

6 ways to be a good houseguest



Each year, millions of Americans travel and visit friends and family members for the holidays. And with so many overnight visits this time of year, being a courteous houseguest is a skill that may come in handy. If you're staying with a friend or family member, remember these tips:

- **Make plans well in advance.** Don't expect family members to drop everything at the last minute for your visit. Give them several weeks notice of when you will be coming (if possible) and don't arrive earlier or stay longer than planned.
- **Consider a small gift.** A bouquet of fresh flowers, a book, or an attractive fruit bowl are good host gifts to consider.
- **Pay attention to house rules.** Are there shoes by the door? Then you should take yours off when you enter.
- **Offer to pitch in.** Ask if you can pick up some groceries at the store, or offer to pay for meals when going out.
- **Clean up after yourself.** Don't expect the host to do it all. Help clear the table after meals and wash dishes. The day of your departure, strip the sheets off the bed and offer to throw them in the laundry. Wipe off the bathroom counters after you use them. Put things back where you found them.
- **Send a note afterward.** When you return home, send a short but sincere thank you note to your host.

Source: *The Emily Post Institute*