

How to Prepare for College

Freshman Guide

29 actions to complete before Day One



ARRIVE READY FOR YOUR FIRST WEEK

Use this checklist to arrive mentally, physically and financially prepared, with a clear plan for the first days of college. A little preparation can help you avoid costly mistakes, settle in faster and enjoy the experience.

10
STEPS

29
ACTIONS

DAY 1
READY

STEP 1

Complete the paperwork

Complete the forms and documents required before you arrive. Common requirements include enrollment, housing, health, transcript, orientation and financial-aid paperwork.

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- 1 Check the student portal for required tasks and deadlines ☐
 - 2 Submit every form that applies to you ☐
 - 3 Arrange your final transcript and confirm receipt ☐

STEP 2

Prepare a weekly budget

Prepare a weekly budget so you know how much you can afford to spend. Set a limit for everyday college life that will last throughout the semester.

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- 4 Work out how much money is available for everyday expenses ☐
 - 5 Set a weekly limit and keep a reserve for unexpected costs ☐
 - 6 Address any funding shortfall before the semester begins ☐

STEP 3

Choose your classes

Choose your first-semester classes carefully. Use available choices to keep promising majors or specializations open until you know which field you prefer.

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- 7 Review the requirements for likely majors or specializations ☐
 - 8 Favor classes that keep several options open ☐
 - 9 Compare all available class times before registration ☐

STEP 4

Shop for essentials

Take time to choose a few things you will definitely use, such as a backpack, laptop, phone, clock radio or comforter. You may already own most of what you need.



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- 10 Identify everyday items that are due for replacement ☐
 - 11 Compare options for one or two important purchases ☐
 - 12 Save most of your shopping budget until college starts ☐

STEP 5

Set up your devices

Set up the laptop, phone and other devices you will take to college. Have your accounts, updates and required software ready before classes begin.

- 13 Install updates and required software ☐
- 14 Activate your college accounts and test each login ☐
- 15 Turn on backups and device tracking ☐

STEP 6

Plan your transport

Work out how you will travel to college and what transport you will use once classes begin. Consider both move-in day and your normal route to class.



- 16 Check the move-in route and arrival instructions ☐
- 17 Review parking, shuttle and public transport options ☐
- 18 Choose a regular route and a backup ☐

STEP 7

Catch up with friends

Catch up with friends before everyone heads in different directions. Make time for the people who were important during high school and enjoy your final weeks together.

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Arrange a relaxed get-together before people leave

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Make individual time for the friends you most want to see

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STEP 8

Build healthy habits

Use the extra time before college to look after your physical and mental health. Aim to arrive fit, healthy, rested and feeling good about yourself.

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Use your spare time for extra exercise

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Get outdoors and choose downtime that reduces anxiety

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Eat well and arrive feeling rested

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STEP 9

Get to know your surroundings

Before classes start, walk around the campus and nearby area. Find the buildings, shops, eateries, pharmacies and services you may need during the first week.

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- 24 Walk the route to the buildings needed during your first week ☐
 - 25 Locate useful shops, eateries and services nearby ☐
 - 26 Save important places on your phone ☐

STEP 10

Start college confidently

With all the preparation done, enter college full of confidence. Capitalize on your early enthusiasm to get on top of your learning and start to build connections.

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- 27 Speak to someone in each class ☐
 - 28 Complete every first-week task on time ☐
 - 29 Attend at least one campus activity ☐