

Questions to Ask Potential Housemates

Shared living has many advantages: it costs less than living alone, offers a built-in social network, and may give you access to shared resources that you would not have on your own. However, these advantages may not look great if you live with someone who is too noisy, is a slob or invades your privacy. That is why it is important to interview potential housemates: you can ask questions and discover whose personal habits, preferences, schedule, and approach to shared living are the best match for you. Below is a list of questions that you can use. Pick the questions that are most important to you. When you set up your interview, make sure it is in a public place with plenty of people around, like a coffee shop or recreation center. Ask for references who you can call or email to find out more about the individual's habits and background. Finally, do some research on the Internet to make sure the person is not listed in the Virginia sex offender registry (<http://sex-offender.vsp.virginia.gov/sor/zipSearch.html>). Also try Googling the person and looking on Facebook to see what information comes up.

- 1. How often do you clean the place you live now? Which chores do you like? Which chores do you really hate?**
- 2. What do you like to do on weekends?**
- 3. Do you like to have friends over or go out with friends?**
- 4. How often, if ever, do you smoke at home? Drink at home? Do drugs at home?** If the person does illegal drugs, this is a RED FLAG.
- 5. Have you lived with a roommate before? What did you like/dislike about that experience? Are you still friends with your former roommates?** If the person only has negative stories to share about prior housemates and takes no responsibility for the problematic situations, this is a RED FLAG.
- 6. What time do you wake up and go to bed?**
- 7. What do you do during weekdays?**
- 8. Do you expect a lot of out of town guests?**
- 9. What is your romantic situation?** If the person has a significant other, ask how often that person spends the night. Frequent overnights are a RED FLAG.
- 10. Do you have any pets? Plans to get any pets?**
- 11. Why are you leaving your current place?**

12. **How much is your rent now?** (If it's much less than what they would pay after moving in, they might not be able to afford the new rent.)
13. **How do you think we should handle buying shared supplies like toilet paper, garbage bags, etc.?**
14. **What do you think is the best way to handle paying the rent and utilities?**
15. **How do you think we should handle the chores, like cleaning the common areas and washing the dishes?**
16. **Do you like the apartment temperature more on the chilly or warm side?**
17. **Do you have any food allergies?**
18. **How you feel about sharing stuff, such as a cable/Internet subscription, kitchen equipment or a vacuum cleaner?**
19. **What do you want in a roommate?**
20. **How often do you cook?**
21. **How long do you plan to stay?**
22. **What are challenges you've faced in past living situations?**
23. **Do you have references?** Ask for phone numbers and email addresses.
24. **Anything else I should know?**