

Getting Along with Neighbors

Directions Even if you are not close friends with your neighbors, getting along with them is a good idea. If a problem comes up, neighbors who like and trust you are more likely to speak to you first instead of complaining to the landlord or police. They are also more likely to keep an eye open for the safety of you and your home. Read the good neighbor tips and the situations. Answer the questions on separate paper.

TIP 1	The best way to have good neighbors is to be one. Introduce yourself to your new neighbors when you move in. Smile and say hello when you see them.
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Neighbors or Strangers? Consuelo and Jodi moved into two apartments in the same building. Consuelo smiled and spoke to people in the hallway. Jodi said, “I have enough friends.” She continued to treat her new neighbors as strangers. When Consuelo and Jodi took a vacation together, they needed someone to water their houseplants. *How might their different behavior toward neighbors affect what happened to the plants?*

TIP 2	Be considerate about noise. Think of the downstairs neighbors before you bounce a ball on the floor. Turn the television and CD player low, especially when neighbors are sleeping.
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Whose Rights? Julius and Harry share a townhouse. They also play in a band together. Julius practices trumpet in the evenings but is careful to quit by 9 p.m. Harry practices drums until midnight. He tells Julius, “I pay to live here. I have as many rights as the next person.” *What might Julius reply?*

TIP 3	Understand differences. Misunderstandings can arise because of different cultural or age-related assumptions. Neighborhood old-timers may have different expectations from newcomers.
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Noisy Nights Mitch bought a condo in a building with neighbors of different ages and lifestyles. Several are much older and go to bed early. Mitch used to live with six other young men in a rented house, where loud parties often lasted late. *How can Mitch host parties in his new home without offending his neighbors?*

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TIP 4	Be respectful. Do not gossip, and do not touch other people’s property. Respect their right to live as they choose as long as their choices are legal and do not infringe on your rights.
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Respect for Property Liz and Margaret are young mothers who have just bought houses in the same neighborhood. Liz tells her children not to play with toys they see in other children’s yards. Margaret says, “They should not leave their toys outside if they care who plays with them.” *How might the two approaches affect how neighbor families act toward Liz and Margaret’s children?*

TIP 5	Listen calmly when neighbors have a complaint about you. Try not to get defensive. Thank the neighbors for telling you how they feel. Apologize for causing a problem. If you see it differently, explain calmly and respectfully. Say what you plan to do differently in the future, or offer to work with them toward a solution you can all accept.
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Seeking Solution Nate put a political sign in the front yard of the house where he rents a room. Judson, who rents another room in the same house, told Nate that the sign offended him and asked Nate to remove it. *What might Nate appropriately say in response? Describe a solution they both might accept.*

TIP 6	When you have a complaint against a neighbor, in most cases try to resolve it peacefully before complaining to the landlord or police. Express your concerns calmly and listen to the neighbor’s view. Try to work out a solution together.
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Shared Area Stacie does not like the way her neighbor’s children leave toys in the entryway to the building where they live. She is embarrassed by the clutter when friends visit. She is also concerned that someone might fall over the toys and get hurt. *How might the relationship between Stacie and her neighbor affect how the neighbor responds to her concerns?*

When Friends Help Friends Move

Directions Moving is a big job. Some people borrow or rent a truck and ask a group of friends to help, serving them pizza as a “thank you” at the end of the day. Other people hire a moving company to pack and move everything. The decision depends on personal preference, financial resources, and availability of willing friends. Interview two people about their most recent move. Fill in the chart based on their answers and discuss results in class.

Questions		Person 1	Person 2
1	Did you hire a moving company? If so, what did the movers do?		
2	Did you ask friends to help? If so, what did you ask them to do?		
3	How many people helped with the move?		
4	Did you have trouble finding friends who were willing to help? Explain.		
5	What did you do, if anything, to thank the people who helped?		
6	Why did you decide to handle the move the way you did?		
7	If you had to move again, what would you do the same and why?		
8	If you had to move again, what would you do differently and why?		

Space for Self, Housemates, and Guests

Directions Imagine that you write a newspaper column on decorating living space. In your column, you answer letters submitted by readers. On separate paper, write your reply to each of the letters below. Then complete “Draw a Floor Plan.”

1. **Décor Versus Finances** “My friend and I are moving into our first unfurnished apartment. We both like bright colors. We would like to invite friends over for parties. We think the colorful furniture in the “contemporary” section of the furniture store is more exciting than the dingy furniture in the resale shops, but we can not afford to buy good furniture. What do you recommend?”
2. **Dueling Neatness** “My family will be moving to a new house next month. My sister and I share a room. Our parents have told us that we can arrange it any way we want to. We read many of the same books, listen to the same music on the same equipment, and even wear many of the same clothes. However, my sister is very neat and tidy. She thinks I’m a slob. Do you have any suggestions for how to arrange our room?”
3. **When Friends Visit** “I’m a very private person. I am moving alone into a one-room apartment. Much of the time I read, study, and play my guitar. I do have a few close friends who will visit occasionally. How can I arrange the apartment to make me happy when I’m there alone and also to look nice for friends?”
4. **Little Room, Big Crowd** “To celebrate living in my own home for the first time this year, I invited my whole family for Thanksgiving dinner. About fifteen people will be coming. Now I’m starting to worry. My dining area is small. I do not have a big table, and I only have six dining table chairs. I still want them to come, but I do not know how to make the space work. What do you advise?”
5. **Separate Spaces** “My brother and I rent one very big room. We prefer separate spaces for reading, television, eating, sleeping, and so forth, especially since we often do two different activities. With separate spaces, we would not distract each other so much. Our landlord, of course, would not be pleased if we got hammer and nails and started installing walls! Is there anything you would suggest?”

Draw a Floor Plan

Select one of the letters above. Draw a floor plan showing a space like the one described in the letter. On the floor plan, draw a furniture arrangement that would meet the letter writer’s concerns.