

Move in Tips & Advice from the CofC Parent Listserv (updated Summer 2017)

- I know they will be excited to move it, wait 2 hours. Let the masses go first thing so you have less to work around later. That goes for unloading, unpacking and parking.
- We used Rubbermaid totes to pack all her stuff. A couple time a month I would pick one up with my regular shopping, so the extra really wasn't that extra. Also if it was raining, everything stayed dry! We wrote her name and room number on index cards we taped to the lids and containers. Her second year when the room number changed... we just needed a new index card. We have used the same containers for 4 moves. Thankfully this year she is staying in the same place!
- I did spend the extra dollar or two for the Clear Rubbermaid containers. Makes unpacking super easy! We could see what was in each box and not have to dig through any of the others looking for something. We packed like items together. (bathroom stuff, cleaning stuff, kitchen stuff, food stuff etc..) We would just stack them and bring them home, then bring them back to her when it was move out time. Except for her clothes, most of it stayed packed up until we moved her back in the next fall.
- We used a dolly to get everything from the car, to at least the bottom of the stairs. Don't count on using the elevators. I promise it was easier to just use the stairs.
- Small tool kits, level and a cordless drill will be used!
- WATER WATER WATER This cannot be said enough- Is South Carolina... Hot and humid in the summer! Bring plenty of water, and wear light colored, light weight clothes!
- Bring a change of clothes for after moving everything in. You will probably be very sweaty and setting up the room in dry clothes is a must. Also, pack a cooler with some water so you have some cold weather while setting up the room.
- Plan for rain, and hope for a cloudy day!
- Pay for the good rain boots the first time! I made the mistake of not doing that until her Jr year... when I bought the third pair because the others didn't hold up.
- Everyone that talks about Space Bags and how amazing they are, IS RIGHT! We put all her bedding, even the pillows in one XXL bag. Put it in a container and closed it up. Just be mindful how much you put in there.. you may not realize how heavy it becomes!
- If your student likes Starbucks and both of you have the app on your phones, you can send them a gift card via the app and they will have it in mins. I usually send one the week before finals to help with the late night study sessions.
- You will forget things, it OK! They have all the stores you will need in Charleston.

- A step stool of some kind for the 'vertically challenged" to be able to get into their lofted beds!!
- One of the easiest ways to move clothes is to keep them on the hanger and put a trash bag over them with the hanger hook sticking out. It keeps everything neat and then all the student has to do is hand then up and remove the trash bag.
- Be prepared for your child to be a bit overwhelmed, excited, nervous and quick to sometimes "bark" at you. Once it's all in and somewhat unpacked, he/she will calm down a bit. Remember that they are nervous, but don't want to necessarily show it.
- Try not to worry about remembering and packing every single item you could imagine your son or daughter needing for the dorm....
- I wrote her name and room # in large letters on everything (after all, all Rubbermaid looks the same)
- I would say they need about half of what they pack! It took us 3 trips to get her back home in May, good thing we are only 75 miles away!
- We took a visit to Target and Wal-Mart the day after move-in, with our list of items that we figured our daughter would be needing, only after seeing the bedrooms, measuring the bathroom space, looking at the kitchen and common areas, etc, etc.
- Another tip: remove items from the original box or plastic wrapping before packing for the trip. It makes the move in go faster with a lot less trash to deal with on that day.
- BYOTP: Bring your own Toilet Paper!!! There is never such a thing as too much toilet paper
- Our student (especially girls) will over pack! Just let them, they will send stuff home on your first visit.
- Have them check with their roommates about who's bringing a TV, Printer, Standing fan, Etc.
- When shipping packages, I highly recommend UPS or FedEx; you can track that status of your package. UPS from Central Virginia to Charleston was 2 business days. USPS up to 2 weeks!
- Hopefully your time will allow those shopping trips....I remember Target had a wonderful mini tool kit that came in a case, which came in handy, and we were also able to choose some shelving for over the commode, in the bathroom, which comes in all different sizing....

