

COLLEGE SURVIVAL GUIDE

Here are some tips on surviving your first six weeks of college. This information was been passed on to us from previous students.

- Most freshmen have feelings of anxiety, homesickness, and loneliness during the first six weeks of school. No matter how cool most of your fellow students appear: you are not alone.
- Play it safe academically the first six weeks. Make a daily schedule of what you plan to do all week and stick to it. Plan to study two or three hours for every hour of class. If you have a plan, your chances of success increase. You can modify your schedule when you receive mid-semester grades.
- As soon as you arrive on campus, find out how to drop or add a class. This is critical information. Many students need to adjust their schedules first semester, and you might be one of them.
- Remember to meet as many people as possible your first two weeks. Try not to eat alone the first six weeks! Instead, seek out those people who are sitting by themselves. You can learn a lot from meeting new people, and you'll definitely feel less lonely. Freshmen sometimes meet so many people this way that they ended up running for freshmen political positions and winning.
- Find out about health services at the beginning of the semester--before you get sick. Where is the health center? Hours? Any costs? Sometimes, if you get sick first semester, it can make you homesick; if you're prepared, you'll have it all under control and can take care of yourself.
- Before you leave home, make sure everyone in the family knows who is paying for what. Then everyone can budget his/her funds (i.e., paying for fraternity fees, spring break, etc.).
- You may wish to open a checking account at your college or somewhere close to campus. Try to avoid credit cards if at all possible.
- Begin signing your name (especially if attending a large university) on all documents with first name, middle initial, and last name. Avoid nicknames since you will be registered in your given name.
- Identify your support systems before leaving home. If you're feeling low, do you play your guitar, go jogging, attend church? Take your support system with you to college. Get involved in intramural sports, the school chapel, etc.

Sing in the shower. Wear your favorite sweatshirt. Keeping your favorite stuffed animal from childhood on your bed or in your suitcase is OK too, if they make you more comfortable and happy.

- If at all possible, don't take a car first semester! Everyone wants to feel popular, but when you have a car, you will be used. Often time this is not intentional. You'll feel guilty when someone wants to borrow your car and you say "No," or when you need to study, but your friends want you to drive out for pizza. There's pressure involved with a car, so if you do take it, have your ground rules ready for the first time someone approaches you.
- Professors are available for discussing class materials and other things. Find out when they will be in their offices. They'll usually give you their office hours the first day of class.
- Find out what tutoring facilities are available. Use them if you need them as soon as you find yourself falling behind or not understanding something your professor is covering.
- Once the first excitement of college begins to wane, be prepared for a letdown. Get involved in your work. For awhile, everyone seems to have talked about everything but academics in your new life at college. As the work intensifies, you need your own assurance that this is why you're there.
- Watch yourself for any excess in your behavior. Examples: apathy, all work and no play, changes in your sleep pattern such as insomnia or too much sleep, eating too much or too little. Check to see if you're doing too much of anything, like constant partying or no partying. If this happens, seek out other people and talk about it. Go immediately to your R.A. (resident assistant), a friend, or some other adult friend. Everyone who moves into a new adventure like college will have some feelings of self-doubt or fear of not succeeding.
- It may not be a direct issue for you, but college presidents have identified alcohol abuse as the No. 1 problem on their campuses. Good judgment is your choice.
- When you get to school, write or e-mail your parents a letter thanking them for sending you to college. It will mean a great deal to them.
- When you come home for Thanksgiving or Christmas break, remember that you are idolized by your younger brothers and sisters. Save the partying stories for others who have also left home. Whether you like it or not, you

are a role model for younger siblings.

- Unless you really want it to happen, or you know it's too selfish on your part, ask your parents not to remodel your room during your first year at college. They may not understand this, but it's comforting to you to feel your roots when you come home.
- Establish some rules or guidelines with your roommate before you get to know each other, preferably the first or second day (i.e., smoking or no smoking, quiet hours, boyfriends/girlfriends in the room, etc.).

Source: Glen Brook South HS, DCC, Gloria Mueller

First-Year Survival Items

Linens: It is recommended that you buy two sets of sheets. Some dorm beds are extra-long; always check before buying sheets.

Mattress pad

Pillow and pillowcases: It is helpful to have a few extra cases.

Blankets and/or comforter

Pajamas

Towels: bath size, washcloths and hand towels

Backrest or beanbag

Desk lamp and bulbs

Extension cords

Three-pronged plug

Surge suppressor

Alarm clock or clock radio

Telephone: Be sure to check and see if your room already has one.

Wastebasket

Desk supplies: such as a desk organizer, ruler, scissors, calculator, paper clips, stapler and staples, push pins, scotch tape, masking tape, pens, pencils, address book, stationary and stamps, large wall calendar, a small pocket calendar and book bag or nap sack.

Dictionary (on-line, software, or hard copy versions)

Thesaurus (on-line, software, or hard copy versions)

Memo board and markers: These items should be placed outside your door so friends can leave messages. Remember to purchase extra markers, as they tend to dry out quickly.

Laundry bag

Laundry basket, a large plastic Rubbermaid type.

Laundry detergents

Quarters, if necessary, to use in the washers and dryers.

Collapsible clothes drying rack

Sewing kit

Hangers

Toiletry bucket: You need something of this nature for getting toilet articles to and from the bathroom; a plastic sand-pail will suffice.

Soap dish

Toothbrush case

Rubber shower shoes/sandals or flip-flops

Small medical kit: aspirin, bandages, etc.

Extra set of prescription glasses or signed eye doctor prescription.

Hot pot & mugs

Fan

Iron and Ironing Board

Computer, printer & modem: Computers can usually be purchased cheaply at the University Store, if not provided directly by the university.

Palm Pilot or some type of schedule organizer
Microwave (if allowed or not furnished)
Mini-Refrigerator (if allowed or not furnished)
George Foreman Grill (if allowed)
Contraceptives
Stereo
Bicycle
Earplugs

Source: CollegeMasters, LLC, Rusty Haynes, CEO