

# Handy checklist of things to take for your first term at uni

## Important documents

- Accommodation forms
- Bank account or building society details plus bank cards and online banking details
- National Insurance card
- Driving licence
- Insurance documents including student possessions insurance
- NHS medical card
- Your passport or a photocopy of it
- Plenty of passport photos
- Documents relating to your student loan

## Books and academic materials

- A diary
- A dictionary
- You might want some of your old subject notes or books
  - to be honest, you probably won't use them, but it can be comforting to know that they're there just in case
- Folders and lined paper
- Writing paper, envelopes and stamps
- Pens including highlighters
- A hole puncher, ruler, scissors, stapler, Sellotape
- Writing pads
- A noticeboard (check that your room doesn't already have one first)
- 'Blu-tack' to stick up posters and room decorations
- A cheap printer if you've got one/find one
  - can be useful when you need to print an essay at 8am and there's a huge queue for the library printers

## Toiletries and first aid

- Any prescription drugs you take
- Paracetamol
- Cotton wool
- Tweezers
- Condoms
- Plasters and antiseptic cream
- A flu remedy to battle against the freshers' flu lurgy
- All your normal toiletry bag contents – toothbrush and paste, make-up remover, spot cream, etc.

## Bedroom things

- Bedding – duvet, mattress protector, sheet, duvet cover, pillow, pillow covers – but first check with your accommodation officer to find out what is provided
- Hot-water bottle
- Box of tissues
- Sleeping bag – for visitors and in case you travel anywhere
- Laundry bag – to carry dirty clothes to the washing machine (or home...)
- Desk lamp (if not provided – check first)
- Decorative items, e.g. beanbag, cushions, blankets/throws, photos and posters, plants, rug
- Laptop, plus carry case, charger wires and memory stick, or iPad
- Alarm clock
- Spare batteries
- Plug extension leads
- Iron
- Mobile phone and charger(s)
- Speakers

## Kitchen goods

Before you start packing your kitchen utensils, check what's provided by your halls or student flat. If your accommodation is self-catered, a lot of the contents listed below will be provided so don't bother wasting your money and save your struggling arm muscles.

- Cutlery – usually two or three place-settings of crockery and cutlery is enough, because you can share with housemates, and having loads will just discourage you from washing up
- Crockery – plates, bowls, mugs, glasses
- Bottle opener
- Frying pan
- Two saucepans, one small (for the pasta that will probably become your staple diet), one larger (to make soup, etc.)
- Chopping board
- Sharp knife
- Tin opener
- Peeler and/or grater
- Basic store cupboard foods (e.g. tea, coffee, sugar, cooking oil, herbs, salt, pepper, pasta, rice, cereal, etc.)
- Sandwich bags
- 'Tupperware' boxes with lids
- Cling film, tin foil
- Tea towel and oven glove
- Cleaning products – such as anti-bacterial spray, air freshener, furniture polish if you're really keen – plus dusters.

- You'll need extra things like toilet and bathroom cleaner if you're living in a house. Many halls have weekly cleaners included in your bill, so check first before going to buy Mr Muscle

When you arrive at university for the first time, with all your stuff, head for your halls of residence or wherever you're living. If you're living in halls, there will probably be a stand set up to welcome you and your family and tell you where to go. If you're living in private accommodation, remember to arrange when and where you will pick up the key before you set off from home.

Some unis arrange Facebook groups and Twitter updates giving freshers the latest info – if yours does, be sure to join or follow these before setting off.

Once you've arrived in your room (or 'digs', as old people like your parents will probably insist on calling your uni room), it's a good idea to start unpacking as soon as possible. Ask any friends or family who have come with you to help you to unpack before they go, because once your room starts looking nice and homely, you'll feel much happier about settling in. Don't worry about unpacking every little thing (it can be nice to have something left to do when your family leave) but unpack your duvet, make your bed, put up some posters, unload your computer and get out some photos so that your room starts to look like it's your own space.

If you're living in a shared flat or house rather than a single room in a hall of residence, spend a few hours getting to know your new housemates early on. Even if you're more into cleaning than Monica from Friends, don't start talking about kitchen cleaning rotas until you've been there for at least a few days – just get to know each other and find things you have in common first. Once you're friends (or at least friendly), sorting out the tough stuff like who's scrubbing the toilet next Wednesday will be easier to organise. (If you're lucky, your hall fee might include the services of a cleaner to do it all for you.)

If you do find yourself feeling homesick, or upset, or stressed, try to relax and then you'll soon start having fun again. One night during my freshers' week, I'd planned to meet a group of coursemates but couldn't remember where we'd arranged to meet and we hadn't yet swapped phone numbers – university suddenly felt like a huge place. But the thing about freshers' week is that students and staff will be extra friendly and willing to help out, and give you directions, or dole out advice.

So relax, and prepare for a fantastic beginning to your university career.

Taken from [A Guide to Uni Life by Lucy Tobin](#)