

# Before you start looking

- How much rent can you afford?
- Do you want a place by yourself, or do you want to live with roommates?
- How far from campus do you want to live?
- What kind of transportation will you need/have?
- What kind of life-style do you want? A quiet and studious atmosphere, a very social home life, or a bit of both?
- What kind of physical setting is appealing to you?

Consider carefully the pros and cons of the following factors:

## Why have a roommate?

**ECONOMY** Most Cal Poly students are on a budget, sharing a room can save money.

**COMPANIONSHIP** Having someone to share your ups and downs with and to accompany you to a movie or dinner can be a great asset.

**SAFETY** Be sure to consider issues of safety when deciding whether or not to share an apartment or house. A roommate's assistance can be invaluable during an emergency or illness.

**CONVENIENCE** Housework is not quite so bad when the responsibility is shared.

## Why live alone?

**PRIVACY** One of the most common reasons for living alone is privacy. Living alone allows you the freedom to entertain or spend time alone.

**CONVENIENCE** If you live alone, you pay the rent and utilities. No one will eat your last piece of chocolate cake or insist on keeping the windows open or shut.

**SPACE** Living alone allows you to live in a very small living space without feeling too crowded.

## Finding roommates

**FRIENDS** Advantages: You are probably familiar with many of each other's quirks so there are fewer surprises, and you do not need to search for a roommate. Disadvantages: It can be a quick way to end a good relationship. Weigh all the pros and cons before you decide to live with your best buddy.

**ON-CAMPUS ACQUAINTANCES** Many of your fellow residents will be moving out of the residence halls or apartments and into off-campus housing next year.

**PEOPLE IN YOUR MAJOR** If you love Shakespearean Sonnets, chances are you are not looking for a roommate who sleeps with a calculator. See what your classmates plans are for housing.

## Selecting a roommate

Interview a potential roommate and discuss your expectations. Be sure to meet in person; a phone conversation won't do for something this important. Discuss how each of you feels about different topics, and if you aren't clear about something, ask. Better to find out before rather than after you sign a lease. Be tactful, but more important, be honest!

- **Who are you?** Discuss your background, your family, and activities.
- **Likes & Dislikes:** Regarding smoking, drugs, drinking, pets, music, etc.
- **Overnight Guests:** Boyfriend, girlfriend, family, friends. (This is a biggie!)
- **Study Habits:** When, where, and how often?
- **Kitchen Arrangements:** Will you share food costs? What are your nutritional needs? Who will do the dishes? How often? Does three-month-old spaghetti in the refrigerator make you crazy?
- **Housekeeping Habits:** How neat and tidy are you really?
- **Sleeping Needs:** What hours? How much? Windows open or closed?