

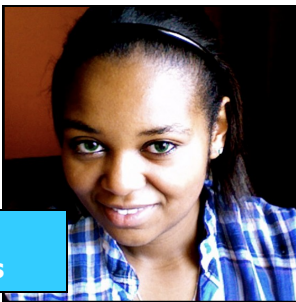
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Meet your

In-Hall

Mediator

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## How to Share What's on your mind? *with roommates:*

It's very normal for two people who live together in close quarters during a year to have some issues arise. Here are a few tips for discussing those issues with roommates.

- Timing is everything: **Don't wait too long** to discuss issues; they're not likely to resolve if you ignore them—they're likely to grow. **Plan a time to talk** with your roommate. Ask them if you can arrange a time to talk. Be sure to pick a time when neither of you is likely to be hungry, angry, stressed, or tired. It's sometimes a good idea to set a regular time to check in with your roommate—maybe over dinner. This way bringing up issues in the room is part of your normal routine.
- **Talk directly to your roommate.** It can be tempting to air grievances with friends, family, and facebook. While they can help you think about how to approach your roommate, you and your roommate need to work with each other before things get better.
- Remember that roommates may also have issues they want to discuss. **Give them time to share** their perspective as well.
- **Share honestly** what your concerns are and **seek new ways** to address them. Rather than complain about how things have gone in the past, focus on how you can both improve things in the future.
- If you come to a new agreement, **plan a time to revisit that agreement** after about a few weeks.
- **Do not assume** your roommate will know or has known what's bothering you. This may be the first they know of it.
- **Don't hesitate to get help** from other resources if you need it. Lots of students find it helpful to work with someone who is not directly involved.

## How to find the Help Center for roommate issues.

**Conflict Resolutions Services and In-Hall Mediators** are a free, voluntary, and confidential resource at AU. We offer conflict coaching, mediation, education, and training for any AU community member experiencing conflict or wanting to learn more about how to address conflict. For more information, you can **email us at [ConflictResolution@american.edu](mailto:ConflictResolution@american.edu)** or **contact your In-Hall Mediator.**

Your **Resident Assistant (RA) and Resident Director** in Housing and Dining Programs can be a good first step in helping you develop an agreement with roommates.

**The Counseling Center** can help you gain skills and insights to manage life challenges, including roommate issues, in a confidential setting. They can be reached at 202-885-3500 or online at [www.american.edu/counseling](http://www.american.edu/counseling)

The **Office of the Dean of Students'** supports student learning through programs and services that promote growth and development, communicate the values and standards of the AU community, and advocate for students' interests. This office can be reached at 202-885-3300.

your guide to

# Life with Roommates

Living with & talking to your roommate



having a great roommate situation is a lot like a great facebook® profile

## know yourself **and** your limits

You couldn't build a facebook profile without thinking about who you are and what you want your relationship to be like with other facebookers. Should you list your mobile number? Should you make your profile public? Can others write on your wall?

**similarly** you should consider the following issues with roommates.

Think about what will work for you, what you want, and what you need to have a positive living situation:

? when would you like the room to be quiet...?

? when would you like to bring guests over? is it okay for your roommate to have guests...?  
can guests spend the night...?

? would you like the room to be clean? What does clean mean to you?

? what items in your room are you willing to share...?  what items are off-limits...?



? what other issues are important to you?

## a roommate relationship **is like** a facebook® profile

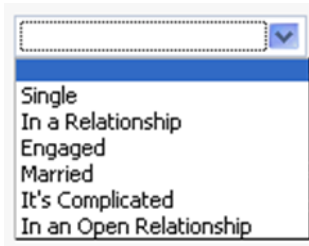
**determine the relationship** Just like "friend" means different things to different facebook users, different people have different ideas about what makes a great "roommate." Think about whether you want to be best friends, have dinner once in a while, or just share living space.



**make a connection** Just like facebook, most of the fun in living with someone is in connecting with them to some degree—even if it's just reading status updates.

**be honest and realistic** Not everything you read on facebook is true (pause for gasps of horror) . . . It might be briefly amusing to make up your profile, but in the long run, you want to be honest about yourself with your roommate and your facebook friends.

**be specific** You wouldn't settle for simply "having a relationship status" would you? You want "It's Complicated" and many other choices. Similarly, don't simply say that you want the room "clean." Think about what such words mean to you and spell it out.

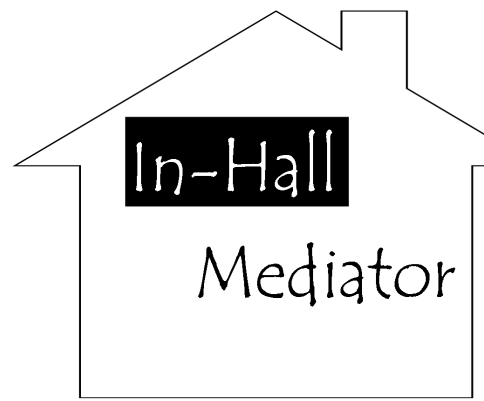


**be flexible** If you can stick with facebook through the format changes, you can make some adjustments to stay with a roommate. Think about what you can be flexible about.

**update your profile** You update your facebook profile all the time—be sure to update your roommate of your latest status about the room and check their status report on the room too.



## Contacting the



conflictresolution@american.edu

An In-Hall Mediator is assigned to each residential area. In-Hall Mediators can be reached by email and GChat at the listed addresses during the academic year. They also are available for appointments in person. Just send an email to confirm their Gchat hours for this semester or request an appointment!

**South Campus Residents**  
SouthCampusMediator@ gmail.com

**North Campus Residents**  
NorthCampusMediator@ gmail.com

**Tenley Campus Residents**  
TenleyMediator@gmail.com

**Off-Campus Residents**  
ConflictResolution@american.edu