

The Complete **Dorm Room Checklist**

Everything they actually need — nothing they won't.

Sending a kid off to college is its own kind of milestone — exciting, emotional, and a little overwhelming. This printable checklist covers everything they need to make a dorm room feel like home, organized by category so you can shop without forgetting the small things. Bed risers and storage drawers up top — they unlock more usable space than anything else.

HOW TO USE THIS CHECKLIST

1. Print this PDF, or save it to your phone for easy reference while you shop.
2. Coordinate with the roommate first — don't end up with two mini fridges.
3. Check the items off as you go. Pack the storage and bedding first.
4. Read the dorm rules — some items aren't allowed (candles, toasters, etc.).

BEDDING & SLEEP

- XL Twin sheet set (most dorms — confirm yours)
- Pillow & pillowcase
- Comforter or duvet with cover
- Mattress topper (memory foam recommended)
- Mattress protector
- Throw blanket for the bed
- Bed risers (5–12 inch lifts) — opens up under-bed space
- Under-bed rolling storage containers
- Extra pillow & pillowcase
- Sleep mask & earplugs (great for shared rooms)

BATH & SHOWER

- Mesh shower caddy (water-draining)
- Bath towels (2–3)
- Hand towels (2)
- Washcloths (4–6)
- Bathrobe
- Shower shoes or flip flops
- Toiletry bag
- Hair dryer
- Shampoo, conditioner, body wash
- Toothbrush, toothpaste, floss
- Razor & shaving cream
- Deodorant, lotion, sunscreen
- Cotton swabs & cotton balls
- Hairbrush / comb / hair ties

CLEANING

- All-purpose cleaning spray or wipes
- Disinfecting wipes
- Paper towels
- Small trash can
- Trash bags (small size)
- Mini broom & dustpan or hand vacuum
- Lint roller
- Hand sanitizer
- Tissues
- Air freshener or essential oil diffuser

STORAGE & ORGANIZATION

- 3-drawer rolling storage cart
- Stackable plastic storage drawers
- Clear storage containers with lids
- Hanging closet shelves (cube organizer)
- Closet rod doubler
- Slim velvet hangers (saves so much space)
- Over-the-door shoe organizer
- Drawer dividers
- Desk organizer / pen cup
- Cable organizers & cord ties
- Small jewelry / accessories tray
- Trunk or storage ottoman

LAUNDRY

- Tall laundry hamper or pop-up bag
- Mesh laundry bag for delicates
- Detergent (pods are easiest in shared laundry rooms)
- Stain remover stick
- Dryer sheets or wool dryer balls
- Mini drying rack
- Iron or steamer (compact)
- Roll of quarters or laundry payment card

KITCHEN & SNACKS

- Mini fridge (coordinate with roommate first)
- Microwave (if allowed by dorm)
- Reusable water bottle
- Single-cup coffee maker or French press
- Insulated travel mug
- Microwave-safe plates & bowls
- Reusable utensils & a sharp knife
- Reusable food storage containers
- Mug for hot drinks & soup
- Dish soap & sponge
- Snacks: granola bars, instant oatmeal, pasta, ramen
- Paper plates & napkins (back-up)

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

- Backpack
- Notebooks (one per class)
- Folders or binders
- Pens, pencils, highlighters
- Sticky notes & flags
- Index cards
- Printer paper
- Stapler & staples
- Scissors & tape
- Calculator (if needed)
- USB flash drive
- Wired or wireless headphones
- Planner or wall calendar

HEALTH & FIRST AID

- Basic first aid kit
- Pain relievers (Tylenol & Advil)
- Cold & flu medicine
- Cough drops
- Adhesive bandages
- Thermometer
- Heating pad or hot/cold pack
- Daily vitamins
- Lip balm & hand cream
- Prescription meds (with refill info)
- Health insurance card (copy)

DOCUMENTS TO BRING

- Driver's license or state ID
- Health insurance card
- Birth certificate (copy, kept secured)
- Social Security card (kept locked up)
- Banking & debit card info
- Emergency contact list
- Roommate contact info
- Move-in paperwork from the school

TECH & ELECTRONICS

- Laptop & charger
- Phone & charger
- Surge-protected power strip
- Extension cords
- Desk lamp
- Clip-on bed lamp or string lights
- Bluetooth speaker
- HDMI cable (for TV / monitor)
- Alarm clock (don't rely on phone)
- Wi-Fi extender (optional)

DECOR & COMFORT

- Photos & frames from home
- Posters or wall art
- Removable wall hooks (Command strips)
- Throw pillows for the bed
- Small area rug
- String lights or fairy lights
- Bulletin or cork board
- Dry-erase board for the door
- Low-maintenance plant (or faux)
- Small wall mirror

SAFETY & PRACTICAL EXTRAS

- Basic tool kit (screwdriver, hammer, tape measure)
- Flashlight & batteries
- Sewing kit (mini)
- Compact umbrella
- Reusable shopping bags
- Small lockbox or safe
- Door stopper
- Box fan (if no AC)
- Small whiteboard & dry-erase markers

Smart Shopping Tips

What I wish someone had told me before that first dorm-shopping trip.

1

Coordinate with your roommate before buying — only one mini fridge, one microwave, one TV needed.

2

Read your school's prohibited items list first — candles, hot plates, and toasters are often banned.

3

Measure bed length and window dimensions BEFORE shopping for sheets or curtains.

4

Pack cleaning supplies in your first load — dorms are rarely move-in clean.

5

Keep prescriptions, IDs, and important documents in your carry-on if flying to school.

6

Buy bed risers and storage containers FIRST — they unlock the most usable space in any small dorm.

7

Don't over-buy. You can always order more from Amazon once you're settled.

Wishing you both a beautiful next chapter.

— Justina, More Ahead Living