



“

One of the hardest things about starting college was embracing the new and unknown. For a while, I kept to myself and talked to friends from home almost every night. Once I embraced new friendships as well as clubs and student organizations on campus, I realized I had a new home and a great community.”

Matt Kratochvil
UW Student

STARTING *the* SEMESTER

*T*he months and days before you leave for college can be some of the most exhilarating and thrilling moments of your life. Family members are proud; friends are sad; you have an opportunity to start over and be a new you. That's a nice thought. But people rarely address the fact that starting over and beginning college do not happen overnight. It takes time, and doing it well takes guidance -- guidance which can feel scarce in your first semester. That's where we come in. This fall semester guide, brought to you by the LeaRN program, will give you insider's advice from students and faculty to help you excel at the University of Wyoming. Think of this like a strategy guide; use it for helpful advice on performing the best you can in your academics while maintaining as much time as you can to have fun and enjoy a rich life outside of college.

Starting the Semester

CONTENTS

NAVIGATING THE ROOMMATE RELATIONSHIP	12
Questions to Build a Roommate Contract	13
CREATING A BUDGET AS YOU START COLLEGE	14
Activity: Develop a Personal Budget Sheet	15
SETTING SHORT AND LONG-TERM GOALS	17
Activity: Write Down Your Goals	18

“ People don’t talk much about the challenges that freedom presents at the start of college. I know I was excited to be outside of the house, but that was because of visions free time and fresh adventures. The first few weeks of school, I was challenged getting to class on time and getting my homework done. I didn’t know where things were or how long things would take me. I would recommend that any incoming student figure out how long it takes to get to class and ask their teachers how much time to allot for homework – professors won’t mind such questions, they’ll appreciate and remember you for it.”

- Jaron Bartosvek, *UW Student*

AUGUST *2018*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	
		Registration	First day of class			

Navigating the **ROOMMATE RELATIONSHIP**

Experiences with roommates range from the start of a “best friends forever” relationship to friction that leads to finding new roommates before the first semester ends. The reality is more often in the middle. Our goal is to help you make the right steps to building a positive relationship, the type of bond that allows you to live peaceably for a year -- and hopefully you can build a lasting friendship that is a positive, memorable part of your college experience.

HOW TO GET ALONG WITH YOUR COLLEGE ROOMMATE

From Campus Explorer's article, "How to Get Along with Your College Roommate"

Every once in a while, you hear a story about two randomly matched roommates who become best friends. Beating all the odds, they find miles of common ground, discover that they're actually a lot alike, and become extremely close throughout college.

It's a nice story, but it sounds like something you'd see on an after-school special.

Realistically, you're likely to encounter some tension and even conflict with your roommate. Many roommates do become friends, but what if you can't get along with yours? Don't despair -- you can still overcome your differences and have a healthy relationship with your roommate.

First Impressions Matter

Like it or not, people are prone to making snap judgments. Whatever impression you give of yourself when you meet your new roommate is likely to stick with him or her, whether it's accurate or not.

Even if you're still a little grumpy from moving in, try to be as amiable and positive as you can through the first few days. Make eye contact, be polite and show an interest in getting to know your new roommate. If he or she likes you right off the bat, they'll be more likely to respect your needs and boundaries later on.

Roommate Rules and Boundaries

As you and your roommate get to know each other, make sure you set some boundaries. Ask him or her about their needs and experiences in creating a workable living environment, then share your needs. Calmly and politely explain your ideal living arrangements while also listening to your roommate's needs.

It's crucial to get this out of the way early. The longer you wait, the more you risk a possible conflict due to clashing lifestyles. Remember, compromise is essential here. You probably won't get everything you want, and neither will your roommate, but the important thing is to create a comfortable, healthy living environment for both of you.

Open Communication: The Key to a Successful Roommate Relationship

Talk to your roommate. We can't stress this enough. Don't avoid conversations because you're afraid that they might be awkward. This doesn't mean you have to be best buds who share everything, but if your roommate does something inappropriate, you should let him know. If you let problems pile up without addressing them, the relationship will start to sour. Address issues as they come up, and you'll be able to defuse them more easily.

Finding Solutions to Roommate Conflict

Even in the worst roommate situations, there's always a way to resolve the conflict. Sometimes this could mean peer mediation to work through the problems. Or it may mean switching roommates.

Whatever the end result, it's important to remember that there's always help. If you've tried everything and can't get through to your roommate, try talking to your resident adviser (RA). Your RA will listen to both sides of the conflict and help you and your roommate find a reasonable solution. If you find your roommate conflicts still aren't resolved, speak to the residence coordinator for your building.

In your first few days at UW, you and your roommate will be tasked with completing a roommate agreement. Use this agreement as a way to start a conversation with your roommate about the following questions.

1. Who gets what side of the room?
2. How clean do you want the room to be? Will you establish a schedule for cleaning? If so, when will you clean?
3. What will be your policy for borrowing each other's stuff?
4. When will your quiet hours be?
5. What are the rules if someone is sleeping or napping outside of quiet hours?
6. Are you okay with having guests in the room? If so, when? If so, do you wish to put a cap on how many?
7. Are you okay with people staying the night? If so, do you wish to establish parameters on when this can happen and in what context?
8. How do you feel about going out? What will be your policy regarding parties?
9. Do you want to have an accountability policy for homework, class or work?
10. Anything else?

