

Steps to Finding a Good Match

The following steps will help you identify an individual that would be a good match for your household.

1. Complete our thorough [Shared Housing Questionnaire](#). It will clarify what is most important to you in sharing a space with someone. This 8-page questionnaire is designed to find out what gives you a sense of peace in your home and includes topics such as noise sensitivity, need for solitude, and the comfort of your own furniture. It will also identify specific preferences in sharing space with someone else. Its wide range of topics is appropriate for all age groups. You will have a comprehensive view of who you can live with and what behavior(s) would drive you nuts!

2. Decide if you want to share a whole house or just rent a room. Some individuals decide to limit their interaction with another person by just renting a room with bathroom and kitchen privileges. Others are comfortable creating a greater sense of community by sharing the entire house.

3. Use general terms when advertising what you want in a housemate or boarder. You can advertise online, at your co-op, make inquiries in your church, or ask friends. Based on your completed questionnaire, you will have a clear idea of what is most important to you in a housemate. Be aware of basic housing laws for your state prior to advertising. One of the best sites we've found for individual state housing laws is www.freelists.com/freelists/free/TenantLaws.htm. You must be in compliance with both your state and federal laws. One of the best resources for more information on the Federal Fair Housing laws is www.craigslist.org/about/FHA#roommates. Federal Fair Housing laws for roommates and shared housing have two components: advertising and decision-making. Review the difference at the above website or speak to a legal advisor to ensure you are in compliance with state and federal laws.

4. Require your prospective housemate to complete a copy of the questionnaire without sharing your specific answers. This will allow you to obtain an honest response of their needs and preferences. You may choose to run a credit check on the most desirable applicants. The credit check may show poor credit, but you may already know they have some financial difficulty. Ask for references of reliability and character.

5. States define boarders and tenants differently. Know what is allowed in your state. Sharing your household with a boarder gives you more control and is different than renting a home with another individual also considered a tenant by the landowner. If you are currently renting your home or apartment, any roommate may need to be approved by your landlord and have certain financial responsibility to the property owner. Regardless of your circumstances, having a clear agreement with your housemate is vital. Once you decide on your house sharing match, complete our [Shared Housing Agreement](#) to have a firm agreement of terms and to avoid misunderstandings.