

Family Rules



“Family rules” or norms are “the way we do things in our family.” Often, they are unconscious, rarely discussed, seldom decided by discussion. Different families have different rules. When a couple is married, the different family rules conflict. Family rules often become more important than the Bible—even in strong Christian families. These norms are often elevated to God’s truth. They are not just the “way we did things in our family,” but that is the way things “ought to be done.”

Think about the home you are establishing. What do you want your rules to be? Discuss each rule. Commit to it for six months. Have an open discussion. What has worked? What needs to be adjusted? Redefine your rules.

- **ROLES**

What will be “women’s work?”

What will be “men’s work?”

- **TIME**

What will be your family’s rule for being on time?

How will this be applied to work, school, church?

- **MONEY**

How will money be managed and spent?

Who will decide on the use of money?

How will money reveal what is important in your family?

- **SPIRITUALITY, GOD**

How important will God be in your family?

How will this be expressed in worship, Bible study, use of time and money, and ministry?

Who will be the spiritual leader of your family?

- **HOLIDAYS**

How will your family celebrate Thanksgiving?

How will your family celebrate Christmas?

When will you open gifts?

How will you open gifts?

What are other important holidays, birthdays, family reunions and how will you observe these?

- **DRESS**

What will be the dress codes in your family?

What dress will be preferred for church, school, public, in the house?

- **DRUGS, ALCOHOL, TOBACCO**

What will be your family rules in relation to the use of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco?

- **AUTHORITY**

How will your family view people in authority such as police, public officials, elders?

- **CHILDREN**

How will children be valued – center of family, burdens, blessings, inconveniences?

What speaking privileges will children have?

How will children be taught and corrected?

How will different children be treated?

- **PETS**

What kind of pets will your family have?

How many pets will you have?

Where will they stay?

Where will they eat?

Where will they sleep?

- **CONFLICT**

How will your family handle conflict?

What will be considered “fighting fair?”

What will be considered “not fighting fair?”

With whom will you be able to disagree?

With whom will you not be able to disagree?

What topics will be off limits for discussion?

- **FAMILY SECRETS**

What are some family secrets that your family will not to discuss with people outside the family?

What were some family secrets that your family has that are not to be discussed—even in the family?

- **FEELINGS—SADNESS, JOY, FEAR, ANGER**

What feelings will be acceptable to have and to express?

What feelings will be unacceptable and not to be discussed?

- **OTHER RULES**

What other rules would you like to have?

- **CHANGE OF RULES**

How and when would you change family rules?