For information about Residence Life, dining, and other first-semester issues, check out the Mobile App UWyo Guide and social media handles:



UWyo
Guide



UWyo Reslife
& Dining



UWyo
RLDS



wyorlds

CREATING *a* BUDGET *as you* START COLLEGE

From "College Budget Template: Keep Track of Your School Expenses." (mint.com)

College textbooks, a night out with buddies, furnishing your room - the expenses during your college years can quickly and easily burn a hole through your bank account in no time if you don't have a detailed college budget set up. No one enjoys counting pennies and controlling spending, but budgeting is a necessary part of financial health. Your college years in particular are the perfect time to learn how to budget properly before real adult life kicks in.

Don't think you need to maintain a budget? Here are some reasons why it's important to have one set up now, using a college budget template, as you start your first year of college.

Mom and Dad Aren't Constantly Watching Over Your Shoulder

While your parents may have had a dominant handle over your expenditures while you were living at home, you don't have this type of supervision when you're off on your own. Many times this financial freedom can get the best of college students, who end up finding themselves tempted by the myriad of items that are available to buy. Without mom or dad there to say "no," you could find yourself with mounting debt. Having a budget is a responsible step towards adulthood and maturity that helps you take control of your spending.

Having a budget in place can help you delegate every dollar you make.

Your Funds Are Probably Limited in College

Most college kids don't exactly have a ton of cash to work with, which makes the art of budgeting even more crucial. No matter where the funds are coming from - mom and dad, a part-time job, or even a scholarship or award - you'll most likely have to be savvy and learn how to stretch your dollar. Money has a tendency to be spent on 'wants' rather than 'needs' when no budget exists (more in the November chapter!). Having a budget allows you to see if whatever money is coming in is adequately covering your expenses, or if you have to look for more ways to supplement your income, or lower your spending if possible.

Managing Your Money

Having a budget on a detailed spreadsheet with the help of a college budget template allows you to better control your money. It will show you where your money needs to go, including your savings, expenses, and extra spending money. This tool will also provide you with a reference to identify what your financial position is at the end of each month. For instance, if you've allotted \$100 to be spent on entertainment, but notice that all the receipts you've kept that month total \$150, you know you need to cut back \$50 from your entertainment expenditures.

What Should You Include in Your Budget?

A budget can be as detailed as it needs to be for you. When it comes to your expenditures, don't leave anything out. Include items such as textbooks, tuition, room and board, student loans, transportation, groceries, entertainment, and other miscellaneous items. When it comes to your income, make sure to include anything on top of your part-time job that may bring money in, including awards, allowance from parents, and so forth. At the end of the month, compare the difference between the two, which will tell you whether your income covers your expenses, or whether you're ending up in the red.

COLLEGE STUDENT BUDGET TEMPLATE

Monthly income for the month of: _____

ITEM	AMOUNT
Estimated Monthly Income	
Financial Awards	
Allowance from Parents	
Other Income	
TOTAL	

Monthly expenses for the month of: _____

ITEM	AMOUNT
Rent	
Utilities	
Cell Phone	
Groceries/Car Expenses	
Student Loans	
Insurance	
Medical Expenses	
Credit Card	
Entertainment	
Laundry	
Miscellaneous	
TOTAL	

Semester costs for the month of: _____

ITEM	AMOUNT
Tuition	
Books	
Lab Fees	
Deposits	
Other	
TOTAL	

How am I doing?

ITEM	AMOUNT
Monthly Income	
Monthly Expenses	
Semester Expenses	
TOTAL	



SHORT & LONG TERM GOALS

Freshmen enter college with a range of real world experiences, from working full-time to never having done laundry to only having the culinary skills to make instant Ramen. Being independent is more about a mindset than an actual skill set. You can learn to do anything, from Calculus to making marinara from scratch if you are willing to own that you are responsible for learning to do it. This will apply to a range of tasks in the next four years, spanning from paying bills to academics.

Famous author, Annie Dillard, once said, “How we spend our days is how we spend our lives.” This is an important mantra as you move through college. Your college degree is not a golden ticket to a new life; rather, you spend four years working towards a degree, and those four years teach you how to live.

“

I want to quote the advice I received during my freshman orientation: “when you are in a new town, school, or place in life, sometimes the best thing you can do is show up. Show up and be open and willing to try new things.” Show up for class, for clubs, and for your friends. Remember that people here care about you, whether it’s the student next door in the dorms or your English 1010 professor. Make a great freshman year for yourself!

-Peyton Lunzer
Graduate Student, College of Education
Adjunct Faculty, Synergy



August REFLECTION

Answer the following questions considering how you want to make a new home and how that will make your time at the University of Wyoming. Not only will this help you settle into the semester, some research shows that students who write down goals are more likely to overcome obstacles and to achieve their dreams.

Jot down five goals for your freshman year:

Now write down five “two-year” goals:

Write down five “five-year” goals:

Write down five “ten-year” goals:

