

ROOMMATE REMINDERS

When I moved away from home, I never knew how much I could learn to love new roommates. But those relationships have also helped me prepare for life in general. While extenuating circumstances may occur, principles for happy living can apply to most roommate relationships.

- **Laugh.** Realize that you all have differences and learn to find humor in each other's quirks. Some of my roommates have been night owls; others were early birds. I've lived with all kinds of music from the Beatles to opera.

Regardless of our backgrounds, we can all laugh together and forgive one another instead of taking things too seriously.

- **Be considerate.** Follow through on roommate commitments, and understand when someone is feeling overwhelmed. Even a simple thing like being quiet for a light sleeper can show you care.

- **Communicate.** Make time to discuss apartment concerns together. Acknowledge the good others have done and listen receptively to everyone's suggestions. Communicate regularly so concerns don't fester.

- **Let go.** Some things don't matter, and no one roommate is the boss. Consider carefully how you can compromise in certain areas without compromising your personal standards.

- **Love them anyway.** You may not end up as best friends, but you can still try to see your roommates as the Savior does. Serve them as He would. Saying nice things or making someone's bed can really work wonders. Simply stated, treat others as you would like to be treated.

Katie Westenskow, Oregon

THEY CAN SEE WHAT TO DO

In our family we believe everyone is responsible to help our household run smoothly. Before our daughters could read, I made a simple "to-do" poster using pictures instead of instructions. I took pictures of the girls doing household chores such as making their beds, putting

away laundry, and setting

the table. I laminated

the pictures; you

could also use

contact paper or

cover them with

clear tape. Then I

wrote "To Do" on the

left side of a poster

board and "Done"

