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### What NOT to buy: A common-sense guide to dorm-room purchases

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## What NOT to buy

### A common-sense guide to dorm-room purchases



By Katie Kemp

July 05, 2022

For more information, contact OBU's news bureau at [newsbureau@obu.edu](mailto:newsbureau@obu.edu) or (870) 245-5208.

ARKADELPHIA, Ark. – When I was about to move in as a freshman at Ouachita, I was over-prepared and overwhelmed. I got sucked into buying all the things I thought I would need and wound up with more clutter than space.

Just because Pinterest, Instagram and BuzzFeed show you all the cool things you *could* buy does not mean you *should* buy them.

I am here to give you permission to pass over these things you might feel pressured to buy. If some of these items are essentials for you in your everyday life at school, by all means, invest in those items. This guide may vary depending on your needs.

1. Printer. This is the bulky, pricey pitfall for many college students. All Ouachita students start the semester with print money that can be used on easily-accessible printers in dorm lobbies, the library and many other places around campus. Unless you are in a major that requires an abundance of printing, this purchase will sit mostly unused in your dorm.
2. Organizers. The baskets. The shoe pockets. The under-the-bed storage. It is too much. Buy a few baskets or bins – better yet, snag these items from a friend, family member or thrift store – and pick up more after you move in. Once you have lived in your room for a little while, you will have a better idea of how you want to organize things or what areas need a tidier system.
3. Kitchen supplies. Definitely pick up at least a couple plates, bowls and sets of silverware. A few Tupperware containers are also nice, but be careful not to get too carried away beyond these essentials. Coffee makers, blenders and whole dish sets are not necessities.
4. Too many cleaning supplies. Buy a hand vacuum or quick vacuum, cleaning wipes, all-purpose cleaner and something with a stronger base for cleaning the bathroom (such as a bleach cleaner). Any other cleaners can easily be picked up at Wal-Mart later if the need arises.
5. Decorations. These are a nice touch to make your dorm feel homey, but buy these things sparingly. Especially when it comes to added furniture, rugs or other large decor items, it is best to wait until your whole suite has settled in. It would be a sad waste of money to buy a nice rug or chair with no place to put it.

Coordinate with your roommate to try to avoid duplicate items, and don't feel like your room has to be magazine-ready on Day One. Move in your essentials and then purchase, thrift or borrow the things you are missing.

Bonus tip: Some of the purchases that *have* served me well? A power strip, a basic tool set, a quality umbrella, a calendar or planner and Command Strips!