Questions to Ask a Potential Roommate:

- **Do you have references?**
  - You would never take a job applicant's word for how great they are, nor should you with a potential roommate.
  - Ask for a testament from a former roommate or personal references like friends and work colleagues (two or three should be plenty).
  - Ask for their reference phone numbers and emails—people tend to be more candid on the phone, but emailing is a good backup if your calls go unanswered.

- **What are challenges you've faced in past living situations?**
  - Bug or rodent infestations, bad landlords, repairs, and so on: how they handled these challenges will provide you insight on whether you're dealing with someone who can get things done.

- **Are you still friends with your old roommates?**
  - If your potential roommate can tell disaster story after disaster story, pay heed to the red flag.
  - If the person is somewhat hesitant to discuss their past roommate situation you may consider this yet another red flag.

- **How long do you plan to stay?**
  - If you're looking for a long-term, secure situation, you will want to weed out those who know they're only looking to rent for a short period of time.

- **How long is your average school/work day?**
  - You may want to know if your potential roommate has a similar schedule or a schedule that leaves the two of you in the space at opposite times. Both situations present pros and cons. For example: Similar schedules allows for carpooling to campus, while opposite schedules ensure that the bathroom will be open for use when needed.

- **What time do you go to bed?**
  - Try to find out as much as you can about this person's late-night habits and how they can affect yours.

- **Do you have any pets?**
  - Each landlord has a different policy on pets. Make sure you know if your potential roommate plans to bring a pet with them.

- **Do you expect a lot of visitors?**
  - If guests plan to stay in your shared apartment, you will want to establish rules as to how long they can stay (maybe no more than a weekend or a couple of days). If they seem to have a packed schedule of out-of-town guests already, you may want to steer clear.
What do you do on the weekends?
- A good one to determine if you're into similar things.
- It's not an automatic no if you're into different stuff, but this question will get your potential roommate talking--and may alert you to any personal deal-breakers.

How often do you clean?
- Cleanliness--or lack thereof--is one of the biggest sources of conflict for roommates.
- Ask them which chores they like and which ones they don't like. And tell them your habits, too.

Do you smoke?
- Living with a smoker is a deal-breaker for some, and an essential question to ask if your lease forbids smoking indoors.
- If they say they are occasional smokers, ask how occasionally.

How often do you drink at home?
- Make sure your roommate is on the same page.
- If you typically avoid alcohol but your roommate wouldn't mind a Tuesday hangover, you may not mesh.

What's your romantic situation?
- If you've only met one half of the couple, you're basically signing on for a third roommate you've never met (which we know is a bad idea). But if they say they're in a serious relationship, you may expect lots of sleepovers.

Can you put down a deposit?
- Like any landlord in this town, you need to protect yourself in case your roommate skips out on the rent.

Anything else I should know?
- Maybe they forgot to mention new activities they've picked up or whether they have any allergies.
- Let the interviewee take the lead, and let their personality come through.