

# **HOUSING GUIDE**

**THE ORACLE  
FALL 2019**

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# OFF THE GRID

## OFF-CAMPUS SAFETY

## CHOOSING AN APARTMENT A SAFETY GUIDE

**The Dean of Students Office and the Off-Campus Safety Committee encourage you to make safety a priority when choosing an apartment.**

### DOORS: WHAT TO LOOK FOR

- All outside doors are solid core or metal-clad in construction
- If hinges are on the outside, the pins are the non-removable type
- All outside doors have deadbolt locks
- Sliding glass doors have screws in the frame that prevent the doors from being lifted up and out of the tracks
- Sliding glass doors have a secondary security device (Charlie bar or dowl)

### ABOUT STRIKE PLATES

A strike plate is found on the doorframe where the lock catches and it should have an extended surface area. The strike plate itself should be embedded in the door's frame and 2 x 4 studs with 3-inch wood screws.

### DOOR LOCK TYPES

- Double Deadbolt – requires a key to operate it from both sides
- Single Deadbolt – requires a key on the exterior and thumb-turn on the inside.
- The bolts in each of these should have a 1-inch throw into the door jam.

### EXTERIOR DOOR TYPES

- Solid wood or wood core – High Security
- Metal-Clad – High Security
- Hollow Core – Poor Security
- Sliding Glass – Poor Security

### EXTERIOR LIGHTING: WHAT TO LOOK FOR

- Entrances are well-lit
- Lights turn on automatically at night
- All lights work properly and are protected or placed at a height that will not allow the casual removal of bulbs
- Parking lots are well illuminated

### LANDSCAPING: WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Does the landscaping create “blind spots” which allow someone to stand or crouch unobserved by your window? Shrubs or other plants around the apartment should be trimmed back to allow for a clear view of all windows and doors. These items should be kept less than 2 feet tall or below the lower edge of your window.

### FENCES AND PARKING AREAS: WHAT TO LOOK FOR

- Fences or gates do not block visibility of window, walkways, yard, entrances or parking areas
- All parking spaces or carports have good lighting and allow for an unobstructed view of the entire area

### SPECIAL SECURITY TIPS

- Engrave all property (TV, DVD player, laptop computer, camera, etc.). Your driver's license number is a good choice.
- Use extra security when living in an apartment on the ground floor.

**Dean of  
Students Office  
MSC 4301**

**[usf.edu/deanofstudents](http://usf.edu/deanofstudents)**

# Satisfy your tastebuds the healthy way



Freshly offers breakfast, lunch and dinner options that are made in a gluten-free and in a peanut-free facility. **SPECIAL TO THE ORACLE**

By **Brittany Loeffler**  
U L O O P

Between working, studying, having a social life and taking time to relax, it can be difficult to find time to cook a healthy and nutritious meal for yourself. Recently, meal kit delivery services have made cooking a nutritious meal at home easy and extremely convenient.

With so many meal kit delivery services available now, you may feel overwhelmed when trying to decide which one best fits your diet and lifestyle. These are the top ten meal kit delivery services that you should try.

## HelloFresh

HelloFresh offers subscribers customizable meals. That means

you can choose what type of protein you would like or choose a vegetarian option if you prefer. These meals come in compact containers, so they fit in your refrigerator nicely. There are three different levels, so you can always increase the more comfortable you become with cooking.

Depending on just how busy your life is, you can opt for the “Quick” meals from HelloFresh. These meals take about a half hour to prepare and cook, which means you have more time to cross items off your to-do list and less time worrying about what you’re going to eat for dinner.

If health and nutrition are important to you, then you can also opt for the “Fit” meals, which are packed with nutritious ingredients.

HelloFresh offers two meal sizes. You can order meals prepared for two people or four people. This is perfect for those busy parents who still want to make healthy dinners for their kids.

Price: \$60 for three meals per week portioned for two people or \$96 for three meals per week portioned for four people.

## Blue Apron

Blue Apron was one of the first meal kit delivery services to come on the scene, so they definitely know what they are doing when it comes to providing delicious easy to make meals.

The beauty of Blue Apron is that most of their meals take just under an hour to make. You don’t have to worry about missing

any ingredients or wasting time chopping or measuring anything. Just follow the instructions and throw it in the pot, oven, or whatever the recipe calls for.

