

Vista



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Dorm Room Dos for the College Bound



For many students, leaving the comforts of home and moving into a college dorm can be a dramatic experience. At first glance, a dorm resembles a drab hospital room—small and bland. And, it has to serve many functions: bedroom, study area, dining room, living room ... all within four walls! However, you can help your child infuse their dorm with their personal style and make it a home away home. Here are five great tips to make the most of a limited space.

1 Choose multipurpose furniture and use vertical height of room.

Loft-style beds that provide a desk or sitting area underneath are ideal to gain additional living space, so don't be limited by floor plan and use vertical height of room whenever possible. For seating and organization, a tower bookcase can be turned on its side to function as a bench. The cubby holes are great to store books and decorative accessories, while pillows on top complete the look to make it more comfy as a mini sofa.

2 Buy furniture that requires minor assembly.

Most dorms come furnished with only the basics such as a bed and desk. Buying additional accent pieces that require minor assembly such as bookcases, end tables and dinette sets not only keep costs low, but also eases the move at the end of the school year if your son or daughter gets switched to another room, which happens frequently. Luckily, the majority of retailers offer a great selection of portable back-to-school furniture during this time of the year that can help you save on your budget.

3 Add color with accessories.

It is often prohibited to paint and you're faced with plain, white walls. The goal then is to be creative and introduce color with accessories! Drape the walls with curtain panels in fun and vibrant colors. Use area rugs, bedding and toss pillows in different patterns and textures to make the room pop without the need for paint.



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4 Create and hang artwork without fuss.

Some dorm rooms don't allow drilling or holes of any kind in the walls. But hanging pictures shouldn't be a challenge. During college your child's new best friends is double-stick tape, tension rods and self-adhesive hooks that can hang just about anything! For inexpensive and one-of-a-kind artwork, use magazine pages, calendars, or fabric inside a matted frame. I also love decorating with removable peel-n-stick art that comes in many different designs, even as wall-paper borders and letters that can create a graphic focal point on any wall. These products add personality, color and style to a room without the commitment. At the end of the semester, simply peel it off.

5 Define spaces with furniture layout.

I know at first glance it might look like one room, but you can define key areas in a dorm simply with furniture placement. A small bookcase, for example, can create a visual separation between two spaces and act as a half-wall. A floor screen or curtain panels hung ceiling-to-floor allow you to close off one side of the room when not in use. Designating each wall for a specific task also helps to visually separate the areas within the dorm.

With some ingenuity and creativity, a dorm room can become a blank canvas for your children to express themselves as they begin a new chapter. Think of it as a crash course in Decorating 101 getting them ready for their own place when they graduate! >>>



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