- Walk to the Harris Teeter on East Bay with another friend and share the cost of the Uber/cab ride back.
- Helpful is to have a local cab company phone number stored in their cell phone.
- Store public safety, Highway Patrol, Triple AAA, Charleston police, health services (on campus), hospital and other safety numbers in their cell phone
- Space Bags and suitcases work well. The rolling suitcases make it easier to get things to the room and then you just take the empties home.
- Try to eliminate big boxes - put items together the night before so you won't have a lot of trash. e.g. Rolling carts, etc.
- Bungees to keep things in place on the hand truck helped, too!
- Egg crate foam was daughter's favorite dorm purchase! And she was very happy to have her own tool kit. She needed it. Wal-Mart sells a nice canvas bag set, about \$20 that we added a few things to.
- The egg crate topper was great! The girls in the next room had purchased a bathroom shelf unit that was a good thing. Bed, Bath and Beyond had that.
- My daughter said rain boots are a must - at least for girls. When it rains, it pours in Charleston!
- Invest in an umbrella or some kind of rain wear! Trust me!
- When we took our older daughter to college we really wished we had brought a small tool kit to put things together (i.e. shelves, adjusting beds, etc.).
- I got a hand cart at Wal-Mart which has come in "handy" (LOL)
- Wished we'd had a hand cart of some kind for move in/out!
- The hand cart stored easily in the car and worked perfectly getting items in and out of Liberty. It was worth every penny of its \$50!! It is made in the USA by Harper and can be found in the hardware area of your store.
- Invest in a dolly NOW!!! It will be great for move in and if your student is like I was, they will have more stuff to move out with than they did when they moved in...If they don't send things home early!!!!
- We flew down and shipped packages with the dolly in it. Upon picking up the packages at Mail Services, we opened the one with the dolly in it and we were good to go. We each had a large suitcase on the plane (with all her clothes in it - mine was in a carry-on bag) so on the way home, I put the fold-up dolly in the suitcase along with some of those extra things she decided she really didn't need

- A fan and hand truck. My husband found a hand truck that could be altered to move as a cart (much like a small luggage cart in a hotel). We ended up using that method. We were even able to park our car about 1 1/2 blocks away and then load and reload from
- My kid laughed at me because I made up a small plastic box filled with band-aids, antiseptic, antibiotic ointment, Tylenol, cough drops, sinus/cold meds, tums, etc. etc...all in travel size packages. She stopped laughing when she caught her first cold/flu and it was all right there, in her room, close at hand saving her from a walk to CVS for a shopping trip while running a fever!
- You might want to bring a supply of those "sticky" hooks, because most walls are block, and nails are not allowed.
- Extra hanging bars for towels in the bathroom, placed over the back of the bathroom door was also a great way to have enough room for all the towels, since sharing spaces is the name of the game.
- Share the costs of supplying the bathroom (shower curtain, bathmat, rugs, etc). If your child has not made that contact with their roommates, just wait and get that stuff there. Mt. Pleasant has everything (Target; Wal-Mart; Bed, Bath & Beyond, etc.).
- I recommend a night light (Glade plug-in with light is great)
- Bed, Bath & Beyond has a program where they choose what they want in their local store (with a scanner) and you pick, when & what date to pick-up in the Mt. Pleasant store.
- Recommend a curtain and rod for Liberty to divide the sleeping area from the common area of the room.
- We also made certain that items which did not fit into boxes were put inside large trash bags, as we had been warned that sometimes you can be moving in a rain storm. We had sunny weather; however, it was a great help to know we were protected.
- If you have your student check in at front desk BEFORE you try to unload you will be out in the hot sun for a shorter period of time.
- Plastic tubs are the best way to transport everything that you can. Then just bring them home with you when unloaded.
- One person drives, the student goes to get their key, one person stays with the stuff on the curb! Make sure someone stays with your "pile" until everything is in the room.
- We purchased all the same size plastic containers so we could "unpack and stack" them. We planned w/her roommate to stagger our move in times, so there wasn't so many of us in there.
- The items that were not in containers (pillows, etc) I wrapped in large, black trash bags.

- We did bring a dolly and a strong teenage boy if you have one.
- We pulled up to the curb and her go inside for her key. Then we started unloading at the curb. By the time she came out, we were half way unloaded and she and her brother started climbing the stairs. They stacked in the dorm room.
- I know it seems like there won't be enough storage, but there is plenty. My daughter is a bit of a clothes horse and didn't have a problem. We bought one of those plastic cube units at Target. One with 2 drawers and 3 w canvas drawer insert. We put that ON TOP of the armoire. She could easily get to that with one of those fold up step ladders .I also recommend one of those as well, for making lofted beds every day. (I say that tongue in cheek--she did NOT make her bed every day!)
- Buy the 3M brand of "hanging tape". It really does just pull off when you're done with it.
- Pole lamp or standing light for the living room/dining area.
- Rug for the living/dining floor, large comforter for the love seat.
- Plastic containers to hold leftovers to heat in the microwave, also zip lock bags.
- Small plastic container to put at the bottom the refrigerator to hold fruit, etc.
- Stand up paper towel holder.
- Dish cloths, towels, soap
- Dishes
- Place setting of 4 (more environmentally friendly than paper)
- Silverware
- Tool kit
- First-aid kit
- Rain gear
- Surge protector
- Extra computer cords
- Black-out curtains
- A very loud alarm clock

