

How can I be a better roommate?

“Get to know those with whom you live. Attend your meetings together, and plan activities with each other. You may room with people from many different backgrounds. Some will be easier to get to know than others; you will have more in common with some than with others. But working together and striving to create a spirit of harmony and love will bring you some of your happiest moments, and you will be able to say to your roommates . . . with true conviction, ‘Ye are they whom my Father hath given me; ye are my friends’” (D&C 84:63; Babzanne P. Barker, “Ye Are My Friends,” *New Era*, Nov. 1979).

Prepare yourself spiritually

What qualities do you appreciate in a roommate? What do you do to be the kind of roommate you want for yourself? In what ways could you be a better roommate?

Prayerfully study the following scriptures and resources. What will inspire the members of your group to become better roommates?

- [Mosiah 18:8-9](#) (Care for and comfort one another)
 - [3 Nephi 11:29-30](#) (The spirit of contention is of the devil)
 - [Ephesians 4:29-32](#) (Christ-like communication)
 - [Proverbs 15:1](#) (A soft answer vs. grievous words)
 - Babzanne P. Barker, “[Ye Are My Friends](#),” *New Era*,” Nov. 1979
-
-

Begin the learning experience

Choose from these ideas or think of your own to introduce this lesson:

- Read Sister Barker’s quote found at the beginning of this lesson. Ask group members to share a time in which they felt a spirit of harmony in their apartment. What did individual roommates do to contribute to such a spirit?

- Ask each group member to make a list of characteristics that embody a good roommate? Briefly discuss a few of the characteristics and consider how they relate to the Savior's character and disposition.
-

Learn together

Each of the activities below can help Home Evening group members learn how to become better roommates. Following the inspiration of the Spirit, select one or more that will work best for the group.

- Read together Mosiah 18:8-9 and ask group members to consider these passages in relation to apartment life. Discuss practical ways in which roommates can bear one another's burdens, mourn with and comfort one another, and witness to one another the goodness of God. How would an apartment benefit from a culture in which these practices were exemplified by roommates? How would each roommate benefit?
- Divide into two groups and read Ephesians 4:29-32. Ask each group to discuss the following questions: What represents "corrupt" communication in the apartment? How can the way in which you communicate with your roommates affect the Spirit in your apartment? How can the way in which you communicate help you become a better roommate? What role does forgiveness play in helping you become a better roommate? What prevents you from forgiving others? How can you develop the humility and love to forgive your roommates "even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (v. 32)? Reunite as a larger group and reflect on the key points and insights that were shared in each respective sub-group. Encourage additional depth to the discussion.
- Provide each group member with a copy of the following quote and ask someone to read it aloud: "A few short months ago in October, my wife and I performed vicarious sealings in the Rexburg Temple. During the ceremony, the sealer paused to share an inspired thought with the assembly. He asked us to consider the beautiful sunsets that are frequently present on the horizon in the great state of Idaho. He reminded us that we never look at a sunset and regretfully sigh, 'Oh, I wish there were more hues of red or stronger hues of purple in this sunset. If there were only a little more orange or not so much yellow. It's a bit off-center or not quite evenly distributed.' We simply enjoy the sunset for what it is and cherish and value its distinctive beauty. Though he wasn't very explicit in stating why he shared this thought with us, we all recognized the lesson: see the good in others and accentuate the positive"

(Troy Dougherty, "[The Practical Work of Building Zion in Your Apartments and Homes](#)," BYU-Idaho Devotional, Jan. 21, 2014). How does this particular experience relate to being a better roommate? Discuss the following questions: Do you lift roommates through kindness and compliments? Do you do all you can to make them feel good about themselves? Do you overlook certain idiosyncrasies or harmless habits and accentuate the positive?

Live what we are learning

A lesson is not complete until an invitation or challenge is extended that inspires and motivates participants to apply what they have learned. "It's in the doing, not just the thinking, that we accomplish our goals" (Thomas S. Monson, "A Royal Priesthood," *Ensign*, Nov. 2007, 59-61).

- Ask group members to consider the impressions they have had throughout the discussion. Invite each individual to identify specific ways in which he/she can be better a roommate. Encourage group members to write down their commitments and refer to them often. Reporting commitments to others may also aid them in their progress.
- Distribute "Thank You" cards to group members and invite them to write a brief note of gratitude to a roommate for something he/she has done to bless the group member's apartment and/or college experience.