

**The anatomy of a solid relationship agreement:**

- What you are going to get or do in the agreement
- What the other person/people will do or get in the agreement
- What happens if someone can't/doesn't do the things they agreed to
- How the agreement ends or changes:
  - When the agreement is done (event or milestone)
  - How long the agreement lasts (time frame)
  - When the agreement should be revisited next, and how often it should be revisited after that (What's more polyam than Google Calendaring when your next check-in?)

**Tips on what not to include:**

- If you're writing an agreement on a subject that would usually include a long legal contract or if you are dealing with a business, keep your agreement simple. Example: If you are selling a car or lending money, don't charge interest or try to repossess anything unless you have a legal contract reviewed by a lawyer. The laws for how to do these things are complicated; you could get in trouble if you do it wrong.
- Avoid agreements where you promise what you will think or feel (like declaring not to fall in love with other people); this won't hold up in court and generally speaking is something you can't control.
- Avoid agreements where you promise to "never" or "always" do something. Human beings are imperfect and make mistakes and it is better to acknowledge that than to agree to do the impossible.
- Don't make written agreements to do anything illegal.

**Start with this basic template:**

I \_\_\_\_\_ agree to \_\_\_\_\_. You,  
\_\_\_\_\_ agree to \_\_\_\_\_.

This agreement lasts from today \_\_\_\_\_ until \_\_\_\_\_.

If I don't \_\_\_\_\_, then \_\_\_\_\_; If you don't  
\_\_\_\_\_ then \_\_\_\_\_

If one of us wants to cancel the agreement before the time is up, we will give the other person  
\_\_\_\_\_ notice.

**Examples:**

Please note: your versions can be lighter or much more detailed. These are simply samples.

**1. Opening up a relationship**

We, Meg Monahan and Catherine Roberts, agree to open up our marriage to allow for us to date other people. We agree to maintain our own separate bedrooms in our shared house.

Since this is new territory for us, we agree to keep our respective play partners separate. If either Meg or Catherine wish to propose playing together with a new partner, we agree to bring that conversation up when we are 1:1 — not in front of other people.

We agree to meet every Sunday morning to check in with each other to see if each of us are getting our needs met and to discuss how we are feeling or what we would like to see change in our relationship. Meg agrees to cook and Catherine agrees to clean up.

This agreement lasts from today, August, 23, 2021-December, 31, 2021. If one of us wants to cancel the agreement before the time is up, we will give the other person at least 7 days' notice. At the 12/31 check-in, if we decide to continue this agreement, we will set the next check-in date then.

**2. Living together, splitting finances & setting relationship boundaries**

I, Sarah Cooper, agree to live with you, Steve Jones, splitting the rent 70% to 30%, respectively because I use 40% of our home exclusively for my business. We agree to live together and split other living costs such as subscriptions and groceries equally: 50/50. We agree to maintain separate bank accounts. If I no longer use our space for my business then I will offer you one month of notice, after which we agree to split the rent 50/50.

We agree to an open relationship, where we have romantic partners besides one another. We agree to use protection (i.e. condoms) with all other partners. We agree to be routinely tested for STDs every 6 months, in January and in June, and to update each other on the results within 48 hours of receiving them. If for any reason, I engage in sexual activity without the agreed upon barrier method/protection, I agree to notify you within 24 hours of that activity and before we are sexually active with one another. If, for any reason, you fail to get routine testing and disclose your results or fail to disclose unprotected sex with another partner, we will meet to discuss dissolving the relationship.

This agreement lasts from today, December 20, 2020 until December 20, 2021. If one of us wants to cancel the agreement before the time is up, we will set aside time to discuss it and make changes or cancel the agreement at that time. We agree to check in once a year in December to make any adjustments to our agreement.

***3. When you had a verbal agreement, but it isn't working out***

Karla, When you moved in with me back in October of 2020, I agreed to let you stay while you were trying to get a new job and trying to find a new place. I asked you to help keep the common areas clean and to pay half of the utilities when you could. It has been 6 months since you moved in; this is longer than I expected you to stay and it was never intended to be a long-term situation. You haven't kept up your promise to clean and have never helped pay for the utilities. I am not OK with having your new puppy in the house. I did not agree to adding a new dog when you moved in and his messes are not getting cleaned up by you. I have asked you several times in the last couple of months to fix these things but you haven't. I realize this isn't working for me anymore and it has already damaged our relationship. I think the best thing for our relationship would be to not live together anymore and I know this is the right thing for me. I know things have been difficult for you, but I can't continue to live with you. I need you to move out in 30 days from today, April 7, 2021. [Check the eviction laws where you live to find out the minimum amount of time you need to give someone to move out].