

Nursing School Supply List

Essential Items by Program Level

This comprehensive supply list covers everything you'll need throughout nursing school, organized by when you'll need it. Don't buy everything at once - start with essentials and add items as your program progresses.

Essential Supplies - Start of Program

Clinical Tools

Stethoscope	Quality matters. Littmann Classic III or Cardiology IV recommended. Budget option: ADC or MDF.
Penlight	Get one with pupil gauge. Keep a backup - they disappear easily.
Bandage Scissors	7.5 inch trauma shears. Keep sharp and clean.
Watch with Second Hand	Analog or digital. Needs to be cleanable and waterproof.

Uniform & Accessories

Scrubs	3-4 sets minimum. Check school requirements for colors. Choose comfortable, breathable fabric.
Clinical Shoes	Closed-toe, non-slip, comfortable for 12-hour shifts. Break them in before clinicals.
Compression Socks	Prevent leg fatigue and swelling. Invest in quality pairs.
Lab Coat	White coat if required. Check school specifications for length and style.
Name Badge Holder	Retractable clip style. Keep your ID accessible and professional.

Study & Organization

Nursing Drug Guide	Updated annually. Davis or Mosby recommended. Mobile app versions available.
Medical Dictionary	Taber's or Mosby's. Essential for understanding terminology.
3-Ring Binders	2-3 large binders for organizing notes, handouts, and study materials.
Notebook or Clipboard	For clinical notes and patient information. Keep it HIPAA-compliant.

Highlighters & Pens	Multiple colors for color-coding notes. Black pens for documentation.
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Tech & Productivity

Laptop or Tablet	For care plans, research, and online exams. Ensure it meets school requirements.
Printer with Scanner	For assignments and study materials. Consider all-in-one device.
USB Drive or Cloud Storage	Backup all your work. Use encrypted storage for HIPAA compliance.

Intermediate Level - Add Before Med-Surg II

Advanced Clinical Tools

Blood Pressure Cuff	Aneroid sphygmomanometer if not provided. Useful for practice and home.
Pulse Oximeter	Portable fingertip model for clinical assessments.
Reflex Hammer	For neurological assessments. Taylor or Buck style.

Reference Materials

Lab Values Pocket Guide	Quick reference for normal ranges. Laminated cards work well.
EKG/ECG Interpretation Guide	Pocket guide for rhythm recognition and interpretation.
NCLEX Review Book	Saunders or Kaplan. Start reviewing early, not just before graduation.

Advanced Level - Final Year & NCLEX Prep

Specialty Clinical Items

Tuning Fork	128 Hz and 512 Hz for sensory assessment in neuro rotations.
Otoscope/Ophthalmoscope	If doing advanced assessment course. Often provided by school.

Professional Development

Resume Portfolio	Professional folder for resume, certifications, and reference letters.
Business Cards	Simple cards with name, credentials, email, LinkedIn. For networking.
Professional Interview Outfit	Polished outfit for job interviews and networking events.

NCLEX Preparation

NCLEX Question Bank	UWorld, Kaplan, or Hurst. Online subscription essential for practice.
NCLEX Study Plan	Structured review course or self-study schedule. Start 2-3 months before exam.

Optional But Helpful Items

- Small backpack or tote bag for clinical supplies
- Phone charger and portable battery pack
- Energy bars or healthy snacks for clinical breaks
- Planner or digital calendar for time management
- Insulated lunch bag for long clinical days
- Personal hand cream (hospitals are dry)
- Small hand sanitizer for your pocket
- Noise-canceling headphones for studying

Money-Saving Tips

- Buy used textbooks or rent them. Check school library reserves.
- Split costs with classmates for optional reference books.
- Wait until you actually need specialty items before buying them.
- Check if your school provides any supplies or tool kits.
- Look for student discounts at medical supply stores.