

Guidelines for Visitors to Cohousing Communities

We cohousers like living close together. However, we also value our privacy; many members of the communities we visit may feel a bit introverted when confronted with a tour group. Also, when you walk through our communities it is not unlike walking across your neighbor's backyard or over their front porch. So please keep these simple guidelines in mind when visiting.

1. Please don't peer into folks' windows— or expect them to stop what they're doing to greet you.
2. A number of cohousers will undoubtedly walk by and say hello as you pass. Don't be offended if some cohouser that you stop to chat with does not have time for long talk. Sometimes cohousers are in a hurry. Save most of your questions for the community host or your tour leader.
3. Please don't take pictures of anyone unless they've already struck up a conversation with you and you have asked them if you may take their picture. And please don't smoke or leave trash anywhere in the communities.
4. Please stay with other members of your group or subgroup; don't amble around the community on your own.
5. Be prepared to remove your shoes when entering individual homes.
6. Please keep any unflattering opinions to yourself until you leave the site. If there is something you'd do differently in your dream community—you know, the one where you get the best house at a huge discount and you love to pieces everyone in the community—wait until we get back on the bus where you can tell us all about it.
7. The residents who show you around Cohousing Association National Tours today are doing so on their own time and out of the goodness of their hearts. Remember to thank them—it means a lot to them!
8. Listen and respond to your guide's directions, and call to return to the bus - Promptly.
9. Please wear your nametag all day, for the benefit of your tour leaders, community hosts, the cohousers you meet along the way, the bus driver and the other tour participants.
10. In spite of this long list of rules - Have fun! Don't hesitate to sit in a different seat each time you get back on the bus, or not. And if or when in doubt, smile.
11. Don't let anything you see or hear today discourage you from going out and starting your own group. Take our word for it: cohousing works!
12. Please take a moment to acknowledge our hosts and guides.