerns and how you have been feeling. I hear what you have stated, and moving forward, I will be more respectful of the time that my friends visit and when they leave.").

### **Build an agreement that works**

Brainstorm solutions to the conflict. Be open to new ideas. Be willing to negotiate and compromise. Remember that a solution will probably involve each person giving something and getting something. Trust the other person will do their part.