

Packing Essentials

Packing for college can be a long stressful process. Although looking around your room at home and deciding what to bring, what to buy and what to leave can seem overwhelming, the key is to take the big move one step at a time.

To help you make decisions along the way, we have provided a detailed list of essential items incoming college students need. The list is broken down into 10 categories to simplify the packing experience.

Each college or university may give students a specific list of items they are permitted to bring as well as items not allowed. Also, certain colleges will provide furniture such as a bed, desk, chair and dresser or closet. Pay particular attention to the furniture and storage sizes to avoid overpacking your dorm room.

1) Room Furnishings

Make your room comfortable as a place to study and hang out with friends.

Desk lamp and bulb

Alarm clock/radio

Wastebasket

Clothes hangers

Wall decorations (posters, white boards, photographs)

Floor rug

2) Laundry and Cleaning Supplies

Keeping your belongings clean can help you focus and relax in your room.

Laundry bag or basket

Laundry detergent, dryer sheets and stain remover

Quarters for washers and dryers

Clothes drying rack

Iron and mini ironing board

Non-abrasive cleaning supplies

Dish soap

Paper towels

3) Clothing and Accessories

If you live in a state with a steady climate year round, you may need to prepare for all four seasons depending on where your college is located.

Rain boots

Everyday footwear and dress shoes

Shower shoes (flip-flops)

Swimsuit

Sweatshirts

Light and heavy jackets, and a raincoat

Belts

Hat, gloves and scarf

A set of business-casual clothes

A set of formal clothes for special events

Exercise and sports clothing

Pajamas and a robe

4) Groceries

Sometimes you just need a snack or quick meal in your room instead of going to the cafeteria. Here are a few suggestions for easily stored and prepared foods and useful kitchen supplies:

Coffee, tea and hot chocolate

Water bottles

Oatmeal packets

Cold cereal

Trail mix

Granola and protein bars

Macaroni and cheese

Plates, cups and silverware

Mugs

Travel mugs

Electric hot water pot

5) Bed and Bath

Check your bed and bathroom setup so you can pack specifically for your needs.

Bed sheets (Be sure to take note of the mattress size.)

Comforter

Mattress pad

Blanket

Pillows

Towels

Shower caddy

6) Personal Items

Taking care of yourself marks the beginning of a successful college experience.

Shampoo, conditioner and body wash

Deodorant

Toothbrush and toothpaste

Sanitary supplies

Hair products

Facial products

Medical insurance information

7) Electronics

As you know, electronic devices are useful for coursework and entertainment.

Printer, printer paper and ink

Extension cord/power strip (UL approved)

Laptop and charger

Hard drive and flash drive

Headphones

Speakers

8) Classroom Supplies

Going back to school would not be the same without stocking up on basic classroom supplies to ensure you begin college on the right note.

Notebooks, note cards

Folders

Writing utensils (pencils and erasers, pens, markers, highlighters, permanent marker)

Mini stapler and staples

Tape

Ruler

Post-it notes

Planners

Calculator

Textbooks

9) Miscellaneous

These are items you will need in certain situations:

Backpack

Suitcase

Personal ID

Medical insurance information

Sunglasses and umbrella

Sewing kit

Flashlight

10) Optional Items

Finally, these are extra items you might want or need:

Fan

Microwave

Small refrigerator (keeping in mind any size requirements)

Bicycle

Use this list to effectively pack dorm room and college-life essentials. There is no need to stress about the packing process if you are following a detailed list to remind you of any items you may need.

Remember to double-check your college's guidelines for what you can bring—or not—and do not be afraid to ask your admissions counselor for the top items every student takes to college.

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