

Apartment Living

(8 Tips to Being a Good Neighbour)



- Be friendly towards others
- Be soft-spoken
- Offer assistance
- Be considerate of the noise levels
- Choose small pets
- Have Wheelie-Bin etiquette
- Be cautious when having guests
- Resolve disputes quickly

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1. Be friendly towards others.

- You don't necessarily need to know your neighbours, but a simple hello or greeting goes a long way. In smaller complexes, it's easier to know names, faces, and parking stalls. Creating friendly relationships also makes it easier to interact in the future if anyone has questions or concerns.

2. Be soft-spoken when entering and exiting.

- It may be normal to walk from the parking lot to your front door and vice versa, but you'll need to consider how loud a person is.
- Avoid stomping on stairwells, especially when leaving before sunrise or coming back late at night. Try not to walk around apartment with wood floors in your shoes. Not all tenants work a "9-5" job and may be trying to sleep during "regular" daylight hours. Keep the noise at whisper-level in hallways.
- Loud laughter and conversations while people are relaxing or sleeping are a nuisance.
- Close doors behind you with ease. Main building and apartment doors can create a lot of noise. Don't let them slam or shut by themselves.

3. Offer any positive assistance to your neighbors

- If you see them in the parking lot with groceries, ask them if they need help carrying them inside the building or hold any doors open.

- If you see their mail piling up or you don't notice their lights on at night for some time, knock on their door and see if they're doing okay.

4. Be considerate of the noise level inside the apartment

- This is one of the most common complaints reported to managers. More noise etiquette is needed if you live above another person.
- Soft footwear makes less noise than heavy duty items such as boots or high heels. It's not necessary to thump your feet around the kitchen in the middle of the night. If a neighbor requests for you to keep the noise level down, try to negotiate on a solution.
- Try to vacuum on the weekends or when you know people are at work. Noise and vibrations goes through floorboards and can be an annoyance.
- Practice "quiet time" rules with children. Allow them to jump and run around during the day, but instruct them that they need to stop doing so when the sun goes down. Spend quality time outside, such as in a small community playground
- Turn the volume down on electronics, such as gaming equipment, music players and televisions. For wall-to-wall neighbours, you may want to move them away from those specific walls. Set a specific time to stop playing video games at a loud volume.

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5. Choose small pets for a pet-friendly apartment.

Cats and small dogs hardly make noise while walking on floors and they are less likely to threaten other neighbors. Always keep any four-legged animal on a leash while walking outside of your apartment and bring a plastic bag with you at all times. Inform your neighbors about a new pet if you're uncertain about their feelings.

6. Have wheelie bin etiquette.

- Wheelie bins may be located around complexes for the ease of tenants.
- Make a note of what day of the week garbage trucks come around the area. If you're moving in with a lot of boxes, don't solely depend on one place for your garbage. Check other city places, such as waste/recycling facilities, or spread out your items throughout a few weeks.
- An empty wheelie bin doesn't necessarily mean that it is "free game"; allow other residents to throw their garbage out. Always fold up or smash boxes and other compact items.
- Be sure to securely fasten your garbage bags before hauling in bins. Open garbage bags not only spreads rubbish to the ground when a truck flings it back, but also attracts wild animals, such as rats.

7. Be very cautious when having guests over.

- Reckless behavior or any disputes between the guest(s) and another tenant is your responsibility.
- In such cases, it is a good idea to give your neighbors a heads-up about any potential noise, etc.
- If holding a party, let those neighbors likely to be inconvenienced know about the occasion. If you think the neighbors will enjoy themselves too, consider inviting them.
- Avoid having big parties or loud get-togethers on weeknights. Turn down party music by 10:00pm.

8. Resolve disputes quickly

- Sometimes it is just not possible to avoid small disputes and disagreements with your neighbours.
- When a situation arises, it is important to act promptly. This will lessen the chance of a further similar incident occurring.
- Here are some helpful tips when you need to approach your neighbours:
- Do not approach your neighbour unless you are calm
- Address the issue as quickly as you can, so the problem is not repeated/worsen
- Plan what you are going to say to the person and how you plan to say it

- Make sure you are polite and respectful (remember, it's the behaviour you have a problem with, not the person)
- Simply and calmly explain to the person how the incident affected you/your family
- Try not to deal with older incidents, only talk about the most recent situation that affected you
- Do your best to try and understand your neighbour's point of view
- Do your best to reach a compromise, one that will be acceptable to all your neighbours
- Do not make threats against your neighbour, including not making any threats to "take further action"

We find very often that once a tenant has directly told their neighbour about how an incident affected them, the neighbour will make the changes required themselves.