



## Possessions

**Possessions:** Each and every possession we have requires some degree of care and maintenance. Think of homes, cars, computers and more. Some degree of planning for each thing will serve you well in seeing that there will be support for particular possessions. Think of a car. It can be run until it won't anymore. Then, when it won't start or that loose fan belt breaks, there'll be a crisis. OR, on the other hand, there can be a plan. Do you have skills to address the needs of your car? **Your characteristic or quality.** Do you know someone (daughter-in-law or neighbor who does)? **Friends & family, or Community Resource,** like a repair shop or a skilled sister-mechanic. Could you take a class and learn? **Community College.** Do you have the money to do so? **Finances.** Could you keep a maintenance schedule? **Intellect** ... you get the idea.

Here's some ideas to get you started:

- List things you own that have value
- Consider whether you want to insure any, or already have insurance
- If you have insurance, or have maintenance plans, write them down.
- Help keep this part of your Personal Safety Net organized by gathering and placing these in a place where you, and those you want to have the information, will be able to access it:
  - Copy of your current bills
  - Appraisal or inventory of valuable items
  - Birth certificate
  - Driver's license – copy
  - Extra keys
  - Personal information from my personal files
  - Safe(s)-
    - Do I keep a safe deposit box?
    - Where is the key?
    - Who is authorized to get in?
    - What's in it?
    - Do I have a fireproof safe in my house?
    - Where is it?
  - Pets
    - Who will take care in an emergency?
    - Have they been asked?
    - Create a list of information about your pet(s). Include: habits, food liked/disliked, allergies, and problems.
    - What and when are they fed?
    - Veterinarian(s)
    - Name of pet sitter(s)
  - Information on any prior or legal name(s)
  - Copy of Education, Certifications and credentials
  - Copy of Current resume
  - List of Employer(s) and contacts
  - Marriage certificate
  - Military discharge papers
  - Motor vehicle title
  - Passport/Naturalization papers
  - Prenuptial agreement
  - Prior years' tax returns
  - Property and school tax records
  - Social Security Card
  - Veteran's administration paperwork
  - Warranties for things owned



## Resources:

### Seven Tips for Vigilant Home Safety



[1]Seven Tips for Vigilant Home Safety:

1. Open lines of sight on your property. Not only make sure you can see out, but ensure your neighbors have adequate visibility of your home and access points.
2. Exterior lighting needs to be bright enough to see 100ft from your home. Light up entry points. Consider motion sensor lights in less frequented areas on your property.
3. Using inside lighting timers or home automation are great ways to bring life or perceived occupancy to your home when you are away.
4. Never hide spare keys near your door or in the glove box of your car.
5. Let at least one of your trusted neighbors know when you will be away from your home for an extended amount of time.
6. Make sure your house number is visible from the street.
7. Consider using alarm company signs and decals as a deterrent.

### Shared Housing (Home-sharing) #1 Know YOURSELF – “20 Questions”

- [Get Started](#)
- [Who We Are](#)



Print this out - then get started . . . .



**[2]Step 1: Before you start talking with others about**

**homesharing**, we suggest you take time to think about previous times when you've shared living space. Everyone has done this - with parents, roommates, children, other significant people. Pause and reflect on positive experiences.

- What were the ingredients that made them positive?
- Now, turning to negative experiences, reflect on those experiences that were negative.
- What went wrong and why were they negative?
- Finally, think about you and your current needs, and what kind of experience you'd like to have. There are many reasons to homeshare. You don't have to match up perfectly, but you'll be better able to find a good match if you know what you are looking for.

**Step 2: Answer the following 20 questions as honestly as you can.** This is for You! Be brutally honest with yourself and then with others. Take this step even if you're considering moving back with parents, in with friends, or thinking about having children or parents come into your home.

**Steps 3 – 11 come after you've completed these questions.**

# 20 Questions

**[3]THE QUESTIONS:**

**1) I think homesharing would allow me to (check all that apply)**

- Reduce my rent and utilities
- Have another adult in the house
- Prevent eviction
- Feel like a better parent
- Reduce expenses
- Keep my sanity
- Find companionship & support
- Stop worrying so much
- Form an extended family
- Live in a nicer neighborhood
- Get help with chores or tasks
- other?

**2) If I share a home I'm afraid that: (check all that apply)**

- I'll end up doing all the cooking since I'm a good cook
- I will discover the other person has only chrome & black furniture, while I have antiques



- I'll be exposed as being a slob
- They'll be slobs - or neatniks!
- I'll always feel like a visitor
- I'll never get to see my boyfriend/ girlfriend overnight again
- There'll be too much company
- I'll expect too much from the other person and be disappointed
- They'll expected too much of me
- I'll loose my autonomy
- I'll want to control the others
- I might have to move out ... and then what?

