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The Roommate Decision

Some people love to have their own place. Some people go crazy living alone. The first decision you should make: do I want to live alone, or would I enjoy sharing a place with a roommate? Make no mistake, the decision about roommates is as important as the place you end up living. If you are unsure, evaluate the pros and cons behind the BIG roommate decision.

The most obvious upside is expense. By sharing a place, you also share the expense of monthly rent with your roommates. By combining your financial resources, you and your roommates can afford a larger living space. Also, you can cut down on each of your costs for phone, cable, food, and household supplies. Speaking of household supplies, you and your roommates can share household chores to make life easier. Most importantly, roommates provide companionship. In the right roommate situation, you may develop life-long friendships, so make sure to take the time to find the best possible roommate. At the same time, just because you can be friends with someone does not mean that you will be compatible roommates – living together is very different from hanging out together.

The most obvious downside for roommates is the simple fact that you have another person living with you, and you definitely have less privacy. Again, this issue is a major one to address: do you want to share your home, and ultimately a big part of your life with another person? Remember, your sharing your home with your roommates. Just as your problems come home with you, so will your roommates' problems. You can easily become involved in your roommates life and their problems. Where there is stress, there is the potential for arguments and disagreements. If you are not comfortable being open and direct with your roommates to work through these issues, you may create a very uncomfortable situation in your home. On the practical side, if you're roommate does not honor their financial obligations, you can be put in a bad spot when it comes time to pay the rent and bills.

Ultimately, the big thing to remember if you choose to live with roommates is compromise. You'll need to be understanding of another person's life and lifestyle. And you need to be open and respectful with your roommates, so they are able to accept you into their lives. Through compromise and communication, you'll be able to maintain a healthy relationship with your roommates.

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