



Making the most of dorm room space

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You're moving into a college dorm room, not a 3,300-square-foot home.

You'll be lucky if you have as much space as that walk-in closet you dreamed about as a teen. You know, the one big enough to throw all of the stuff that was on your bedroom floor when your mom came in and told you to clean your room.

According to a recent survey by www.dormbuys.com, 94 percent of college students say their dorm room is too cramped.

So how do you make the most of the 96 square feet that will become your new home? We asked some area residence-life experts for some help.

Here are 10 ways to save some space:

1.

Condense your closet.

"Don't bring your entire wardrobe, especially if you don't live too far

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If the school allows, having your bed lifted high enough for storage or to create a living space is a good idea to expand the limited space in a dorm room.

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from home," says Ron Dalton, director of housing and residential life at the University of [South Carolina](#) Upstate. "It'd doesn't get that cold until mid- to late October or November." He recommends bringing your summer wardrobe and then swapping out clothing items as it begins to get cooler.

2.

Don't buy too much before you arrive.

"This saves room in your car, plus allows you and your roommate to see your space and assess what you need," says Rhonda Mingo, assistant dean of students at [Converse College](#).

3.

Leave the non-essentials at home.

Christy Melton, assistant director of residence life at [Wofford College](#), says, "A good rule of thumb is to look at everything you have packed, and unpack half of it. We recommend that students only bring a few trinkets or keepsakes to put around their rooms. They will very quickly collect a ton of new memories, and they will wind up sending most of the nonessentials back home."

4.

Loft your bed or use bed lifts.

Elevating your bed can give you more storage or floor space. Lofts must be approved by the residential life offices at [Converse College](#), [Wofford College](#) and [USC Upstate](#). Students at [Spartanburg](#) Methodist College are not allowed to loft their beds, according to the Web site.

5.

Stay organized.

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Plastic, mesh or wicker storage boxes can hold clothes, linens, books, shoes, video games, etc. Just make sure you buy small containers that will slide under your bed or slip into your closet without too much difficulty, resident directors advise

6. Over-the-door hangers. "For their closet doors, which can hold shoes, clothing or other items," Melton said.

7. Use smaller appliances. Mini fridges and microwaves are allowed in most college dorm rooms; however, some schools have specific rules about the wattage and size of your appliances. For students at [USC Upstate](#), they can save a dime, as a microwave/mini-fridge combo is available in their residence halls, Dalton said. Converse students also have a mini-fridge supplied in their room as well.

8. Hand trucks, rolling carts or dollies. While they won't save you space in your car, they will save you some time as you are moving those heavy boxes to your dorm room. Just make sure someone can take them back for you once you are completely moved in.

9. Furniture. Most dorm rooms are equipped with a bed, desk, desk chair, armoire/closet, mirror and dresser for each occupant, so leave these items at home. But if you have the space, small folding chairs, mini futons or beanbags can make a comfortable space under a lofted bed.

10. Talk with your roommate. Two televisions and two micro-fridges are a little much, so decide who is bringing what. That way you don't end up using your precious space for storage until you go back home.



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