- A plastic container FILLED with medicinal items such as Benadryl, Tylenol, thermometer, etc.....any and all medicines
- Copies of prescriptions, medical records, social security card, insurance card, passport
- Monthly calendar, planner
- Mattress pad
- SHOUT color savers for the wash, fabric softener
- We bought a clear plastic hanging shoe bag. My daughter hung it on the back of the bathroom door and it held all the makeup, washcloths, toiletries and other items for her and her roommate. Also the extra tall bed risers for Berry and she used large plastic bins underneath the bed like drawers. I also bought a tall wire shelf for the common room for them to use for storage. Bought a smaller one and she used it on her desk for over-storage. Just raise the bottom shelf to give clearance.
- Vacuum - even though there was a “community” vacuum on the floor of his dorm, the bag was usually full, the suction wasn’t good, and etc. as it was used a lot. I would suggest bringing some small vacuum and a Swiffer.
- I would recommend an all fabric 21-24 inch duffel like the Vera Bradley duffels for the girls or military style duffel for the boys that the kids can wad up for their trips home. The duffels should be as wide as they are long for maximum capacity. Hard case luggage takes up too much space in their dorm. My daughter's Vera Bradley duffel is 4 years old and has not lost a stitch. Also a quick access ID carry all w/a key ring is helpful outside of their regular wallet.
- In regarding clothing, it may also help to remind the kids that they will be home for thanksgiving or Christmas to bring back their summer clothes so they don't need to bring all of their clothing for the year. I would recommend a warm fleece that they can layer under their rain/windbreaker for an unexpected cold spell prior to the holiday.
- We invested in the blue Glad large, XL and XXL zip lock bags to use for washed bedding, clothing on hangers from their closet, towels, shoes, paper goods and other soft goods. They have the Ziploc feature with handles. They are located in the storage bag aisle in the grocery stores or in the college seasonal aisle at Target. We have used these same bags for the last 3 years and will reuse them for our son. Since it folds up and takes minimal space, my daughter kept them in her dorm & when it was time to move after term, she would have those items packed up by the time we got there.
- My recommendation would be to get as much seasonal college items like the foam bed toppers, XL twin sheets and comforters prior to getting there, we tried that once and they were sold out in all of the stores. Have them sent prior or bring them washed. FYI,

many of the packaged college bedding packs include scratchy poor quality sheets and pillow cases that are not worth its cost.

- Along w/the first aid/medicine kit, a can of Lysol to start using to spray the hallways and door knobs during flu season in September. They'll roll their eyes at first but will reach for it when everyone around them is sick.
- I would also recommend their favorite condiments to ease home sickness. Microwaveable Mac and cheese, plain and flavored rices, soups and pasta packs for those late night or busy times. And instant oatmeal packs and cereal for those busy mornings.
- For those who do not like tap water, we found a Brita pitcher was cheaper and easier than buying water bottles, besides the ecological benefits. The kids split the cost of the filter pack from Costco or Sam's Club. With that of course, reusable water bottles and a hot travel mug. Hot chocolate packs, a paring knife, small cutting board, and a Pyrex 2 cup measuring cup to warm up liquids in the microwave are to be considered for the dorm kids w/o full kitchens.
- We sent our daughter a multi surface spray or wipe cleaner. And disinfect wipes are highly recommended. Toilet brush, cleaner, shower caddy, garbage cans for bathroom and kitchen(should be assigned among roommates)
- We bought a small plastic container and filled it with all her first aid needs. Tylenol, band aids cough drops etc. Everything you could imagine your child may need if the get sick or get a boo boo :) She never had to run to CVS for those things which were nice when she wasn't feeling well. She used this her freshman year and we restocked it for sophomore year. I am sure we will do the same for her junior year.
- Mini tool kit and sewing kit. Additionally, I did for my daughter something my sister had done for me when I went away to school – I bought her some flat gift wrap, tape, some blank greeting cards, a couple of gift bags and some stamps. She said that this came in handy!!
- You may need to add: perfume, Nyquil, cough drops, RAID, Brita System, reusable water bottle and ink cartridges for printer.
- Duct tape, come in handy taping cords to baseboards and now comes in lots of different decorative designs.
- Flashlight
- A Laundry baskets are only a good idea if they fit under the bed, or on top of something, otherwise they take up valuable floor space. We found a collapsible hamper that my

daughter also uses to transport her clothes back and forth to the laundry room (it is from Target).

