

# Roommate starter kit

Your guide to being a better roommate.

## Welcome to residence

A major part of university is adjusting to the community living situation. It may be the first time you have lived away from home with anyone other than your family. It can be a scary feeling when you first move into residence and realize that you know little or nothing about your roommate/housemate or floormates. Living with a roommate and even just living within the close confines of residence is a great experience but not without the chance for conflicts to occur. This pamphlet is designed to give you and your roommate some guidance on different issues that may be of interest to you in the upcoming year.



### Rights and responsibilities

A healthy residence community begins with healthy roommate/housemate and floormate relationships. Everyone deserves respect and everyone has the right to:

- Be free from intimidation & harassment
- Access the space freely
- Sleep, study, and socialize without interference
- Expect that Residence Community Guiding Principles will be adhered to
- Personal privacy



- To be treated with consideration
- Reside in a clean space

As much as any of us have rights we also have certain responsibilities if we hope to maintain successful relationships within the residence community.

Some of these responsibilities include:

- Treating people as you would like to be treated
- Engaging in honest discussion with your roommate
- Working to compromise

# Getting to know each other

Asking questions about each other is an excellent way for roommates to get acquainted. The things that can be important to find out are sometimes the things people overlook or don't think to ask at first. Breaking the ice and covering some of these basics can go a long way to helping you and your roommate adjust to each other. Following are some things you may want to ask.



## Background questions

- Where are you from?
- Why did you choose Brock?
- What will you be studying?
- What hobbies/interests do you have?



## Communication questions

- How will we resolve conflict?
- How do you behave when under stress?
- What are your pet peeves?
- How do you approach people when they're annoying you?
- What's the best way to approach you if I have a concern to raise?



## Room arrangement questions

- Will we move the furniture?
- Who will sleep where?
- How will we decorate?
- Who's stuff should go where?
- What sleeping habits do you have?
- Are you an early-riser or a late-sleeper?



## Roommate conflict

Inevitably there will be some conflict between roommates over the year. The key to successful relationships in the residence community is to identify and address the trouble before it escalates.

### Identifying Conflict

Telltale signs of roommate conflict include:

- The "silent treatment"
- Spending less time in the room when the other is home
  - Less considerate of other's needs
  - Lack of interest in the other
- Doesn't communicate messages to the other roommate
- Doesn't indicate when he/she will be gone for a while



## Lifestyle questions

- What temperature do you like the room to be?
- How often should we clean and who should do what?
- How do you define "clean?"
- What kind of music? How loud?
- Can we use each other's stuff?  
If so, what can we use and is anything off-limits?
- How do we handle guests?
- How much personal time do you like?
- How will I know when you need some space?