

ROOMMATES

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On-campus housing: to most people those three words are synonymous with having to share a 12 foot by 12 foot space with another person. For most people, their rooms at home were about this size or larger, but the room most likely was not shared with another person. How do you make a transition like that? Making this transition is especially difficult if you go "pot luck" for a roommate and are randomly put in a room with a stranger. Most times, the person is someone that you get along great with, and a friendship is made, even if you decide not to room with that person again next year. On the other hand, sometimes the roommate is a person that you cannot get along with, no matter how much you try.

Just like Skittles come in all different flavors, bad roommates come in all different forms. Here are a few that I have heard about. First, there is the "party all night" roommate. This roommate seems like he or she came to college just to party all the time. This person treats college like a non-stop party that you pay ten thousand dollars a year to attend. This roommate would not be so bad if he just hurt himself by partying, but his party lifestyle affects everyone. He wakes you up or interrupts you while you are studying whenever he returns to the room very late from a long night of partying.

Then, there is the roommate who thinks, "what's yours is mine, what's mine is mine." This roommate will use everything of yours -from your computer to your futon- in any way he sees fit. But this same roommate will do the most fussing and complaining if you touch anything of his.

The worst kind of roommate would probably be the messy roommate. This type of roommate makes it 'mission impossible' to get from the door to your bed if your roommate's side of the room is closest to the door. Or you could have the messy roommate who has all kinds of clothes and stuff pouring out of his closet. This is probably the same type of roommate who will drop an empty milk carton on the floor by the refrigerator just because "it's empty." So, what do RAs do when two roommates can't get along? When two roommates can't get along, the RA brings them together for mediation. The people who must be present for mediation are the two roommates, and either two RA's or an assistant area director and the RA. At the mediation period, the roommate contract is brought out, and changes are made to it. If too many changes must be made, then either a new roommate contract is made, or one of the roommates volunteers to move into another room.

I hope that you all get along great with your roommates, but if you do not, there are a couple of things that you can do to remedy the problem. You can talk to your roommate and try to handle the problem yourself, or you can bring your RA into the situation and go through mediation with your roommate. If that does not work, either you or your roommate can move into another room. No matter what you do, consider it a learning experience.

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