

# Incoming freshman learns to talk with roommate.

"Ask Amy", The Bellingham Herald  
August 20, 2007

## Dear Amy

I am about to start my freshman year of college 20 hours away from my home. I don't know anybody there.

I was notified who my roommate is in early July so that I could at least bond with one person before school starts. I emailed her, and gave her my ideas on what we could each contribute to the dorm room, along with a few details about myself. She replied with no details about herself or what she might be bringing to school.

I hadn't heard from her in weeks until a couple of days ago when she emailed me. She said that her boyfriend was going to be visiting her during school, and that he would be hanging out in our room and possibly crashing in our room. She wanted to know if that was OK with me.

This has put me in a difficult position because I want her to like me, but I feel that if I tell her that it is not OK for him to be there all the time, she will not be fun to live with. I would have liked to get to know her better before having to be put in this predicament. What should I do?

— Confused

## Dear Confused

Welcome to college. Having fun yet?

Rest assured, this is one of the trickiest issues you'll face during school.

It is completely understandable that you want your roommate to like you, but giving in to her won't make her like you. I suggest that you attempt to establish a relationship in which she at least respects you. Mutual respect is the rock-bottom minimum for any successful cohabiting relationship.

Your roommate's request is unreasonable and I suspect that she knows it. You should give her your answer now — before you meet her face to face and before this boy shows up in your room.

Craft an email saying something like, "I really appreciate your asking how I would feel about having your boyfriend stay over, but it is not OK with me. Maybe you can make another arrangement while he's visiting, but I don't feel comfortable having him stay overnight in the room."

If you have more questions or believe that you need some support once you get to school, your college's housing office is used to dealing with this sort of issue. Don't hesitate to get them involved.

**For practical ideas to help you get your roommate relationships off to a good start or get back on track if you've been having trouble, check out:**

**<http://www.housing.ubc.ca/rez/roommate.htm>**