

Section 6 – Prepare to live independently



What to pack for University

Heading off to university for the first time is quite the experience. There will be excitement and nerves alike. There will be new things to experience and lots of people to meet. Packing is part of your preparation, but avoid taking everything you own! Here are a few quick tips to get you started:

- Aim to travel light. You're moving into a small room with very limited cupboard space - and you'll be moving out again in June. One large suitcase of clothes, a couple of boxes of other stuff and a bin-liner of bedding is about the right level.
- Don't splash out on expensive stuff.
- Before you go out and buy anything, make sure you've checked what the university will be providing. You don't want to turn up with a lot of stuff that's already been laid on.

Wondering what to pack?

The Must-haves:

Clothes:

A top tip for university is not to do a big shop for new clothes beforehand; most people's styles change a lot at uni and you end up disliking a lot of things you had from before! There is also no need to pack your entire wardrobe, especially if you're going to head home at the end of term.

But don't forget:

- Pyjamas, bring ones that you don't mind strangers seeing you in – 3.00 am fire alarms do happen.
- Dressing gown: for the same reason
- Slippers /flip-flops: student floors are rarely clean enough to walk on in bare feet
- Sports clothes: you never know what you might find at the Fresher's Fair – even if you don't think you'll join a sports team, it's worth having something just in case.

Think about what else you might be doing at uni for example - Swimming club – Swimsuit, Football - Football boots and tracksuits

- A big bag: if you're living on campus you might find you get away without a big bag in first year. If you're off campus, however, you'll need a bag that can handle your laptop, a few books and lunch.

Bedroom Essentials:

Check what is provided by your halls as this does vary but you may well need the following:

- Duvet, mattress protector, bedding, sheets, pillows, hangers, and towels. You might want to think about ear plugs if you're going to be in a lively area
- Nice but not essential: Mattress topper (expensive but do be wary that student mattresses are not known for comfort), blanket (comes in more useful than you might think but make sure it's washable) and cushions

Electricals:

- Laptop/phone/tablet
- Extension Leads
- Chargers: maybe put your initials on these to avoid friendly theft
- Hair dryer/straighteners etc
- Headphones: noise cancelling headphones might be a good idea for studying when your neighbour is partying... or for lending to your neighbour when you're partying!
- Games console: use it sociably and you could be very popular.

From the bathroom cabinet – toiletries, glasses, contact lenses, medication, and a small first aid kit.

Laundry – washing products, laundry basket, most halls will have a dryer but a clothes horse might be a cheaper long-term option.

Kitchen essentials – check what is included at your accommodation, most include a toaster, kettle and microwave, but as a minimum, you'll need enough cutlery, crockery, glasses, pots, tea towels, mugs, baking trays, and pans, plus basic gadgets for yourself.

ID – passport, driving licence, NHS medical card, online card reader (if you use one for online banking), National Insurance number, and all important correspondence with your university.

Food basics – while you'll do your first food shop when you're settled, it may take you some time to get settled into your room, so think about taking enough for the first few days such as coffee, tea bags, cereal, cooking oil, tins, and condiments.

Course essentials – if you can, try to get hold of any reading lists before you go and buy books in advance. You may be able to get a deal on second-hand books before term starts. You should also consider the stationery you'll need.

Little touches – if moving to uni is your first time away from home, take some keepsakes that will help keep you from getting homesick.

'Just in case' items – things like an umbrella, torch, batteries, alarm clock, pack of cards and plenty of change.

Have a look at this guide for what to pack too:

[A list of absolutely everything you need to take to university or college | UCAS](#)