

## **Living with a Roommate**

Step two is developing the terms by which you will co-exist. Your roommate can be your best friend or someone you found specifically to share your apartment. Regardless of the circumstances, once you have found a compatible roommate, it's a good idea to talk about your living arrangements before you move in. Living with someone else is full of challenges, but can be very rewarding as well! Talking about issues before they arise and setting guidelines now will limit disagreements in the future. The following is a list of common conflicts between roommates:

1. Be careful about sharing expenses for things like refrigerators or furniture. What will happen with those items when one or more of the roommates move out? You can even out expenses by having different individuals pay for each large item or by renting.
2. Decide how monthly bills (utilities, rent, etc.) will be divided and who is responsible for making sure the bill is paid. Keep track of who paid deposits for different utilities.
3. Discuss sharing personal items such as clothes, computers, and school supplies.
4. Discuss the division of household duties. Cleaning schedules (dividing the chores daily or weekly) are the most effective way to do this. Differences in preferences for cleanliness are one of the biggest conflict areas for roommates.
5. Talk about groceries and food. Often roommates will agree that each is responsible for his/her own grocery shopping, and food is generally not shared. Others shop together, divide the grocery bill evenly and share equally. Still others contribute a set amount to go towards staples (sugar, flour, eggs, milk).
6. Finally, sign a Roommate Agreement. It clarifies responsibilities and sets some ground rules for your new home.