

The Ultimate College Packing Checklist

School Essentials

Many of these things can be purchased at your school bookstore if you are moving long distance and need to minimize what you have to carry with you!

- ☐ Backpack or large tote bag
- ☐ Day planner
- ☐ Pens (blue, black, red)
- ☐ Highlighters
- ☐ Multicolored tabs for note taking
- ☐ Calculator
- ☐ Stapler
- ☐ 3 hole punch
- ☐ Binders and binder paper/notebooks
- ☐ Index cards
- ☐ Sticky notes
- ☐ Laptop or desktop computer (though you can use the computer lab)
- ☐ Scissors
- ☐ Permanent markers
- ☐ Tape: scotch and duct tape
- ☐ Desktop organizer

Dorm Life

It can be tempting to bring everything from your bedroom at home, but keep in mind you're likely sharing space with your roommate. Here is our list of college dorm room must-haves.

- ☐ Desk lamp with an extra bulb
- ☐ Power strip
- ☐ Small fan for white noise and cooling you down
- ☐ Whiteboard or whiteboard wall decal (removable)
- ☐ Laundry basket or large bag - think about carrying it up and down stairs
- ☐ Clothes hanging rack for things that can't be dried

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- ☐ Clothes hangers for the closet
- ☐ Sheets, pillows and pillowcases, and blankets - check with your school to see if they need to be “dorm sized” or extra long, meaning regular twin sheets won’t work.
- ☐ Mattress cover - ideally get one that covers the entire mattress, top and bottom
- ☐ Bed risers to create more space under the bed
- ☐ Under-bed storage totes with lids to keep out the dust
- ☐ Portable three-drawer storage -- can be used at the desk or for all of your socks
- ☐ To go containers and Ziploc bags for bringing snacks along on those long days
- ☐ Water bottle
- ☐ Tea/coffee travel mug

Decorations

Dorm rooms are notoriously bland, so you’ll want to bring some decorations to make it feel like home.

- ☐ Area rug
- ☐ Posters
- ☐ Washi tape (better than wall putty!)
- ☐ Thumbtacks
- ☐ Photos from home
- ☐ Twinkle light strands

Essential Roomie Stuff

Discuss these things with your future roommate - no need to double up!

- ☐ Mini fridge -- communicate with your roommate to be sure you don’t end up with two!
- ☐ Electric kettle
- ☐ Water filter pitcher
- ☐ Microwave, if your school allows
- ☐ Shoe rack
- ☐ Doormat

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- ☐ Two sets of plates, bowls, forks, and spoons for late night snacking
- ☐ A collection of starter snacks like crackers, granola bars, popcorn, peanut butter, instant oatmeal, and any other favorites. Don't forget tea bags, too.

Cleaning Stuff

Don't wait until Mom and Dad are coming to visit to keep your dorm room clean!

- ☐ Small handheld vacuum
- ☐ Disinfectant wipes
- ☐ Small trash can
- ☐ Paper towels
- ☐ All purpose surface spray
- ☐ Laundry detergent and dryer sheets
- ☐ Stain stick
- ☐ Electronics wipes for your computer or laptop

Bathroom Things

Communal bathrooms may be a first for you -- here's a survival list for how to handle them in style.

- ☐ Plastic (washable) shower caddy
- ☐ Bathrobe
- ☐ Shower flip-flops
- ☐ Your favorite bath products - consider using liquid body soap instead of a bar for ease of carrying and storing, and make sure to find a place for your caddy where it can dry out during the day. Nobody likes bacteria growing in their razor.
- ☐ Two towels and two face cloths, for when one really needs to get washed.

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Clothing

Of course, pack for your own style -- but here are a few guidelines, and essential things to remember when deciding how much clothing to pack for college.

- ☐ Shoes: mostly, think practical. You're going to be doing a lot of walking, so although your favorite pair of shoes may be stylish, can they handle a speed walk across campus

when you're late to class? Bring rain boots or other weather-proof shoes for wet or snowy days.

- ☐ Don't bring that many t-shirts. As many as you were thinking? Bring fewer. Unless you live in them every day now, you won't need as many as you think.
- ☐ Think about the space that your clothing will occupy. Bring one winter coat (if you're going somewhere cold) rather than three, and bring just a few of your favorite sweaters to start. You can always ask your parents to send you a winter care package with more layers when the time comes.
- ☐ One thing you will want to bring plenty of? Underwear and socks. With the hustle of school sometimes laundry might pile up... and these are things you don't want to run out of.
- ☐ One formal outfit. Just one. If you're questioning what clothes to pack for college, are you really worried about your formal attire?
- ☐ Bring clothes to take advantage of your school's fitness center. Clean athletic sneakers are a must, as well as a few changes of sports clothes. Yoga attire for the mind-body classes will help you stay sane during finals week, too.

Other Essential Items

All necessary insurance cards (health, dental, travel) and IDs (bring your passport, you never know when you'll need it!)

- ☐ Umbrella
- ☐ Gym bag
- ☐ Computer lock
- ☐ Bicycle, bike lock, and helmet
- ☐ Basic medicines - whether you go all natural or traditional, think headache remedies, Vitamin C (hello winter cooped up in a dorm), cold and flu remedies, and immune boosters. Also, bring some bandaids and antiseptic cleaner for those little paper cuts and scrapes that don't require a trip to the health center.