

Shared Dorm Items Checklist

What to Split, Share, Skip, or Ask First

A practical planner for roommates who want to avoid duplicate purchases, awkward money talks, and tiny-room clutter before move-in day.

What this PDF includes: shared item ideas, roommate shopping rules, buy-before vs wait-to-buy guidance, school-rule checks, a shared expense tracker, ownership notes, and a simple agreement page.

Dorm / building	Room type	Roommate(s)

Quick Start

- ☐ Ask your roommate what they already own before buying shared items.
- ☐ Check your school rules for appliances, wattage, extension cords, candles, and furniture.
- ☐ Decide who owns each item after the year ends.
- ☐ Avoid buying two of bulky items like rugs, fridges, fans, or vacuums.
- ☐ Put expensive shared purchases in writing, even if you are friends.
- ☐ Wait on decor and large furniture until you know the actual room layout.

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

Share vs. Keep Personal

Not everything should be shared. The easiest rule: share bulky or room-use items, but keep personal hygiene, bedding, medicine, and daily essentials separate.

Category	Usually share	Usually keep personal
Appliances	Mini fridge, microwave, kettle if allowed	Water bottle, favorite mug, personal snacks
Cleaning	Vacuum, wipes, trash bags, dish soap	Laundry detergent if you prefer your own
Bathroom	Suite bathroom supplies, hand soap, bath mat	Towels, shower shoes, toothbrush, skincare
Comfort	Fan, air purifier, blackout curtains if agreed	Pillow, blanket, bedding, sleep mask
Decor	Rug, mirror, lights, shared wall decor	Personal photos, keepsakes, desk decor
Tech	Streaming device, TV, printer if truly needed	Laptop, chargers, headphones, passwords

Reality check: Sharing only works when someone is clearly responsible for bringing it, replacing it, cleaning it, and taking it home at the end.

Ask Your Roommate First

☐ Mini fridge or microwave	☐ Shared cleaning supplies
☐ Rug size and color	☐ Air fresheners or scents
☐ Large mirror	☐ Fan or air purifier
☐ TV or streaming device	☐ Large storage shelves
☐ Printer	☐ Shared snack bin
☐ Coffee maker or kettle	☐ Guest items like extra blanket or floor cushion

Shared Appliances and Tech

Before buying appliances, check your housing rules. Many dorms limit wattage, appliance types, cords, and furniture size.

Item	Bring?	Rule before buying
Mini fridge	Maybe share	Check size limit, outlet rules, and who cleans it.
Microwave	Maybe share	Check wattage cap and whether it must be rented through school.
Electric kettle	Depends	Check if heating appliances are allowed.
Coffee maker	Depends	Ask roommate and check appliance rules.
TV / streaming device	Ask first	Decide who owns it and whether it fits.
Printer	Usually wait	Most campuses have printing; do not buy unless you know you need it.
Fan / air purifier	Often useful	Agree on noise level, placement, and filter costs.
Power strip	Buy safely	Check surge protector and cord rules; avoid daisy-chaining.

Shared Cleaning and Laundry

☐ Small vacuum or handheld vacuum	☐ Suite bathroom: toilet brush
☐ Broom and dustpan	☐ Suite bathroom: plunger
☐ Disinfecting wipes or spray	☐ Suite bathroom: bath mat
☐ Trash bags that fit the bin	☐ Shared stain remover
☐ Dish soap and sponge	☐ Lint roller
☐ Paper towels or microfiber cloths	☐ Cleaning caddy or storage bin

Do not overbuy: One small vacuum, one dish soap, and one pack of trash bags usually beats two people bringing duplicates.

Bathroom, Kitchen, and Food Items

Shared items depend a lot on your room type. A suite bathroom needs more shared supplies than a communal bathroom dorm.

☐ Suite bathroom hand soap	☐ Paper towels or reusable cloths
☐ Suite bathroom trash bags	☐ Shared snack bin or shelf
☐ Suite bathroom toilet paper if not supplied	☐ Mini fridge bins or labels
☐ Bath mat for suite/private bathroom	☐ Reusable grocery bag
☐ Dish soap for mugs and bowls	☐ Food storage bags or containers
☐ Microwave-safe bowl or plate set	☐ Water filter pitcher if both will use it

Keep personal: towels, shower shoes, toothbrush, razor, skincare, medicine, contacts, retainers, and anything hygiene-related.

Comfort, Decor, and Room Setup

Item	Good shared choice?	What to decide
Rug	Maybe	Size, color, cleaning, and who keeps it after.
Full-length mirror	Usually yes	Door mirror vs wall mirror; check hanging rules.
Floor lamp	Maybe	Only if lighting is poor and it fits safely.
Curtains	Depends	Check school rules before buying.
Extra seating	Usually wait	Do not buy until you see the room.
Shared wall decor	Ask first	Agree on style, tape/strip rules, and cost.

Shared Purchase Planner

Use this before shopping so you know what is already covered, what still needs to be bought, and who is paying.

Item	Who brings/buys?	Cost	Split?	Who keeps it?

Money Rules to Agree On

- ☐ We will not buy shared items without checking with each other first.
- ☐ We will save receipts or screenshots for shared purchases.
- ☐ We will decide who owns each item before splitting costs.
- ☐ If one person keeps the item, we will decide whether it should still be split.
- ☐ We will not pressure each other into expensive decor or upgrades.
- ☐ We will set a shared-item budget before shopping.

Budget-first tip: If an item is expensive, breakable, or only one person cares about it, it may be better for one person to buy it and own it instead of splitting it.

Buy Before, Wait, Check, or Skip

Decision	Best for	Examples
Buy before move-in	Small basics you will definitely use	Trash bags, wipes, dish soap, first set of paper towels, hand soap.
Wait until you know your room	Bulky or layout-dependent items	Rug, extra seating, shelves, big mirror, curtains, floor lamp.
Ask your roommate first	Shared or style-dependent items	Fridge, microwave, TV, decor, fan, coffee maker, shared snacks.
Check your school rules	Appliances, cords, hanging items, furniture	Microwave, kettle, power strips, curtain rods, bed risers.
Probably skip	Items that waste space or cause conflict	Duplicate appliances, scented sprays, large furniture, printer unless needed.

What Parents Often Overbuy

☐ Too many cleaning supplies before seeing storage space	☐ Large storage shelves that may not fit
☐ Duplicate mini appliances	☐ A printer when campus printing is available
☐ Huge rugs or bulky chairs	☐ Decor the student or roommate does not actually want
☐ Extra lamps before seeing room lighting	☐ Too many dishes for a room with little sink access

Best rule: Buy the boring basics first. Save the big, cute, expensive, or shared items until roommates talk and room details are confirmed.

Roommate Shared Item Agreement

Fill this out after you decide what is shared, what is personal, and what you are waiting to buy.

Rule	Our decision
Shared item budget	
Big items we are not buying yet	
Items we need to check with housing first	
How we will split costs	
Who keeps shared items at the end	
What happens if something breaks	

Roommate signature / date	
Roommate signature / date	

Notes and Custom Room Rules

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For more dorm checklists, tools, and move-in planning guides, visit DormRoomBlueprint.com.