

[Complete List](#)[Roommates](#)[Top 10 Items](#)[Leave Behind](#)[Bring or Buy?](#)

How much you bring from home vs. what you buy on or near campus will vary depending on whether your student gets to school in the family car or needs to travel by plane, train, or bus. Here are some helpful all-purpose guidelines:

Bring:

Essential personal items — Your student's basic wardrobe and toiletry kit, plus the items that simply aren't for sale: family photos, a favorite pair of jeans or book, that lucky T-shirt.

Electronics — Laptops, printers, e-readers, tablets, and cell phones are best purchased at home where you can evaluate your student's needs and shop around for the best prices.

Lightweight items — If you're driving your student to school and able to load up the family car, it's ideal to buy bedding and towels, plastic storage bins, hangers, etc. at home. You'll appreciate a shorter shopping list on move-in day.

High-demand items — If your student is headed to a small town without many stores that carry college supplies, be sure to buy key items such as desk lamps and shower caddies beforehand.

Buy:

The cheap stuff — Snacks, toiletries, school and writing supplies, laundry detergent, paper towels, etc.

Appliances and furniture — Many schools have specific regulations about what appliances are allowed in dorms. In some cases beds may only be lofted with university-supplied kits. If you know the rules ahead of time, you can do some shopping at home and the rest locally or online.

Bulky or heavy items — Extra chair, area rug, fan, wastebasket, storage crates/bins, and small appliances (see above) are all good candidates for buying after you arrive. This gives your student a chance to check in with roommates as well.

More tips...

Use the UniversityParent Complete 1st Year College Packing List and highlight items you plan to buy on campus.

Utilize in-store pick-up: Stores such as Target and Bed Bath & Beyond will let your student shop in the hometown store and then pick up the items in a store near campus. This is a great option, whether you're driving or flying to campus.

Almost everything is available online and companies courting college buyers may offer free shipping.