



Ten Ways To Get Along With Parents

Living with parents is pretty much impossible for lots of teens. But if you've got to live together and if you are going to let them pay the bills and make your meals, you might as well make the most of it, and learn to enjoy each of them. And maybe even learn some stuff as you go along. Here are some ideas on how to treat your parents when you are a "nearly adult type person" —

1. Treat them **as you want them to treat you**. Even though it sounds basic, if you want to be treated with respect and fairness, then you must treat your parents the same way.
2. Remember that **parents are people**, too. This means they are human, make mistakes, lose their temper, and say things they don't necessarily mean. They usually want to do their best, especially in raising their children.
3. **Handle the ordinary**, and the special will take care of itself. If you handle your normal curfews, chores, and school responsibilities, you will have a better chance to have the rules relaxed when something special comes up.
4. It's OK to **call timeout** during family arguments. If you, or your parents, get emotional during arguments — saying things you don't mean — agree to timeout, and come back to the issue when everyone has cooled down. Just be sure that you eventually do resolve the issue.
5. **Talk** to your parents. Communication begins with a willingness to just talk. Make it a point to have real conversation every day about the things going on in your life and theirs.
6. **Plan escape routes** with your parents about possible awful events. Everyone gets into difficult situations, whether on a date, at a party, or out with friends. Think about your options, before the event occurs.
7. **Agree on the basics**. Talk with your parents about curfews, school expectations, participation in church, household chores, driving with friends, and other issues, rather than relying on mind-reading. Perhaps you can renegotiate the basics on your birthday, so as you get older you gain more rights and responsibilities.
8. Tell your parents that **they are doing a good job** when you think they are. Parents get little training on how to be good parents. It's more like "trial and error" — and you are the consequences of their errors! You'll surprise them by telling them they are doing OK.
9. **Try to become friends** (at least respected associates) with your parents. As you get older, you will no doubt be their friends. So, begin being friendly, talking with them, and sharing some time together.
10. Learn how to say, "**I'm sorry.**" It's a sign of maturity to admit that you are wrong about something, or at fault. This will go a long way toward good relationships with your parents. It will also go a long way with them thinking that you have grown up!