

# THE ULTIMATE SUMMER BEFORE COLLEGE CHECKLIST

(FOR INCOMING FRESHMEN & THEIR PARENTS)

Congratulations! You are heading off on your own. Let's make that as seamless as possible with the following checklist. And remember, these are things to help you, not stress you! Take what works and leave the rest.

D2D Tip\* (see end of doc)



## Upon Acceptance – Top Five



You have given your acceptance and paid your deposit. Now what?

- ☐ Celebrate! Take a moment and give yourself a pat on the back. You have accomplished so much just getting to this point! Enjoy it.
- ☐ Download and start using a calendar App. Most Smart Phones come with one. If not, try Google Calendar or any other app that works for you. This is a great place to keep track of deadlines you don't want to miss. Enjoy a hard copy calendar? Get one and use it. **Moms & Dads, that makes a great gift along with some gel pens.**
- ☐ College-related Forms & Deadlines
  - ☐ Add your college deadlines into your calendar. Tuition payments, class registration, admitted student days, paperwork deadlines, housing registration, room-mate choice, training. Everything. **Consider making a family calendar to track together if you will be sharing responsibilities.**
  - ☐ Classes – the earlier you register, the better chance of getting the classes you want. Same goes for housing and move-in. Note: moving in the night before classes start is not optimal!
  - ☐ Set up your college e-mail.
  - ☐ Complete a FERPA release if you would like your parents to have access to your records.
  - ☐ Complete the FAFSA if you did not have to do so during the application process; it is usually required regardless of financial aid.
  - ☐ Make a payment schedule for tuition payments and decide who is making them. **(parents or you)**
  - ☐ Understand health insurance requirements. Are you going to carry personal insurance (through parents) or through the school. If you decide through your parents, make sure to fill out any appropriate waivers. Twice we forgot and had to ask for refunds. That process is a pain.
  - ☐ Understand if the college has other auto charges that require opt-outs. Parking could be one. Always check your statements. You don't want to pay more than you have to! **This is one where it may be worth a shared responsibility.**
  - ☐ Make sure **you and your parents are on school e-mail lists** so no one misses reminders. If you haven't gotten an e-mail from school yet, it may be time to call and check.
  - ☐ Read through policies and procedures, code of conduct, grading systems, etc.

## Upon Acceptance – Top Five (Cont'd)

You have given your acceptance and paid your deposit. Now what?

- ☐ Participating in Work/Study? Start and continue to look at on-campus opportunities and put all deadlines in your calendar.
- ☐ Get on school Instagram and Facebook groups, both parents and students. Follow school accounts on social media.
- ☐ **D2D Tip:** Begin meeting with other friends/parents/students who have experience at your chosen college. Ask questions, get school-specific tips, etc. After all, one of the keys to life is understanding ***It's All About The People, People.***
- ☐ Understand from other students and parents, what meal plan works best. I can't tell you how many parents still buy the most expensive meal plan and are left with hundreds of dollars on their account that cannot be carried over. Ask if you can go with a small meal plan and just add money.
- ☐ Understand what appliances are allowed and if you need to use a rental service. We had to rent a microwave/fridge combo, and they do run out!
- ☐ Look for a roommate if you are going that route.
- ☐ ***Oh, and if parents' weekend is in the Fall, make your travel and hotel reservations as soon as possible. You would not believe how quickly the hotels fill up!!!***
- ☐ **Enjoy your graduation time. This is a special month and the perfect time to soak up all the goodness.**