on the right side

before laminating

it as well. I adhered

Velcro to the backs of

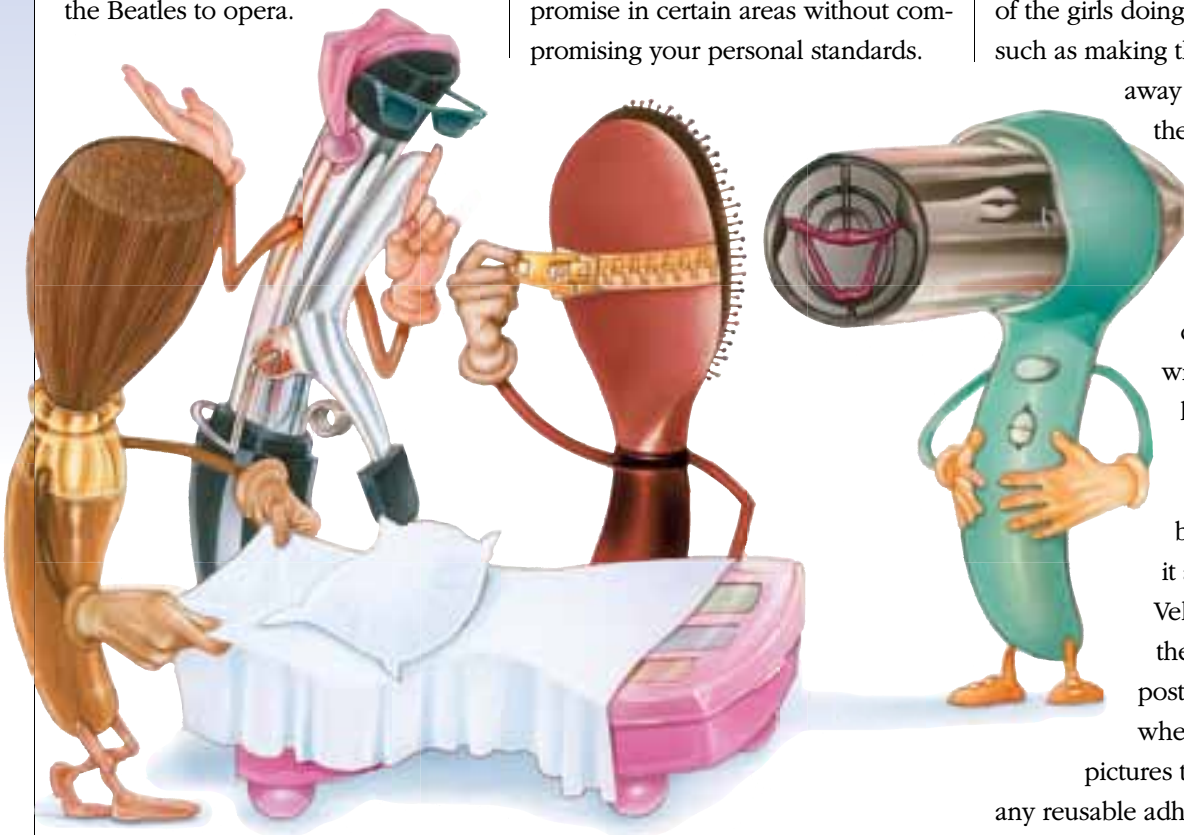
the pictures and on the

poster in two columns

where I wanted the

pictures to be. Of course,

any reusable adhesive would work



well too. Then the girls could move each picture to the right side as they completed the responsibility. Though they're both good readers now, our daughters still love to use their own personalized to-do charts.

Jenny Spencer, California

BOOKMARKS FOR SCRIPTURE STUDY

Enhance your scripture study with a bookmark? Of course you can. Seminary students do it every year, so why not use this resource at home or in Sunday classes? Bookmarks for each of the standard works are available online at www.ldsces.org. They include a chronology of events as well as a scripture mastery list.

On this Web site, you can also learn about the Church's seminary program. Additional study aids, such as reading charts, manuals, and study guides, are available. You can even download MP3 files to create your own CDs, to store on portable devices, or to save on your computer hard drive.

Studying the chronological time lines has provided me with a better base understanding of scriptural events. Because the bookmarks have been so helpful to me, I often share them with other members or when I teach a lesson.

Michelle Erik Lehnardt, Utah



Military Mail

My husband, Paul, is gone for months at a time serving in the military, so we often have to work harder to keep our family connected. At least once a month I send a package, and we often send letters, sometimes daily, in addition to regular e-mails. We like to liven up our correspondence, as you'll see from some of our favorite ideas.

• **Audiovisual recordings.** Sometimes I record our daughters doing a play, dance, or talent show. Other times I ask Paul to record his thoughts on a particular subject. Then I play his comments at the end of our family home evening lesson or activity. I have to plan ahead for this because, in our case, mail delivery takes at least three weeks.

• **Pictures.**

Every other month we take creative pictures of us. Once we used a photo booth at a store to machine-draw our

pictures. We also posed for a western-style photo. I take lots of everyday photos, which we organize in a scrapbook and send to Paul. Sometimes we put little comment stickers on the pictures or write about silly things we were thinking when the pictures were taken.

• **Date coupons.**

Before Paul leaves for duty, he likes to take our daughters out separately for a special date night of their choice. After he left, I implemented a similar idea and gave the girls 12 coupons each (written on small note cards), one for each month their dad would be gone. Each coupon was good for a date night with Mom. After we were done with an activity, each child would write about our date on the back of the coupon and send it to Dad. He loved receiving the cards and

knew we were doing well while he was away.

• **Parties.** For special occasions it's fun to prepare a "party package." Before Paul's birthday we had a party on his behalf with family and friends. We filmed the whole thing, talking to the camera as if we were talking to him. We sang a birthday song, and the tape ended when we told him to open his presents. Then we put the video, decorations from the party, treats, and presents in the package, which he received by his actual birthday.

All of these suggestions require a little planning, but I've found it's good to keep busy while my husband is away. Though distance separates us, Paul does what he can to keep in touch, I do what I can, and Heavenly Father does the rest.

Jennifer Hansen, Washington

