



Introduction

Living in a shared living environment can be an exciting and rewarding experience. It allows you to expand your horizons, build new friendships and sample new ways of living. The friendships you build at GHR can last a lifetime and the memories and experiences you take home will shape you as a person. That said, we understand settling in a new living environment can be challenging too, and you may encounter some obstacles or scenarios you didn't count on or don't feel you have the know-how to navigate. Luckily, we've heard it all, and are well-equipped and resourced to provide you with sound advice to set you on the right path.

Here are some tips for a successful and enjoyable co-living experience:

1. Set Clear Boundaries and Expectations Early

- Create House Rules: Have a discussion with your housemates early on to establish guidelines around cleanliness, noise and shared spaces. This prevents misunderstandings later on.
- Shared Responsibilities: Divide chores such as cleaning, taking out the rubbish, or even buying communal supplies (toilet paper, dish soap, etc.) so everyone pulls their weight.
- Respect Privacy: Everyone needs their own space and time. Establish personal boundaries for quiet times and social gatherings. GHR's mandated quiet times are 11pm-7am. You are free to work within these boundaries to come up with your own shared rules to ensure a harmonious living environment.

2. Communicate Openly and Respectfully

- Be Direct but Polite: If there's an issue, don't let it fester. Approach your housemate calmly and respectfully to discuss concerns rather than avoiding conflict or complaining to others.

- Group Chat: Consider setting up a group chat to keep communication smooth and quick. It can be used to co-ordinate plans, make requests or give updates.

3. Be Considerate of Noise

- Quiet Hours: Respect GHR's mandates quiet hours and the habits of those sharing your apartment.

- Use Headphones: When listening to music, watching videos, or gaming use headphones to avoid disturbing your roommates.

4. Respect Shared Spaces

- Clean After Yourself: Whether it's the kitchen, bathroom or living room always clean up after yourself immediately to avoid tensions. Work under the clean-as-you-go principle – rule number one for any food service establishment in Ireland.

- Set Fridge and Storage Boundaries: Clearly label your food and personal items and have a shared area for communal items if you pool some items. Don't eat or use someone else's things without first asking.

5. Manage Finances Transparently

- Split Bills Fairly: Use apps like Revolut to keep track of shared expenses, like household supplies or food.

- Plan Group Purchases: If you're sharing expenses like cleaning supplies or ordering weekly groceries agree on a fair system where costs are split equally or rotated.

6. Plan Social Time Together

- Bond with Your Housemates: Arrange occasional dinners, movie nights or outings to build friendships and make living together more enjoyable.

- Respect Alone Time: Balance socializing with respecting your roommates' need for personal space. People need downtime/time alone.

7. Be Flexible and Adaptable

- **Compromise:** You won't always get your way, so be ready to compromise. Flexibility with living habits will make the shared environment much easier to navigate.

- **Be Understanding:** Everyone has different living styles, habits, and schedules. Try to be patient and empathetic when issues arise.

8. Create a Positive Living Environment

- **Small Gestures Go a Long Way:** Simple things like taking the trash out without being asked, washing a roommate's dishes when they're busy, or leaving a friendly note can improve the atmosphere.

- **Be Kind and Respectful:** Treat your roommates with kindness, and avoid petty complaints. A positive attitude helps in maintaining a harmonious household.

9. Stay Organised with Schedules

- **Bathroom and Kitchen Schedules:** In shared apartments with limited space, it can be helpful to agree on morning/evening schedules, especially for bathroom use, to avoid clashes during busy times.

- **Plan Quiet Study Hours:** During exam periods or project deadlines, coordinate quiet times in shared spaces for studying.

10. Be Ready to Address Conflicts Maturely

- **Conflict Resolution:** Conflicts are inevitable, but they should be addressed calmly and constructively. Approach any disagreement with a solution-oriented mindset.

- **Involve a Mediator if Necessary:** If things get tough, consider involving an impartial third party (such as a Resident Assistant or student mediator) to help resolve bigger issues.

These ten tips can make shared living smoother, helping you to create a positive and productive environment where you can all thrive.