



# First Night in Your Dorm Checklist

## What to keep easy, what to set up first, and what can wait

A compact first-night plan so you are not digging through every bin when you are tired after move-in.

**What this PDF includes:** a first-night bag checklist, what to pack separately, bed and shower setup, tech and ID essentials, parent and roommate reminders, what to wait to buy, housing-rule checks, and a first-week mini checklist.

| Student | School / Dorm | Move-in date |
|---------|---------------|--------------|
|         |               |              |

### Quick Start

|  |                                                                                        |  |                                                                                  |
|--|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | Pack one clearly labeled first-night bag or bin.                                       |  | Keep ID, keys, wallet, phone, and room documents together.                       |
|  | Put bedding, pajamas, chargers, toiletries, shower shoes, and medication near the top. |  | Do not bury towels, trash bags, cleaning wipes, or water at the bottom of a bin. |
|  | Set up your bed before decorating anything.                                            |  | Save cute decor and bulky extras for after the basics are done.                  |

### First-Night Setup Order

|                                                                                 |                                                                              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1</b><br><b>Bed first</b><br>Make the bed so the room is sleep-ready.        | <b>2</b><br><b>Power + ID</b><br>Find chargers, ID, key, and wallet.         |
| <b>3</b><br><b>Bathroom route</b><br>Keep towel, caddy, and shower shoes ready. | <b>4</b><br><b>Trash reset</b><br>Clear packaging so the floor stays usable. |

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Plan what to buy, what to skip, and how to make dorm life easier.



## First-Night Bag: Pack This Separately

This is the bag or bin you open first. It should not be buried under decor, hangers, or extra clothes.

|                          |                                              |                          |                                                       |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Pajamas or comfortable clothes               | <input type="checkbox"/> | Glasses, contacts, case, and solution if needed       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Next-day outfit and underwear                | <input type="checkbox"/> | Water bottle and easy snacks                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Phone charger and laptop charger             | <input type="checkbox"/> | Campus ID, key, wallet, and important cards           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Medication and basic first aid               | <input type="checkbox"/> | Trash bags and disinfecting wipes                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Toothbrush, toothpaste, face wash, deodorant | <input type="checkbox"/> | Small fan or sleep mask if you need them              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Shower shoes, towel, and shower caddy        | <input type="checkbox"/> | A small comfort item: blanket, photo, or stuffed item |

**Buy before move-in:** bedding basics, towel, shower shoes, charger, medication, trash bags, and wipes. These are annoying to hunt down when you are tired.

## Do Not Bury These in Random Boxes

| Item               | Why it should stay easy to reach                          |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| Bedding            | You will want the bed ready before you are exhausted.     |
| Toiletries + towel | You may want to shower before unpacking everything.       |
| Chargers           | Your phone is your map, camera, and communication tool.   |
| ID / keys          | You may need them for check-in, doors, meals, or parking. |
| Snacks + water     | Move-in day often takes longer than expected.             |
| Wipes + trash bags | Packaging piles up fast and makes the room feel chaotic.  |

**Label idea:** write FIRST NIGHT on painter tape or a paper label so parents, roommates, and helpers do not accidentally stack this bin underneath everything else.



## Set Up Your Bed First

Your bed is the first-night priority. Even if the rest of the room is messy, a ready bed makes the room feel livable.

|                          |                                      |                          |                                                         |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mattress protector or mattress pad   | <input type="checkbox"/> | Extra blanket if your dorm runs cold                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Fitted Twin XL sheet                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Bedside charger setup                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Flat sheet or blanket if you use one | <input type="checkbox"/> | Water bottle within reach                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Comforter or duvet                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | Glasses, meds, retainer, or contacts near bed if needed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Pillow and pillowcase                | <input type="checkbox"/> | Small trash bag nearby for packaging                    |

**Wait until you know your room:** extra pillows, large throw blankets, bedside carts, bed skirts, and bulky storage. These can be useful, but only if they fit your actual setup.

