

The Hidden Costs of College



TRANSPORTATION — \$250-\$300/semester

The cost of public transportation, taxis, trains, and buses to get around town or even to get home add up quickly. Find out if the public transportation system offers a discount with a student ID. Check with your college's transportation policy. Many colleges and universities offer free transportation accessed by a student ID card.

TIP: Budget transportation needs ahead of time.



CLOTHES — \$100-\$200/semester

Even if you shop for a brand new wardrobe before leaving for college, you will need to do some shopping. Sharing a dorm and/or laundry room with other students, it's easy for clothes to go missing.

TIP: Try out professional wear and prepare to land your first job!



CLEANING & LAUNDRY SUPPLIES — \$25/month

Living in a shared space requires that you keep it clean and neat. Cleaning supplies, air fresheners, dryer sheets, laundry detergent, and other items are a necessity and need to be considered in your budget.



FURNISHINGS — \$50-\$150/semester

You might want to liven up your space by purchasing a lamp, rug, lights, or other decorations for your room.



TOILETRIES — \$25/month

Bath soap, face wash, shampoo/conditioner, and other personal hygiene products are a necessity.



FOOD — \$50-\$150/month

Local pizza and burger spots, ethnic foods and specialties from other local establishments may become part of your diet.

TIP: It's a good idea to go shopping for food you can keep in your dorm room such as bottled drinks, snacks, coffee, and granola bars.



ALL THE EXTRAS — \$100-\$300/semester

Being part of college life means there are a lot of opportunities for fun experiences. There will be frequent opportunities for going out with friends to the movies, concerts, sporting events, and other recreational activities.

TIP: Put aside some cash for these experiences.



BOOKS & SCHOOL SUPPLIES — \$200-\$800

A portion of your financial aid may cover the cost of books for a semester. If not, it will be up to you to pay for them. Books are expensive and are a necessity to assist with coursework. Check your financial aid office for specific details about covering the cost of your college books. Ask the professor if the books are actually required. Don't go shopping for school supplies until you receive your syllabus from your professor.*

TIP: Consider renting books; it can save you hundreds of dollars.



HEALTH INSURANCE & MEDICAL COSTS

\$75/semester

There may be a time when you get sick and need to see a doctor. Many colleges offer health insurance plans to cover the costs of being ill. If you are switching from your family's health insurance plan to a college or university plan, you may experience a change in co-pays and deductibles.

TIP: Check with your college and insurance carrier to determine your coverage options and rates.



CELL PHONE — \$50-150/month

A cell phone is a survival tool in college. Your monthly phone bill can be pricey, so talk with your local cell phone providers to determine the plan that works best for you.

TIP: See if there is a student discount.



CAMPUS SOCIAL CLUBS & ACTIVITIES —

\$20-\$100/semester

Campuses have events and clubs that run year-round. It's great to get involved and participate in these events, but some aren't free. Expect to pay for things like Greek Life, sporting events, dances, and college concerts.

TIP: Check out the free activities on campus and take advantage of them!



COFFEE & ENERGY

DRINKS — \$50-\$75/month

Between an exciting social life, class projects, part time work, and studying, a daily dose of caffeine seems to be the growing trend in college. The cost of buying lattes, cappuccinos, and other drinks can really add up! Instead of buying a daily cup of joe consider making your own coffee.

TIP: Investment in a single-brew coffee machine and save a ton of money.



NOTE: Dollar amounts are just an estimate.

*Always check with your college's financial aid office if you have specific questions.