

How Do People Avoid Picking a Terrible Flatmate?

Being able to afford to rent your own place is something that most people would like to do. However, skyrocketing rent prices in London and around the UK mean that this is not possible for most people. In 2011, a national census found that 1,850,137 households were made up of either more than one person or more than one family. So what is the reality for today's house- and flat-sharers? How easy is it to find a decent flatmate?

Some people will stick with what they already know and share with people who are their friends. Others will look elsewhere to find a flatmate by placing an advertisement online or in a shop window. Some others may even organize a 'speedflatmating' event - a bit like speed dating but instead of trying to find a partner, many people are interviewed to decide if they are the right person to move in.

Finding a good person to fill a vacant room can be difficult. How do you know if a stranger can be trusted? Can they pay the rent? Will they nick your food?

Will they cross the line by doing something unacceptable? Imagine if your new flatmate showed up without any socks. You might feel charitable and lend them a few pairs, which would be a kind thing to do. But what if you found out later that they had gone into your room and taken more socks? What if that person was actually one of your friends? That would probably be going a step too far for most people.

Perhaps it is better to live with strangers than it is to live with friends. You might avoid falling into a false sense of security and avoid odd clothes-sharing or food-related incidents. Some people would say that living with random strangers is ok when you are younger – but not so easy to do when you get older.

The amount of house sharing is rising, for both younger and older people. And this means that the dilemma of choosing who to live with is not going away any time soon.(355 字)