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Dorm stuff ranges from vital to just fun

Posted by [Stefanie Murray](#) | [The Ann Arbor News](#) August 28, 2008 08:35AMCategories: [M Edition](#)

Doze off on a futon - Art Van has a comfy Click Clack line.

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Shopping for dorm room furniture and accessories is half the fun of moving from Mom and Dad's house to college - and each year, retailers come up with more and more niche products targeting dorm dwellers.

Here's a roundup of a handful of fun, popular and simply useful stuff for your dorm room or apartment.

ODOR KILLER: There's no question about it: A lot of dorm rooms smell. A company called Gonzo sells a mesh bag filled with volcanic crystals that it promises will absorb foul odors. The company says you place the Dorm Room Odor Eliminator in an area that stinks and the odor will be gone in eight to 12 hours. After 10 months, put the bag in the sunlight for six hours to recharge it. Bed Bath & Beyond sells the bags for \$8.99.

WAKE UP NOW: A company called Dormbuys.com sells a gadget that's especially for those who have trouble getting up for class in the morning. The Clocky alarm clock "runs away and hides when you don't wake up," according to the Web site. You set it to let you hit snooze once, then after that the Clocky will jump up to 3 feet off your nightstand and roll around your room, squealing and flashing until you get up, find it and turn it off. It comes in a handful of colors and sells for \$49.99.



Rely on The Clocky alarm clock to wake you up. You hit snooze once; after that the Clocky will jump up to 3 feet off your nightstand and roll around the room, squealing and flashing until you get up and turn it off.


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EASY WASHIN': Dormbuys.com also

sells a product that combines laundry detergent, laundry softener and a dryer sheet into one unit. The WashEZE 3-in-1 laundry sheets are easier to transport than lugging big bottles of laundry soap and sound simple to use: Just toss the sheet in the washer with the clothes, then put the same one in the dryer with the clothes. A box of sheets that'll do 10 loads sells for \$5.99.

DISPLAY PICS: Hang photos in your dorm room in style - and keep them off your cluttered desk. Acme Mercantile in downtown Ann Arbor sells a Mobile Clip Photo Hanger by Kikkerland that suspends pictures, or anything else you want to hang, from the ceiling. It retails for \$11. The same thing is also sold at Urban Outfitters for \$14.

Acme also sells a variety of bulletin boards that work with a combination of magnets and pushpins. The boards, by Umbro, retail in different sizes from \$19 to \$35.

WALL ART: Words, phrases, quotations and famous sayings always make popular decor for dorm rooms - and it seems like there's more to choose from now than ever. Find metal signs at Acme Mercantile for \$12 (some could be considered a bit lewd, so beware) and canvas ones at Middle Earth on South University Avenue for \$23.95. Middle Earth doubled its order of the quotable wall hangings this year because they've been so popular.



The Mobile Clip Photo Hanger by Kikkerland suspends pictures, or anything else you want to hang, from the ceiling. They're available at Acme Mercantile and Urban Outfitters.

TOUGH RUGS: Dorm room floors get pretty beat up - lots of traffic, food and drink spills, among other abuse. Downtown Home & Garden on Ashley Street sells plastic indoor/outdoor rugs that can take the heat. The \$34 rugs by Mad Mats are surprisingly easy on the feet, durable, fade-resistant and are quick to clean, the store says. And environmentally friendly: They're woven with 98 percent recycled plastic and only need water and a mild detergent to mop up a mess.



A U-M grad came up with the Say It With Vases line - they're small plastic bags.

CELL BABYSITTER: Aside from food, a cell phone is probably the most important thing any college student needs to survive these days. A European company called Driinn Ltd. makes a handy little mobile phone holder that elevates and stores your cell phone while it's charging. The yellow plastic gadget hooks behind the charger's plug and hangs from the wall, creating a small shelf to set the phone on. It retails at Middle Earth for \$5.95 and the store says they've been selling great.

UNBREAKABLE VASE: A University of Michigan graduate came up with the Say It With Vases line - flower vases that are actually small plastic bags. When filled with water or rocks, the plastic bag fills out and looks like glass from afar. But if this one gets knocked over during a raucous night of studying, you'll only be cleaning up water and

flowers, not shards of glass. They sell for \$6.95 a vase.

FUN FUTONS: Futons are a dorm room staple, and there's a lot of places around Ann Arbor to buy them. Art Van sells a brown one from its Click Clack line that's comfy. It has metal footings and collapsible overstuffed arms. Sit it up and use it as a couch, push it flat and use it as a bed. It retails for \$299.

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