

## How to deal with roommate drama

Written by Davonte Longmire, Staff Writer  
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Roommates can be one of the biggest stressors in college. There is an unspoken pressure of getting along with one another, as they share a 10 by 12 foot room for the next 2,688 hours of their lives.

The media has painted a picture for college students; roommates will be the most agreeable and best friends you are to meet in college.

This can be the case, yet often it appears that just as many students end up disliking their roommates as the ones that get along.

“My roommate, freshman year second semester was so dirty, there would be times I would enter the room and there would be underwear, gold fish crackers and garbage everywhere,” said Sidika Balogun, family and consumer science major.

One major difference between roommates that can potentially cause the most disagreement is cleanliness.

It all depends on the person’s background; some people simply just place room cleanliness lower on their priority list.

Healthy communication would be best in an honest discussion when both parties are not busy. The conversation can begin by simply saying “Hey, can we talk about the room for a second?” or “Do you have a minute, we need to discuss the room?”

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“Communication and respect are the keys to ensuring a successful roommate pairing. If you genuinely respect your roommates you will communicate your needs and allow them to communicate theirs. You will then come to a compromise regarding how the common space and property is used,” said Bridget Reeland, assistant director of University Housing Services.

Trouble in miscommunication is another issue. People really read into non-verbal communication, sentence structure and tone when someone is speaking.

In fact, these are the most common unintentional communication errors that can occur.

“Sit down and really talk about the roommate agreement and all the different parts of it. Be respectful toward one another, put yourself in another person’s shoes and do the agreement. It is completed at the beginning of the year so you should thoroughly think about how you are as a person, really talk about each item on the list rather than hurrying just to finish it,” Balugon said.

If problems persist, after you have tried to communicate, then you should ask for help from someone else.



“An unbiased third party can be very helpful in resolving conflict. I certainly would not hesitate to call for help if it is needed,” said Reeland.

However, avoiding conflict can be as easy as maintaining honest, frequent and respectful face-to-face communication. Misunderstandings can occur when communication is not in

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person and allowing feelings of frustration to build up can make a very small issue into a much larger one.”

Another debatable issue is whether or not you and your roommates should become friends. On one side, friendship is important to establish bonds and respect for the other person. On the other hand, friends sometimes get into disputes and now you are forced to deal with the dispute because that person is your roommate.

“There is nothing wrong with being friends and it can definitely enrich your experience. If you do become friends, you need to make an effort to not make assumptions. Assuming your ‘friend’ doesn’t mind you borrowing their clothes, eating their food, or letting a friend sleep in their bed has led to many a conflict among ‘friends,’” said Reeland.

Worst-case scenario, if roommates cannot get along with one another, really try to weigh options.

Would it be worth it to contact housing and switch rooms in the middle of a semester?

“A student can call the police whenever they feel there has been an injustice or crime committed. Unfortunately there have been times when that was the case,” said Reeland.