

Your Possible Home

Building Meaningful, Enduring Family Bonds in the Age of AI


www.YourPossibleHome.com

Guidelines for Guests, Exchange Students, and Extended Family

Welcoming people into your home without losing your culture

Most families don't realize they need this resource until they're three weeks into hosting someone and the friction has started. The exchange student leaves the lights on every night. The visiting cousin teases your kids in a way that's not okay in your house. Your sister-in-law's kids are watching things your kids aren't allowed to watch. The friend's family stays an extra week and you don't know how to ask them to leave.

These aren't rare situations. They're normal. And they're easier to handle when you've thought through what your home is like before someone steps into it.

This isn't a list of rules to hand a guest at the door. That would be awkward, and frankly weird. This is a family-facing document that helps *you* think clearly about your culture so you can communicate it warmly when the time comes.

Section 1: What our home is like

Spend ten minutes filling this out before your next guest arrives. It will make every conversation that follows easier.

The pace of our home:

(Fast or slow? Loud or quiet? Early risers or night owls? Lots of activity or lots of stillness?)

The rhythm of our days:

(Mealtimes, bedtimes, family meetings, screen-free hours, prayer or scripture time, anything that's a non-negotiable rhythm.)

Your Possible Home

Building Meaningful, Enduring Family Bonds in the Age of AI



www.YourPossibleHome.com

The energy we protect:

(What restores your family? What drains it?)

The way we treat each other:

(Tone, language, how disagreements are handled, how affection is shown.)

What's important to us about how kids are spoken to:

(Especially for guests who are loose with teasing, criticism, or commentary about appearance.)

What we don't do in our home:

(Be specific. Yelling, swearing, certain content, certain conversations, etc.)

Your Possible Home

Building Meaningful, Enduring Family Bonds in the Age of AI



www.YourPossibleHome.com

Section 2: Welcome to our home

A short, warm document you can share with a guest who's staying more than a few days. Adapt the language for your family. The goal is welcome, not warning.

Sample welcome note:

We're so glad you're here. A few things to know about our home so you feel oriented.

Our family rhythm. We tend to be up by [time] and in bed by [time]. Dinner is usually around [time] and we eat together. On Sundays, [your tradition].

Spaces. The [room] is yours while you're here. The [common spaces] are shared. Please make yourself at home.

Food. Help yourself to anything in the kitchen. If we have something we're saving, we'll let you know.

Quiet hours. We try to keep things calm after [time] so the younger kids can sleep.

How we live. Our family has a pretty simple rhythm and we try to keep things calm and kind. If anything ever feels unclear, just ask. We're easy.

We're so happy you're here.

A note like this on the bedside table or shared digitally before arrival removes 80 percent of the awkward moments before they happen. Most guests genuinely want to know how to fit in. They just don't want to ask.

Your Possible Home

Building Meaningful, Enduring Family Bonds in the Age of AI


www.YourPossibleHome.com

Section 3: For longer stays (exchange students, extended family, summer guests)

When someone is going to be in your home for weeks or months, a longer conversation is worth the time. A few topics to cover:

Daily rhythm:

- Wake-up and bedtimes
- Mealtimes and shared meals
- School or work schedules
- Family meetings or gatherings they're invited to
- Days off and how the family unwinds

Shared spaces and personal spaces:

- Where things go
- What's shared and what isn't
- How we handle laundry, dishes, and chores
- Quiet hours

Communication:

- How to ask for what they need
- How to let us know if they're going to be late or away
- How to bring up something that isn't working

Money and resources:

- Who pays for what (food, outings, transportation)
- How to handle requests for things outside the budget

Your Possible Home

Building Meaningful, Enduring Family Bonds in the Age of AI


www.YourPossibleHome.com

Cultural and family values:

- Whatever matters most for your family (faith practices, content limits, conversational norms, etc.)
- Done as an invitation, not a requirement

Section 4: Boundaries without awkwardness

The phrases below are for the moment when something isn't working and you have to say so. The principle is simple: say it kindly, say it early, and say it directly.

For small course corrections:

"In our house, we tend to [whatever]. Hope that's okay."

"We try to keep [thing] for [reason]. Would you mind [adjustment]?"

"That's something we don't do here. No big deal, just wanted you to know."

For something bigger:

"I want to bring something up before it becomes a thing. [Specific behavior] isn't really how we do things in our home, and I'd love to figure out together how to handle it while you're here."

For something that's affecting your kids:

"I noticed [behavior] earlier with [child]. In our family, we try to [alternative]. Could we adjust how that goes?"

Your Possible Home

Building Meaningful, Enduring Family Bonds in the Age of AI


www.YourPossibleHome.com

For visits that need to end:

"It's been so good having you. We're going to need our space back starting [date]. We can help you figure out next steps if it's useful."

Section 5: For visits with extended family

Extended family is its own category. The history is longer, the dynamics are deeper, and the script that works for an exchange student doesn't always work for your mother-in-law.

A few principles that hold:

Decide together as parents what the standards are. Disagreement between you and your spouse on what's okay is the fastest way for guests to drive a wedge.

Lead with values, not rules. *"In our family, we try to speak gently to the kids"* lands differently than *"Don't snap at them."*

Pick your battles. Not every visit is the moment to renegotiate every dynamic. Pick one or two things that matter most.

Repair afterward, every time. If something happened that you didn't address well, talk about it after the visit. With each other, then with the family member if needed.

Some visits need to end. That's allowed. A short, kind, clear conversation is better than a long, vague, suffering one.

One small reframe

Boundaries with people you love aren't a sign of distance. They're a sign of care. The clearer you are about how your home runs, the more easily people can fit into it. The opposite (vague hosting, unspoken rules, friction that piles up silently) is what damages relationships.

Welcoming someone fully into your home means giving them enough information to thrive there. That's not coldness. That's hospitality.

Your Possible Home

Building Meaningful, Enduring Family Bonds in the Age of AI

 www.YourPossibleHome.com