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MUNCHIE MADNES



is only a week away either. But if you are trying to get out of Bloomington and avoid your hometown, this is your last chance.

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Having planned many failed weekends and road trips, and a couple that went all right, I have a ton of experience with what does and doesn't work when

planning for a group. Here's your day-by-day breakdown of how to plan the a great spring break (or, at the very least, a 7/10 spring break).

Friday

Make a list of everyone you want to go on spring break with and start a group message to get the vibe. Make sure to pick people you know will have fun with you and are people you will be able to be with for a week

straight without losing your mind. You probably are going to go with people you have already talked to about spring break. The vibe is good. Morale is high. You all suggest some places to go, and you are feeling great about where this can lead.

Hold on to this feeling, and make sure to remember it when you are in the throes of planning, which can really bring down the mood. If you don't start off at a high, you can't finish and retain your friendship.

Someone will suggest Panama City Beach, Florida. Quickly remove them from the group message. You barely have time to plan and no time to think PCB, joke

Saturday

Once you arrive at your destination, immediately find a drugstore to buy a toothbrush. Someone always

Celebrate how far you have made it from last Friday, when this trip was just a mere dream. Whether you are going two hours or 12 hours away, you should be prepared for whatever is coming your way tomorrow. Even if you aren't, you're definitely ready for a break from classes, so celebrate that.

Saturday

Buy a 12-pack of beer. Meet with your group in person. Nothing substantial has ever been accomplished in a group message, and you don't have time to mess around with people who never look at their phone or, worse, have the group on do not disturb.

Crack open a brew. Before you can finalize where you want to go and what to do, you first have to make a realistic budget, which is annoying and hard and can cause fights about who is being too cheap or who is spending with no concern.

Make sure to budget everything — whether you have a car that can get you where you need to go, money for gas, food, alcohol, housing and entertainment. It is absolutely possible to have an A+ spring break on very little cash, but it is also possible to ruin a great vacation by constantly worrying over finances.

Once you have a realistic idea of how much the trip will cost, it's time to decide where you want to go. Obviously the destination will influence your total trip price, but it is important to budget first so you know where you can't go. You can't plan to spend \$300 and

then check hotels in Los Angeles. It's just a waste of time. Someone will suggest their family's timeshare in Florida. Nod and listen politely before declining (unless

you are into that concept). Someone else will suggest camping, which sounds like a good and cheap option. However, as someone who has driven to Arizona, camped for a week and then driven home, I have an obligation to tell you nothing strains a friendship like eating lukewarm eggs cooked over a campfire for the fifth day in a row and a constant

stench of B.O. My suggestion would be to plan only a night or two to camp or to hike during the day and return at night to enjoy an air-conditioned home and a high-pressure

Once you pick a destination, it's time to find a place to stay. It's hard this late in the game but by no means impossible. Airbnb is your best friend. Also check out hostels — they are cheap, safe and a great way to meet locals and learn the best places (read: bars) to go. Book your place to stay today. Even a day will limit a lot of housing choices.

Thursday

Add at least three items you forgot to your list. Continue the packing process and make a Target run for anything you don't have that you will need, such as sunscreen, bug spray or a new sundress. Clean out your backpack and wallet so you don't carry around extra items you won't need during the trip.

If you are taking your car, do a quick sweep to make sure you don't have extra items that can cramp your friends in the back. If you are trading driving shifts you will most likely be in the back at some point too, so you are also helping yourself.

Time for a trip to the ATM, assuming one person put the hotel/hostel/Airbnb on their credit card. No college kid can afford to be out that much money for long, and them back. Be a good friend and give them the cash as

Don't get so caught up in your new trip you forget to check your schoolwork for the week. Spend the rest of Sunday prepping for the classes ahead and studying for those last few midterms. You're almost free.

Monday

If you know who is driving, make sure their car is in good condition for a trip. No matter how long the trip is going to be, make sure to double check whether you need an oil change, tire pressure or any other general maintenance. If you are planning on going on a crosscountry road tour, it is also worthwhile to take your car into the shop and just ask them to give it a look over.

Trust me, there's nothing worse than getting halfway to a destination and finding out you have some car troubles that could have been fixed before you are twelve hours from home (see: the camping trip to

Tuesday

Trip planning continues to get easier from here on out. Although Tuesday is a long way away from your estimated departure date of Saturday, I would suggest making a group Spotify playlist today. It's a great way to make sure everyone gets a good mix, so you won't be listening to an overwhelming amount of Top 40 hits or alternative underground lo-fi whatever your hipster friend is always trying to push.

Toss "Coming Clean" by Hilary Duff on for a true club banger that can unite the car at any point during the ride, no matter how high tensions are. Starting the playlist this early gives you a chance to remember songs throughout the week and easily add and delete any song you don't want in a more subtle manner.

Wednesday

Start the packing process, which really begins by doing laundry. No one wants to open a bag of dirty clothes to put on during break. Make a list titled "Things Not to Forget."