

Room-sharing

Why Room-sharing?

- > Room-sharing forms a good platform to develop your interpersonal skills.
- > It is one of your most rewarding university experiences and is beneficial to your future success.
- > It is a new subject you may have never learnt before. People of different cultures and backgrounds will make the living together interesting and challenging.
- > Hence do be prepared as there will always be some initial adjustments required.

How to benefit from Room-sharing?

There are hundreds of ways to do it but the key ingredients for success are:

- S** for Self-respect
- A** for Acceptance of diversity
- O** for Open communication

When and What to do?

Self-introduction Upon Moving-in

- > Introduce yourself and get to know each other, look for common grounds and set the scene for a harmonious relationship

How to Make the Self-introduction Effective?

- > When you move in, take the initiative to introduce yourself to your room/suitemates face to face.
- > As this is a time to get to know each other, be open and do not pass judgment.
- > Set the scene for a harmonious relationship and positive body languages are important, e.g. stand up to greet your new room/suite-mate, smile, steady eye contact, a firm handshake.
- > Share your “private” data, like your name, nickname, course of study, year of study, where you are from, your hobbies and interests etc.



- > If your room/suite mates are NOT around, leave a note on the desk or on the door.
- > If you are the first one to move in the suite or room, do not scatter your belongings all over the place to claim your territory. Keep your things within the designated space.

Roommate Agreement

Rules of thumb:

- > It is better to create the Agreement right from the start or at least within the 1st week.
- > Find a mutually convenient time to sit down and go through the Agreement openly.
- > Do not assume your habits or your lifestyle is the best or the only option. Accept the differences of your suite/roommates and look for an agreeable point somewhere in between that you may both be comfortable with.
- > Remember that mutual respect is the key to build and nurture a relationship. You will gain more if there is a fair share of give and take.
- > Be genuine, positive and flexible to look for the largest space possible for all the stakeholders.
- > Talk about your lifestyles and expectations; come up with some agreed practices in the way you share your time, space, cost, and resources of the room.
- > For personal belongings, don't assume your roommate is willing to share.
- > When everyone has moved in, agree on how the common spaces are to be shared e.g. shelves in the refrigerator, racks in the bathroom.

Teething Problems

- > If you feel uncomfortable with some behaviors of your roommate, before it becomes a big problem, you need to communicate it openly with your room/suite mates.
- > Handle and address problems and concerns in a mature manner.
- > You may get together to go through the Checklist every now and then for “health check” purposes.

Real issues of concern

- > Do not compromise on issues such as your mate's possession of illicit drugs as it is a criminal offence.
- > Look for help from your tutors, warden or SAO staff in Hall Management Section for issues of grave concern.

Roommate Agreement Checklist

*This Checklist serves as a reference only & issues herein are not exhaustive.
Download the e-Checklist at www.polyu.edu.hk/hall/halledu/rac to come up with your own Agreement if you wish to.
Forward a copy of the signed Agreement (or an e-version) to your hall tutor for reference & record*

Issues to be agreed upon:

- 1 How the cost of room air-conditioning be shared? _____

- 2 What personal belongings are okay to share? _____

e.g. Food ? Shampoo? Tissue paper? Eating utensils? Computer?
- 3 Prior-notice required for use of room-mate's personal belongings? _____
- 4 Personal and mutual space:
 - How will your notice-board/room be decorated? _____

 - Is it okay to hang wet clothing in the room/bathroom? _____
- 5 Housekeeping routines:
 - What is your idea on the issue of hygiene and cleanliness? _____

 - What is necessary to keep the space livable? _____

 - How often and how will you share the responsibilities of cleaning routines? _____
 - Fridge cleaning? _____
- 6 Study/Quiet time (communicate your needs and be considerate):
 - What are your hours to study? _____
 - When do you sleep and get up? _____
 - Which days of the week are more critical/relaxed? _____
 - Can you sleep when the light is on? _____
 - Are you a heavy or light sleeper? _____
 - Are there ways to enhance each other's time management skills and study effectiveness? _____

 - When is the latest hour for phone calls? _____

- 7 Guests: (Note that talking on the phone sometimes has the same effect of entertaining a guest in the room)
 - When is it OK to have guests over? _____
 - Do you want to be informed beforehand? _____
 - Is it OK to bring friends when your roommate is out? _____
 - Is it OK for the guest to use your bed? _____
 - Will there be separate rules for guests of different sexes? _____
 - Will there be separate rules for weekdays and weekends or special occasions? _____

- 8 Noise level: Quiet hours are between 23:00 to 07:00 when members of the room have the right to work and rest. But you are always expected to respond positively if you are requested to refrain from making excessive noises. Some genius may be at work!
- 9 Safety: Lock the room when you're out. Do not place the key card in the door notice holder. Smoking, consuming alcoholic drinks and cooking in student room are not allowed in the hall.
- 10 Disagreement: **If you may find there are disagreements, do not feel upset for we can never be able to understand each other perfectly.** Learning how to handle disagreements enable you to be a better team-player. Please seek tips on how to resolve conflicts.
- 11 Verification: It is best to have the agreement written down and handed in to your tutor/warden. Tutors will make room visits to see if something has been done along this line.
- 12 Others: _____

Agreed by: _____ & _____

Room: _____ Date: _____