## June - Top Ten

You are in full summer mode, and it is time to start thinking towards drop-off

- ☐ As reality sets in and you start to really get into the nitty gritty, *here is my number one piece of advice* for the months leading up to drop-off: *Pause, breathe, take a break and return to it.* (PBBR) This is an exciting time AND, also can be stressful. To keep it as fun and stress-free as possible, PBBR. At any point, PBBR. Enjoy the summer.
- ☐ Make a list of everything you will need for your room/daily living. Need ideas? Check your college website, scour the internet, and check social channels.
  - ☐ Be practical and realistic. Maybe split your list into *Must Haves* and *Nice to Haves*.
  - ☐ **D2D tip:** Go color neutral for big ticket items like comforters and furniture. You may be able to use them in the years to come and that will be easier if they are neutrals.
  - ☐ Don't spend a lot on most things; they get trashed. My daughter's side table fell apart, rug was disgusting and lamp broke.
  - ☐ **D2D tip:** Check your dorm room configuration/measurements. Most dorms have twin XL beds; not twin. More often than not you can find virtual tours on YouTube or your College website.
  - ☐ Many dorms are HOT. Get the Woozoo fan. Just do it.
- ☐ Plan for back-to-school sales at your favorite retailers. They are usually in early-mid Summer.
  - ☐ Join Unidays and Student Beans; they publicize discount programs from big retailers like Amazon all the way down to dress shopping like Lulu and Princess Polly.
  - ☐ **D2D tip:** Download apps and/or get loyalty cards from grocery stores near campus/big-box retailers and join college shopping programs if available. Here are a few: Target, Wal-Mart, Amazon, Walgreens, Sephora, Ulta, CVS, Kroger, Publix, Albertsons, etc. Join the free ones except Amazon if you are unable to use your parent's account. They offer a pretty good discount at 50% off the membership and you get a lot for it.
- ☐ If you have a roommate, get to know her/him and plan your room. Discuss items that you may want to split up and bring (like rugs, a cute ottoman, curtains, etc.) You may want to consider a room-mate contract at some point including things like quiet times, visitors, cleaning, etc.
- ☐ Rushing first thing? Start getting alumni letters if required, get your social media in order, begin planning your get to know you video, plan your outfits & buy them (do not wait until all your favorite dresses are gone), etc. **D2D tip:** be authentic & true to you! Oh, and make sure you have deleted any inappropriate shots on your socials.
- ☐ Schedule *(you, not your parents)* your physical appointment and make sure all medical forms are completed, vaccinations obtained and submitted to your school.
- ☐ Understand how you will get any prescription medications you will need and where you will store them. Should any of them be locked up in a small safe that can be attached to your bed?
- ☐ Start helping around the house with laundry, cooking, grocery shopping, running errands. Learn from Mom & Dad.
- ☐ Go back through the *After Acceptance Top Five* to make sure you did everything and make travel plans for drop-off.
- ☐ Start scheduling fun things with friends and family to do over the next couple of months and take photos. More on that later.

## July - Top Ten

Summer is at a mid-point and so are you. Time to get serious with a plan for the next 4-8 weeks.

- ☐ Have the Money Conversation with your parents if you have not already.
  - ☐ Are they giving you a budget for out-of-pocket expenses? How much? Based on that, construct your monthly budget. **D2D Tip: Income – Fixed Expenses = Spending Money.**
  - ☐ Get a credit card in your name and discuss how you will pay off each month. Establishing credit is important. More important is paying it off each month. No late payments!!!
  - ☐ Same with a bank account and debit card. We provide our daughter with a monthly budget that is split between a credit card and bank account with a debit card. She pays off the credit card from her debit account.
- ☐ Schedule (**you, not your parents**) any additional appointments for the weeks leading up to drop-off so that you are not rushing around those last precious days before school: Hair, Nails, Dental, Eye, Dermatologist, etc.
- ☐ Start putting together your “Personal Go-To Bag”: meds, first aid, sunscreen, nail clippers/files, mini sewing kit, safety pins, lip balm, hand sanitizer, small mirror, contacts, eyeglasses, etc.
- ☐ Get a water bottle if you don’t have one. Why? You do not want to spend precious money on water.
- ☐ Get a phone wallet. Why? You must carry your school ID everywhere – what else do you carry everywhere? Your phone.
- ☐ After you receive your class schedule, review the syllabi for tech requirements (most students will need a computer and/or ipad) or other materials you need to bring to college.
- ☐ Order large bags from Amazon and Ikea that you can use for packing. Arrange to ship items to school or a friend nearby if needed. We used these [bags](#).
- ☐ Go back on the school website for any other updates and make sure that you have not missed anything.
  - ☐ Make sure your financial aid is in order, if applicable.
  - ☐ Make more plans with friends and family. Have fun!

## Last Month Before Drop Off - Top Ten

Crunch time! Start packing it up!

