

Home Zone: Make the most of your move from home to dorm

by Maggie_Reed

It's time for many to move from home to the dorm. And while you can't bring it all with you, you can make the best of it.

EASY FIT - Choosing a Bed in a Bag set, like this one from T.J. Maxx, is an easy way to bring everything you need for a dorm room bed. CNS Photo courtesy of T.J. Maxx. WALLIES - This hip look from the '60s is a self-adhesive poster from Wallies - perfect for a dorm room wall. CNS Photo courtesy of Wallies. "The key to a complete dorm room is to combine essentials with decorative pieces, creating a functional and comfortable space," said Sonya Cosentini of T.J. Maxx Home Fashions.

Shopping at off-price stores, she said, lets you decorate for much less and therefore have some money left over for those special extras. Those personal touches are the key to making a dorm room one's own.

The following are the top 10 tips for dorm rooms from T.J. Maxx:

1 - Decide on a color palate to use for a base. This season, blues and browns are tops, but bright colors are always in fashion for dorm rooms.

2 - Think about storage options such as unique baskets or boxes in wicker, plastic or leather. Make them functional and attractive.

3 - Closets are small so make the best of sweater and shoe organizers. They are great space savers.

4 - You'll be spending a lot of time at your desk so choose one that fits your style. Cork and magnetic boards nearby are great for keeping track of study and social obligations.

5 - "Bed in a Bag" sets are perfect for dorms and generally cost less than buying two sheets.

6 - Don't forget to utilize the space under your bed. Fill the space with various organizers for clothes, linens, books and more.

7 - You'll need something to eat all those ramen noodles with so don't forget a few kitchen essentials.

8 - Make your room "homey" with accent pieces like rugs, pillows and artwork.

9 - Most dorm rooms only come with overhead lighting so bring along a desk lamp, reading light and maybe one just for decoration.

10 - Make the most of your towels by choosing oversized ones in colors that coordinate with your room. You'll also need some sort of tote to carry all your shower items in.

DORM DECOR

With the college season gearing up, it's time to tackle those impersonal dorm rooms. Although students-to-be may be limited in what they can do, Kathy Passarete, founder of Creative Home Expressions in Long Island, N.Y., offers these tips that will warm up any dorm room:

- Starting with the window, add some fun, bright curtains without putting holes in the wall for a rod. Tension rods, which range between \$5 to \$7 at Linens 'n Things, will solve this problem, while adding some color and softness to the window.

- Bedding for dorm room beds usually run longer than regular twin-size bedding. Add colorful solids or prints from \$20 and up at Linens 'n Things to make your bed feel more like home.

- Add personality and a unique touch with Wallies (www.wallies.com) for self-adhesive cutouts, like a retro-cool tie-dye pattern that provides temporary decoration. They're easily removable and don't leave a mark.

- Since storage is always an issue, start with an over-the-door laundry bag from Linens 'n Things at \$15. To use every inch of space, Target has under-bed storage containers starting as low as \$9.

- Keep your desktop as organized as the rest of your room. The Desk Lamp with Organizer features a gooseneck adjustable lamp and is \$25 at Target. Available in blue, red and black.

- Cathy Lubenski

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