### 3) I could take steps to make sure the above things don't happen by ...

- Meeting with the other person/s at least 4 times & getting to know them in more than a superficial and social only way
- Visiting the other person's home to check it out there before deciding
- Having any kids meet any others to see if they like & are compatible with one another too
- Getting, then checking and interviewing several references carefully
- Talking honestly with the other person about my fears and my hopes
- Writing down expectations for TV, cleaning, timing, expenses, etc.
- Reviewing these worksheets with the other person
- Talking about things that make me angry and how I resolve disputes
- Setting up regular "house meetings" to discuss things before they're big

### 4) I would describe my interpersonal and/or parenting style as:

- Authoritarian: when I give a direction, I expect others to jump
- Authoritative: there's communication, but also decisions are made
- Libertarian: whatever happens is just fine - don't sweat the details
- Other:

5) A "**Service Exchange**" is another way to reduce housing costs. For example, Jane can afford \$500 a month in rent, but she and Jada found a place to rent together that would cost each \$650. Jane might make up the difference (\$150) in agreeing to provide that amount of services to Jada, who can afford \$800. (her \$650 + \$150)

I would be willing to consider providing or receiving as part of an exchange:

- house cleaning
- grocery shopping



errand running

music lessons

car maintenance

dog walking / care

transportation

other

I could provide or might need \_\_\_\_ (1-15) hours per week in services – what dollar value would we place on each hour? \_\_\_\_\_.

I could communicate my expectations on schedules, quality of services, flexibility, changes in needs by ...

writing down the exact nature of the issue

being specific in requesting changes or preferences

keeping track of actual time on a time sheet

saying “whatever...” or “whenever...”

### 6) I can make a new homesharing situation comfortable by:

letting others bring their things in to my space & discussing arrangements

treating them as I'd like to be treated

extending an assumption of goodwill

introducing them to my friends

including them in my family's activities at least once a month

letting them know they'd better do all the above for me

### 7) How might I handle the first time one of my things gets damaged?

I'll keep it all separate so it'll never happen (fairytale scenario)

I'll cry, pout, yell or scream

I'd expect to be paid for the damaged item or damage done

I'll ignore it. It won't happen again (another fairytale)

I'll damage something of theirs in return

I'll ask for a time to talk to find a mutually agreeable solution

I'll assume it was my fault, yet be angry

Other

### 8) What furniture and/ or appliances can I bring to the home? What might I have to find a place to store or sell?

### 9) If I have kids, how might each, and they collectively, react to sharing a home?

Adopting a “wait and see” attitude     Jumping in with both feet

Being needier than usual                       Getting competitive



Being difficult so they'll leave       Waiting to see if they can be trusted

**10) I (or those in my family) have special wants and needs. These are:**

Restrictions on diet       A room of their own  
 Allergies       Many hours of quiet  
 A yard or park nearby       Time to practice drums  
 Nearby public transit       Other

**11) I may feel uncomfortable sharing a house with someone who ...**

has different religious beliefs       has different politics  
 is on AFDC, food stamps, etc       is gay, lesbian, bisexual ...  
 has a prior criminal record       has another language than mine  
 is in recovery       is of a different ethnic group / race  
 is in a different economic group       is or has been "homeless"  
 owns guns       likes different music  
 Other       wants to be "like family"

**12) My communication preference and style could be described as being ...**

in person     'text, ' email, voice mail  
 casual       formal  
 extroverted (say it right away)       introverted (think it through first)  
 changes when I'm under pressure     other

**13) I think that I...**

would be excited about the opportunities that would be possible by living with people that I've listed above  
 would be open to living with some of the people I've listed above. It could be a good learning experience, even if challenging  
 would prefer not to take risks for myself or my family  
 other:

**14) What kind of behavior in adults makes you angry?**

pushy     controlling       uptight  
 too open-ended       crisis / drama lover     not caring  
 inflexible       nitpicky       neatnik



- \_inconsiderate
- \_drunkenness
- \_procrastination
- \_unwilling to talk
- \_makes too many assumptions
- \_sloppy
- \_stuffs feelings
- \_other

**15) What kind of behavior in children makes you angry?**

- \_overly aggressive
- \_neediness & dependency
- \_whining
- \_needing attention
- \_overactive
- \_too talkative
- \_wont' take "No" for an answer - always bargaining
- \_simply existing in "my" space

**16. What about pets is a problem for you?**

- \_overly aggressive
- \_needing attention
- \_overactive
- \_smelly
- \_noisy
- \_simply existing

**17) When I get angry, I:**

- \_immediately tell you what's on my mind and let it all hang out
- \_try to calm down and then say something
- \_try to calm down and then write a note
- \_withdraw and think about it before saying anything
- \_hit and break things
- \_simmer and then erupt when I can't take it any longer
- \_meditate
- \_other

**18) Describe your ideal homesharing situation:**

Number of bedrooms for your family =

Number of bathrooms for you/your family =

Willingness to share rooms? Y / N – under what conditions?