- ☐ Create packing list. **D2D Tip: Use Eva's College Capsule Wardrobe Planning Method.** Oh, and don't forget that the seasons will change. You can't just run to your closet and grab your coat so bring cold weather essentials with you – especially if you are not going home until Thanksgiving or Winter Break.
- ☐ Check in with your roommate to understand her/his move-in schedule and coordinate. 6 people (student plus two parents) can be a tight fit in small dorm rooms.
- ☐ Put your Move-In Kit Together: small tools (screwdrivers - Philips and flat head), scissors, tape (duct, regular and painters – the painters is perfect for planning out walls), removable hooks (most schools will not let you use nails), trash bags, box cutter, power strips, etc.
- ☐ Complete medical forms before leaving home. You can access these at [Mama Bear Legal Forms](#) (paid) or download free copies at [Rocket Lawyer](#) and [Law Depot](#). Just make certain you follow instructions as some may require witnesses/notarization. Take a copy with you to college and have your parents keep a copy.
  - ☐ HIPAA
  - ☐ Medical Power of Attorney
  - ☐ Living Will (if you have assets)
  - ☐ Durable Power of Attorney
  - ☐ Decide if you wish to be an organ donor.
- ☐ Remember those pictures of friends and family? Print them out to put up on your wall. A photo collage is a great conversation starter.
- ☐ Plan out your first week away. What activities and clubs are you going to participate in and/or get more information. Use your calendar.
- ☐ Go back through everything in the previous lists to make sure you have not forgotten anything. Remember, chargers, batteries, headphones, etc. Also, remember your driver's license, your medical forms and any other important documents.
- ☐ **D2D Tip:** Leave valuables at home! Leave passport at home unless you know you will need it.
- ☐ Eat at your favorite restaurants, do your favorite activities with friends and enjoy time with your family.
- ☐ Gather creature comforts – books, stuffy, blanket – things that you can grab when you might be feeling a little homesick.

## CAPSULE WARDROBE

Eva's tried and true 10 step method for a travel or college capsule wardrobe.

1. **PULL OUT YOUR FAVORITE PIECES.**
2. **FOR EVERY PIECE, PAIR IT WITH AT LEAST 3-4 OTHERS.**
3. **TAKE A SELFIE OF EVERY OUTFIT.**
4. **ORGANIZE THE PHOTOS INTO ALBUMS: EVERY DAY, EVENING, SPECIAL OCCASION, ETC.**
5. **INCREASE/DECREASE BASED UPON LENGTH OF TRIP/JOURNEY.**
6. **ACCESSORIZE WITH EASY TO TAKE PIECES.**
7. **DON'T FORGET SHOES; LIMIT YOURSELF TO 3-4 PAIRS FOR A 2-WEEK TRIP.**
8. **USE PRESSURE BAGS FOR MORE SPACE.**
9. **GET ALL TRAVEL SIZE TOILETRIES.**
10. **ENJOY STRESS-FREE MORNINGS AS YOU USE YOUR ALBUMS TO PUT TOGETHER YOUR DAILY OUTFITS.**

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## Once You Arrive - Top Five

It's Go Time - You've Got This!

- ☐ Follow your move in plan and say goodbye to your parents. This can be hard. Schedule good-byes right before a planned activity.
- ☐ Engage – in as much as you can. Meet new people, learn about the campus, walk your class route before school starts, learn about campus resources – participate in all orientation activities.
- ☐ Meet with your counselor as soon as you can and meet often. No one wants to get to the last year of college and realize that they can't graduate as they are short of credit.
- ☐ Make your travel arrangements for your visit home at Thanksgiving, Winter Break or both.
- ☐ Give your parents a hug and tell them you love them. They are going to miss you.

**D2D Tip:** When you see this, you are seeing a tip that is referenced in my book, *Dorm to Doorstep – Tips, Tidbits and Tales Every Young Woman Will Want to Read*. If you are a young woman, this a great resource presented in **full color** to help you navigate life away from home. You can pick up Dorm to Doorstep, read page to page or casually open to any page for the AHA of the day. Then put it down and pick it up again at your leisure. Every word comes from my place of truth from my own life and raising a daughter, ***just like you***. Thoughtful, respectful, and real—words you'll WANT to read. **Words that make you pause, stories that stick, and moments that leave you smiling—or even laughing out loud.**

You can purchase *Dorm to Doorstep* by visiting the author's website at <https://HilaryAfshary.com>.

