THE TWENTYSOMETHING HANDBOOK

TOP TIPS FOR YOUR TWENTIES

Condensed from *The Twentysomething Handbook*

LEARN TO LOVE WHERE YOU LIVE

If you're in a new city and not loving it quite yet, try getting to know it a little better. In *The Twentysomething Handbook* Abby recommends, *"To make a new city feel like home, I started with thinking of my favorite things and places back home and tried to find a few stand-ins for when I was homesick. Not replacements. Stand-ins. I found my new local favorite pizza place. I found the library. I joined the gym. I started a routine. But I think it's even more important to find what makes your new place unique and gives you reasons to embrace it. I found a new hobby that didn't really work at home but fit perfectly in my new life. And, of course, finding new friends made all the difference."*

If you're like 52% of your twentysomething peers, you're currently living with your parents. Living with the people you grew up with doesn't have to keep you from being a grown up. Enjoy the benefits and comforts of home but keep building your skills for independence. Money management, developing new friendships, pursuing your own interests, and communicating like an adult (even if they try to treat you like a kid) are all great ways to keep on adulting now matter who you're living with.

JOIN UP! FIND FRIENDS AND CREATE YOUR CIRCLE

Finding friendships that fit your life now can be one of the biggest challenges of twentysomething life. Whether you're in a new city or in the place you've always been, find things you like to do and the friends will follow. Service groups, sports teams, activist organizations, churches, and Meetup groups all are good ways to meet new likeminded people that could turn into great friends. It might not happen right away, but it will happen.

REMEMBER THE ROOMMATE RULE: "NO MINDREADERS"

You can't read your roommate's mind, and they can't read yours – if something is bothering you, you owe it to yourself and the people you live with to let them know calmly and kindly. Effective communication is a key to living happily with roommates! *"Say something straight out. Use words like 'I feel like,' or 'that makes me feel like.' They can't argue with your feelings. Don't write snarky remarks on post-its and leave them on the fridge!"* –Matt

TAKE CARE OF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

There are lots of little things you can do to take good care of your mental health-sleep, movement, eating consistently, and making sure you've got people to talk through your stressors with. If you need help finding a therapist, ask your friends if they have recommendations. If your work has an Employee Assistance Program, see what options they can provide – you may have free sessions available! *"Knowing how to take care of your mental health is important. Part of that is being able to recognize when you need expert help."* –Greg

GET OVER YOUR FEAR OF FINANCES

Budget-Getting a handle on your money, especially if you have a lot of debt, can get discouraging. Get an app to help you track where your money is going so you can hang onto more of it for the things you really need or want. A couple of our favorites are Mint and You Need a Budget. Set up a recurring transfer to a savings account with every paycheck. Even a tiny amount will add up over time. Increase the dollar amount as you're able.

Build your credit-Find a card with a low-interest rate, no annual fee, and a great rewards program. Don't spend more money than you have unless it's an absolute emergency. Pay off the entire balance in full every single month. Never get a cash advance.

SWAP, SELL, AND SAVE

Make a list of things you need. Prioritize based on urgency. Mark the things you can buy secondhand! Check out Facebook Marketplace and other swap and sell sites for big purchases like furniture. You can save hundreds of dollars (or more!)

THE KEEP-IT-SIMPLE KITCHEN

Fight the urge to purchase every tool and gadget for your first kitchen. The list of tools you actually need to do some decent cooking is pretty short and simple. Here's our list of Twentysomething Handbook "Must Haves": Large pot, nonstick skillet, cutting board, two good sharp knives, hand mixer, can opener, vegetable peeler, set of measuring cups and spoons, wire whisk, dish towels, pot holders, baking sheet, wooden spoons, silicon spatula, mixing bowl, colander, and glass casserole dish. *"What I was most grateful for was my first slow cooker. They're dead simple to use, and you can make enough food for a week with very little effort."* –Paul

CLEAN UP ON THE CHEAP

Like kitchen tools, cleaning supplies don't need to be expensive or sophisticated. Here's our basic checklist to keep your space sparkling: Broom and dustpan, vacuum, mop and bucket, toilet brush, sponges and scrubby pads, bleach, vinegar, baking soda, rubbing alcohol, dish soap, all purpose spray cleaner, and paper towels.