Willingness to share bathrooms? Y / N – under what conditions?

Maximum number of adults =

Maximum number of kids =

Gender of other adults? Of kids?

Presence of pets? Types?

**18) What are 3 to 5 words that best describe your ideal home atmosphere?** (i.e. - calm, fun, safe, active, warm, quiet, alive, ...)



**19) What are the best things you bring to a homeshare?**

**20) Write down any non-negotiable areas for you. (i.e. - smoking, drinking, restrictions, religion ...)**

\*\* Make notes here of anything else you want to be sure to include to remind yourself to be honest with yourself.

*NOW What?!*

**[4]OK - now that you've taken the PRELIMINARY SELF CHECK, you're ready to meet someone who is also looking to share housing!**

**Step 3: Get the word out that you are looking to share housing. Start with; your Personal Safety Net and you can use their connections too. Then add, Bulletin boards, Linked-In, Craig's List, Facebook, etc.**

**Step 4: Meet the first person you have been introduced to in some fashion to get the ball rolling. Keep it neutral, public & just adults. You might wish to use the "20 Questions" to have in mind and on hand for topics for consideration and possible discussion**

**Step 5: To keep this from being crisis-oriented, plan ahead to have at least 4 meetings before scheduling any move-in dates. You've now had one already. It's OK to have more than one person/family to interview.**

**Step 6: Meet a second time, both having completed "Know Yourself" and "Do We Fit?" - this meeting probably also in a public, neutral space. Bring your checklists when you next meet. Get each other's references, and check them out!**

**Step 7: Each of you can do a basic background check through the Washington State Police web site [www.WSP.WA.gov/crime/crimhist.htm](http://www.WSP.WA.gov/crime/crimhist.htm) [5]) for residents of Washington State.**

**Step 8: Meet at the place where one of you lives: talk about areas still not-yet-covered and questions still outstanding. Be curious. Ask questions.**

**Step 9: Meet where the other person lives - write down an agreement.**

- ~~Who is moving into where? What spaces?~~
- Who will do what?
- When does this start? How long do you envision it lasting? (we recommend a trial period, with renewal)
- If money is to be exchanged, who pays how much, to whom, in what fashion, when?
- If services are to be exchanged, what, by whom, who decides how well, etc.
- Cover all the things that are important, in writing.
  - For example: Vacations and responsibilities
  - Access to and time with internet/wifi – on line, etc.
  - Quiet / Noisy times
  - Cleaning public / private spaces / garbage / recycling / yard
  - Guests – numbers, warnings, times, who's welcome who's not
  - Cars
  - Courtesy and respect – what these mean, examples from each of you

**Step 10: The preceding questions have been intended to aid you in gathering information, having useful conversations, and moving you toward a making a good decision. However, any one set of questions can only get you started. Think carefully, ask yourself hard questions, confer and seek opinions from**





respected members of your own personal safety net.

**Step 11: Make your decision and perhaps move in, and begin a new chapter and may it be positive and good for all!**

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## Shared Housing (Home-sharing) #2 Compatibility Checklist



[6]How do you find a compatible person or family with whom to share housing? Carefully! And here are some good steps to help you do that. You want to get to know potential housemates as well as possible as quickly as possible, and with care.

**Fill this worksheet out before you meet with anyone, then bring it along when you meet anyone face-to-face – use it to keep yourself honest. Having your ideas in writing will help you focus on the important questions and the understandings you hope to arrive at by the end of your meeting. When meeting a second time use both this and “20 Questions” to move your discussions forward.**

*This worksheet will help you get to the business at hand, and will, at the least, give you lots to talk about.*

### **A) Personal & Family Traits:**

1. I'm used to a home being (check all that apply)

- a pig pen                       tidy                       messy
- cluttered but clean     "white glove" clean                       loud and lively
- quiet                       calm soft music or tv

2. I clean up after myself (or my kids/pets) (check all that apply)

- Immediately     once a week     seldom     only if reminded
- even if it's not mine                       if it's yours, I'll let it sit 'til it rots
- I'll teach whoever left the mess how to do it themselves next time



I'm oblivious unless I fall over it

other

3. I want to be able to smoke in my house  yes  no  only outside

4. I don't want any smoking anywhere near me  yes  doesn't matter

5. I'd like to share food in the house  yes  never  sometimes

6. Our / my diet is (circle one): vegetarian  omnivore  no pork  vegan  
fast food  no sugar  no wheat other (describe)

7. I /we eat:  a lot of desserts  some sweets  no sweets

deal with diabetes or special needs  a lot of garlic

8. Pets  are wonderful - any type, size, or shape

bring up issues around allergies - let's talk

are problematic, OK if small and quiet only

can't be in the house, with, possibly, the exception of goldfish

what would not be okay in terms of animal behavior or care?