Advice from our "seasoned parents"

From Scott:

I thought it might be helpful to share our experience with the move-in process from last weekend. My daughter is attending the Summer Preview program this week so she was able to move in last Sunday. We arrived Saturday morning (flew down from NY), checked into our B&B near campus and headed to Mt Pleasant where my wife had taken advantage of the Bed Bath & Beyond pre-order process. I'll admit that this was my first time in the store (I will typically exhaust all online channels before shopping in person) and I must say it was pretty well [organized...they](#) put everything from your order out on a table in the back and then you decide what you do and don't want to keep. They have a CofC housing table set up in the back with printouts on the dimensions and needs for different rooms. There were some items that we decided not to get until we saw the room in person.

On the way back we had some time to kill so drove down to Sullivan's Island to explore a bit, and then on the return trip, we stumbled upon Shem's Creek (in Mt Pleasant) which is a really great place to have lunch. For those unfamiliar, there is a half dozen waterfront restaurant along a large saltwater creek. Many boats pulling up to the restaurants and there was a kayak/SUP rental place there. The highlight was all of the dolphins swimming around in the water.

Back in Charleston, we got to experience the lowland flooding...it was something to see and I learned quickly that if you're in traffic on Meeting Street, chances are that the side streets are unpassable so don't try to find an alternate route...fortunately, I managed to get in reverse before the water got too deep and avoided turning our rental car into a boat. Our parking lot had about 6-12 inches of water. While my daughter had packed boots, I spent much of the time barefoot and carrying my shoes as I unpacked.

Sunday morning saw a quick drive out to Walmart in Mt Pleasant (for cleaning supplies and some forgotten items) just in time for another incredible thunderstorm...apparently they just stay in one place and don't move much like they do up here in New York. Mt Pleasant had 4 inches of rain while our friends at Folly Beach had sun. The best thing we bought at Walmart (due to the weather) was a box of the clear recycling bags...they're certainly not as durable as contractor bags, but you can see what's in them and they keep stuff dry...plus they're good for poking arm and head holes in and wearing in a pinch. Useful if rain is in the forecast on move-in day as you have to unpack a lot of stuff onto the sidewalk

MOVE-IN DAY:

For move-in day, make sure you and your student have eaten and bring something to drink...because it will likely take more time than you're expecting. If you are going to McAllister or Berry, be aware that they make St Phillip Street a one way for move in day. It runs from Vanderhorst Street toward Calhoun Street and they will make you go around the block to get in

the line of cars coming from that direction. There will be a police officer at the corner of Vanderhorst and Calhoun directing traffic. If you don't have your access pass at that point, then you will be redirected. Once past the checkpoint, let them know which dorm you're heading for and you'll be directed closer to that entrance.

Your student is better off checking in at the dorm ahead of time so that everyone will be ready to help by the time you pull up to the curb. If you can, definitely wait a half hour to 45 minutes after your scheduled move in time to bring the car around. I made two trips with the car from our B&B on George Street, and the second time around there was basically no wait at all. One idea is to have your student and maybe one or two other family members check in on foot with a couple items or rolling suitcases (maybe bring up the stuff for setting up the bed)...and then bring the car around about 20 minutes later with the rest of the gear. There were plenty of students available to help unpack and guard stuff on the curb. For Berry, we used the elevators to bring stuff up and the stairs to come down.

Before you unpack or open anything, figure out whether you want to move the furniture [around....mu](#)ch easier to move things when they're empty. If you're putting a rug in, definitely get it positioned before you put the bed risers in place. If you're putting in anything that hangs on a door (i.e. towel bars, mirrors), make sure the door still closes when it's in place.

Things that came in handy or that we bought after moving in:

- **Cleaning wipes**
- **Tape measure** (which was in tool kit) so we could measure available space under the bed after the risers were in...we bought storage for that space the next morning.
- We forgot **Light Bulbs** for the new lamps we had bought...CVS had them
- **Contact paper** for the inside of drawers...even after a cleaning, they could use that extra layer.
- A big **garbage bag** (if you don't have lots of shopping bags) for garbage.
- A **flashlight** (or headlamp) would have come in handy as the rooms are a bit dim (until all the lights are in) and it helps with some assembly of items if your eyes aren't what they used to be
- A **box cutter or big scissor** for breaking down boxes (there should be a recycling spot for them in the common area)
- If you have one of those cloth hanging shoe/clothing racks (they hang inside wardrobe), chances are it will be longer than the wardrobe. My youngest daughter came up with the idea of using clips (paper clip, black binder clips, hair clips? etc.) to shorten up the bottom to fit.