## Shower + Getting-Ready Setup

|                          |                                 |                          |                                                 |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Shower shoes or slides          | <input type="checkbox"/> | Toothbrush and toothpaste                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Towel and washcloth             | <input type="checkbox"/> | Skincare, deodorant, hairbrush                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Shower caddy or toiletry bag    | <input type="checkbox"/> | Robe or towel wrap for communal bathrooms       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Shampoo, conditioner, body wash | <input type="checkbox"/> | Small bag for period products or personal items |

## Sleep Comfort Setup

|                          |                                  |                          |                                                |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Fan or cooling item if allowed   | <input type="checkbox"/> | White noise app or small sound machine         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Earplugs or sleep mask if needed | <input type="checkbox"/> | Keep your first-night outfit and towel visible |



## Tech, ID, Medicine, Snacks

Move-in night is not the time to lose your charger, key, ID, medication, or water bottle.

|                          |                                          |                          |                                                   |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Phone charger                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | Move-in instructions or parking info              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Laptop charger                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | Emergency contact info                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Power bank if you use one                | <input type="checkbox"/> | Prescription medication                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Campus ID and room key                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | Pain reliever or allergy medicine you already use |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Wallet and debit/credit card             | <input type="checkbox"/> | Bandages or blister patches                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Insurance card or medical info if needed | <input type="checkbox"/> | Water bottle and shelf-stable snacks              |

**Check your school rules:** fans, extension cords, kettles, microwaves, candles, wax warmers, and extra appliances may be restricted. When unsure, check housing before buying.

## First-Night Room Reset

|                          |                                                  |                          |                                                                  |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Break down or stack empty boxes and bags.        | <input type="checkbox"/> | Clear the walkway from door to bed.                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Take out trash from packaging and snacks.        | <input type="checkbox"/> | Place chargers where you will use them.                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Wipe the desk, dresser, and high-touch surfaces. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Put valuables in one safe spot.                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Put dirty clothes or towels in the hamper.       | <input type="checkbox"/> | Make sure vents, sprinklers, outlets, and doors are not blocked. |

**Realistic goal:** do not try to perfect the whole room. Aim for a usable bed, clear walkway, working charger, clean towel, and basic trash reset.



## What to Wait to Buy

| Wait on this           | Why                                                            |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Large rugs             | You need room dimensions and floor layout first.               |
| Bulky storage drawers  | They may not fit under your bed or inside your closet.         |
| Extra decor            | You will know what wall space exists after setup.              |
| Duplicate shared items | Ask your roommate first so you do not both buy the same thing. |
| Extra appliances       | Housing rules and outlet limits vary by school.                |

## Ask Your Roommate First

|                          |                          |                          |                             |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mini fridge or microwave | <input type="checkbox"/> | Cleaning supplies           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Rug size and color       | <input type="checkbox"/> | Shared fan or air purifier  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Shared trash can         | <input type="checkbox"/> | Wall decor for shared areas |

## Housing Rule Checks

|                          |                                          |                          |                                              |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Are microwaves and mini fridges allowed? | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are command strips allowed?                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Is there a wattage or size limit?        | <input type="checkbox"/> | Can furniture be lofted or moved?            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Are extension cords banned?              | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are candles, incense, or wax warmers banned? |

## Parent Reminders

|                          |                                                    |                          |                                                                |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Keep first-night items separate from decor boxes.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Confirm transportation, parking, and move-in time rules.       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Help set up the bed before leaving if possible.    | <input type="checkbox"/> | Make sure chargers, ID, food, water, and towel are accessible. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Do not overbuy storage until the room is measured. | <input type="checkbox"/> | Take photos of room condition if the school recommends it.     |

## Roommate Reminders

|  |                                                          |  |                                                     |
|--|----------------------------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------------------------|
|  | Ask before moving your roommate's items.                 |  | Agree on what belongs in the mini fridge.           |
|  | Decide where shared items will go.                       |  | Do not decorate shared wall space without checking. |
|  | Talk about trash, guests, lights, and quiet hours early. |  | Use the first night to be friendly, not perfect.    |

## First Week Mini Checklist

|  |                                              |  |                                                         |
|--|----------------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------------------------|
|  | Find laundry room and trash/recycling areas. |  | Finish unpacking clothes and school supplies.           |
|  | Save campus safety and RA contact info.      |  | Adjust storage after living in the room for a few days. |
|  | Check dining hall hours and closest store.   |  | Make a small list of what you actually still need.      |

## Notes and Custom First-Night Plan

Use this space for dorm rules, packing notes, roommate reminders, parent reminders, shopping list, or your first-night plan.

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