9. Meals at home are:

the very best, daily  OK, occasionally

OK, but I like to eat alone  best with friends

sometimes OK to cook with others in the house

other

10. Alcohol in the house:

I drink some wine or beer occasionally

is a must.  cannot be tolerated  in moderation

is a problem, since I'm recovering from addiction

Illegal drugs in the house – discussion is needed

11. My behavior /personality changes when I drink alcohol  yes  no

When I take prescription / over the counter drugs  yes  no

12. I have had problems with alcohol or drugs in the past  yes  no

(describe, or be ready to talk about this)

13. Someone would describe our family's/my health as

normal  rarely sick  frequently ill  having ongoing problems



14. Mental health issues:

depression  anxiety disorders  non-existent  other

15. The most important social, political issues to me are:

How might it be for me if my housemate held equally strong and opposing positions?

16. Issues of religion and religious practices are:

important to me  don't matter to me  good for starting discussions

**B) ~~Schedules and Activities:~~**

Lots of scheduled activities

Home during the day

Lots of travel

Home weekends  home evenings

Some company  hate company  Lots of company

My style of living is:  hectic  busy  flexible  empty  unpredictable  undependable  
 relaxed

If there are children:  I have custody of them (sexes & ages)

there is shared custody  Life is focused on them

If there are pets:  they are small & confined (breed: \_\_\_\_\_)

well-behaved (or)  wild-crazy  As/more important as people

**C) Relationships:**

1. I have a boyfriend/girlfriend I like to have over \_\_\_\_\_ times a week

We usually have dinner, watch TV, talk

I like to have her/him spend the night  times a week/month

I'm not in a relationship right now but

I won't be in one, and can't live with someone who is

2. I invite the following people over occasionally or regularly:



3. Overnight guests:

OK with advance notice  Not in my space  OK if occasional  not in the bathroom when I'm around

What defines that they've moved in?

What has to be agreed upon ahead of time for this to occur?

4. I have left a domestic violence situation.  yes  no How long ago? \_\_\_\_\_

I feel that there is still danger  yes  no

5. I presently have a restraining or protection order against someone  yes  no

6. I'd like a housemate to be: (check all that apply)

1.  just a reliable person with whom to share housing
2.  someone who understands & can share responsibilities
3.  an extended part of the family
4.  my friend (and one to my kids, if I have them)

7. I think the relationship can change over time:  yes  no

8. I hope that this arrangement will last \_\_\_\_\_ (how long?)

9. I think that this is:

my next adventure  a last resort  interesting to explore

### D) Communication: Answer yes or no to each

1. If there's conflict:

I like to talk about things right away, staying away from blame

I take some time to figure out how I feel

I try to fix things on my own

I talk with others, outside of the situation, first

I want to move out and on

I want to figure out who's at fault

I shut down

Other

2. I would like to:

have regular house meetings

think all who are living in the house should participate

think "agreeing to disagree" can be viable

want to be kept informed about what's going on in others' lives

to listen to complaints without getting defensive, even if they're not presented tactfully



3. I hate being asked "is something wrong?" \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no. If there is, I'll say so \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no
4. I hate the feeling that something is amiss, but the other person isn't saying anything and even denies it \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no
5. If I ask, but am told nothing's wrong, I put it out of my mind \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no
6. I like to write notes \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no
7. What really pushes my buttons is:
8. It's frustrating when an adult:
9. It's frustrating when a child:
10. It's frustrating when a pet:

### E) Other:

1. \_\_\_I have a current drivers license \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no
2. \_\_\_I have a vehicle. Type? \_\_\_\_\_ I will / won't share
3. \_\_\_I have current insurance \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no
4. The disadvantages of homesharing for me are:
5. The advantages of homesharing for me are:
6. If I own the home, I will try to make the other feel welcome by:
7. If I am moving into someone's home, I will make myself feel at home and help them feel comfortable by:
8. When things get broken, how will I respond when it's my favorite \_\_\_?
9. If I want to get/receive service instead of paying, what could I receive? Offer
10. I would want to end the arrangement if:
11. How might prejudice limit the people I'm willing to consider?

### The ideal homeshare would be:

## Resources:

### [CONTACT US](#)

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