After a certain period of time following move-in (it was 9PM for us), the dorms revert to security level and your student will have to sign you in and out and be with you at all times that you're in the building.

Mail services is directly across the street from McAllister and your student can check in there to get their box number and key (Make sure you get their new address from them).

From Madelyn – parent of a graduate (she wrote this when her freshman started):

There are several topics I thought I, as a Local, might be able to help with, for those of you coming from a distance. . For Reference, I am the mother of a freshman who started early (Summer II) staying now in McAlister, Orientation in Liberty & moving to George in Aug. WHERE TO STAY: Besides hotels, consider B&B's. There are lots in downtown Charleston, many within walking distance to CofC. The prices are about the same as the hotels, and you can't beat the experience of staying in a historic house! Also consider the beaches: Folly, Sullivan's, Isle of Palms; and the Suburbs: Mt. Pleasant, North Charleston, West Ashley, etc. There are several hotels in the "Medical District" (4-5 blocks down Calhoun St. from CofC.

Always ask for a College of Charleston discount! Mention why you're coming to town, etc. Search the internet & then call the property's local number for usually the best deal. Your student may get discounts with their student ID card at many stores.

Many B&B's use a central reservation service. The Visitor's Center is always able to help www.charlestoncvb.com

DOCTORS/HOSPITALS: C of C is 4 blocks away from 2 of the best hospitals in the southeast. Medical University of SC (MUSC) is a public (state supported), teaching, hospital, including a children's hospital, and the private hospital, Roper is literally next door to MUSC. Roper was opened in the 1850's and actually "gave birth" to MUSC. BOTH are top notch & we have a SLEW of great specialists, and all the top equipment. When looking for new specialists, I suggest you consult your insurance company's PREFERRED NETWORK. Most cover both MUSC and Roper (and their affiliated doctors), but some may cover one & not the other. Best to check now. Student Health Services can then further help narrow down your choices. You will get excellent care at either Roper or MUSC.

SHOPPING WHEN YOU GET HERE: We have Walmart, Target, B,B & B, Tanger Outlet, etc. You will need a car/van as none are close (less than 5 miles) to C of C. Have your student prepare a list, visit local stores of chains we have, and their websites. Know EXACTLY what you want BEFORE you get here. There will be more add-ons that pop up when you get here. You'll be surprised how tiring shopping in our Aug heat & humidity will make you! You won't get as much done in a day as you think you will. And you can always ship stuff later if needed. Dorms are clean when they move in, but remember they will need cleaning supplies to keep them that way! Don't forget kitchen supplies (depending on dorm)

MAIL/SHIPPING: Mail Services is located across the street from McAlister, so plan accordingly, as this is where all UPS/FedEx/USPS deliveries will go.

Students must carry their mail/packages to their dorms from there. Mailbox numbers are assigned during orientation. I don't know how to send packages prior to that. I'd suggest you contact Mail Services for more info.

FOOD/MEALS: CVS and Walgreens close to campus have a good selection of basic fresh food items such as milk, eggs, and bread; some frozen foods, and canned or prepackaged goods. Check your move-in date! You may have to provide up to a week's worth of meals. The closest "major" grocery stores are Harris Teeter on E. Bay St. (@ Hasell St. {pronounced "Hazel"}), There are small "corner" markets around closer to campus, if you are willing to explore.

WEATHER: Expect hazy, hot, & humid with a chance of afternoon thunderstorms every day. That's pretty much our standard summer forecast.

Temperatures in Aug, usually run 95-100+, with very high humidity & UV index. Plan to stay hydrated, especially on move-in day! But always check the tropics for approaching storms (although Sept. is usually when we see the most activity here).

STORAGE: Think VERTICAL! As much as you can, go up! Under bed is also often overlooked space, especially for less used things like extra linens. For under bed, think plastic bins, plastic drawer units, boxes etc. with wheels on them for easy pullout/push back (i.e.) shoe rack etc.

LIGHTING: Having visited many dorms during several visits to CofC, I (and others) always commented on the "darkness of all the dorms. Overhead lighting is not always so great, and the sun is not always shining in brightly. So I recommend lamps, lamps, and maybe more lamps. George has NO overhead lighting in the bedrooms AT ALL. So my daughter has a desk lamp, a bedside lamp, and a 5-bulb floor lamp with moveable arms (Walmart & Target \$20-30). A clamp on lamp may also be useful. Don't forget surge protectors!

CURTAINS: Use "tension" curtain rods. We're doing 2 rods: one with sheers, and one with heavier curtains for privacy. The Windows are set in so you have about 6" of useable shelf at the bottom of the windows...plenty of room for the mini-blinds and curtains in front of them.