If you like to enjoy a glass of wine with your dinner, this meal kit delivery service also offers a wine subscription. It’s basically a date night, but cheaper and you get to stay at home in your pajamas.

Price: \$60 for three meals per week portioned for two people or \$96 for three meals per week portioned for four people.

## Home Chef

Home Chef has a meal kit for just about anyone. The meal kit is fully customizable, so if you are avoiding a certain food group such as meat or dairy or if you

are allergic to something, you can opt for it to be left out of your meal kit. If you are a planner, Home Chef allows you to choose and plan your meals up to five weeks in advance.

Home Chef also offers meals based on the amount of time you have to cook, such as their “Express” meals. This meal kit only takes about half an hour to prepare and cook. If you enjoy spending time in the kitchen, you can opt for a more intense and intricate meal kit. Or, if you are completely new to cooking for yourself at home and need some tools, Home Chef has you covered with essential kitchen tools.

Price: \$19.90 per meal portioned for two people. \$59.60 for three meals portioned for two

n See **MEALS** on **PAGE 5**



## MEALS

Continued from PAGE 4

people per week. Free delivery for orders over \$45.

### Freshly

The meal kits from Freshly surely live up to the brand's name. Unlike some meal kit services, Freshly never freezes their ingredients, so they are always fresh for you. If you are really on a time crunch during the week and have no time to even cook a meal kit, then Freshly is here to answer your prayers. They deliver fully cooked meals that you just need to pop in the microwave. You'll have a delicious meal in just a few minutes.

Freshly also makes all of their meal kits gluten-free and in a peanut-free facility, which is great news if you have a peanut allergy. Freshly is also one of the few meal kit services that offer breakfast, lunch and dinner options. So, you can ensure that you always have a meal ready for you no matter what time of day it is.

Price: \$50 for four meals portioned for one person per week. \$108 for twelve meals portioned for one person per week.

### Green Chef

Green Chef aims to make 90 percent of the ingredients included in their meal kit USDA-certified organic. That means you don't have to worry about GMOs or harsh chemicals touching your food. There are multiple menus that customers can choose from including a paleo, Keto, gluten-free, vegetarian, vegan and carnivore menu, so you don't have to sacrifice your preferred diet in order to have a meal kit delivered to you.

The recipes are extremely

easy to follow and are even color-coded, so there is very little room to make a mistake while preparing your meal. What's even better is that all of Green Chef's meal kits can be prepared in just 30 minutes, no matter how simple or fancy the meal is.

Price: \$79 for three meals prepared for two people per week. \$95 for two meals prepared for four people per week.

### Why Try Meal Kit Delivery

We've already established just how convenient and easy a meal kit delivery service is. You don't have to worry about going to the grocery store or planning out your meals for the week because everything you need is shipped right to your door.

Not only do these meal kit delivery services offer nutritious, organic and healthy foods, but it's also delicious! That means you can start living a healthier lifestyle without worrying about picking out the right types of food. With so many specialty menus, you will be sure to find one that matches your dietary restrictions and will help you to achieve your goals.

Lastly, you can actually save money with meal kit delivery services. Rather than going out to eat a couple of times a week and spending money on transportation, the food and the service, you can have a restaurant-quality meal right at home for almost half the cost of going out. A bonus is that you will also start to learn how to navigate your way through the kitchen.

If you feel that your life is so hectic that you don't have time to make it to the grocery store and cook a decent meal for yourself, consider subscribing to a meal kit delivery service. You'll be surprised at just how amazing it is.

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**TUESDAY 11.19**  
AMA GIVESBACK NIGHT (BSN 112) 6:00PM - 7:30PM  
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**WEDNESDAY 11.20**  
SEMIANNUAL CAREER FAIR (BSN ATRIUM) 10:00AM - 2:00PM

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# Catch eyes with bold decorations

By Lorena Roberts  
U L O O P

We often find ourselves feeling antsy and itching to change up the decor of our living quarters. Part of how you decide to decorate where you live is directly connected to who you want to be as a person. Are you jumping on the minimalist bandwagon, keeping everything neutral and earthy? Or does your color scheme include the full spectrum and your furniture choices are bold? Regardless, there are ways you can add to your furniture in order to “spruce up” what you come home to every day.

An art piece that makes a statement

An easy way to spruce up a wall in your home is to hang an art piece that truly makes a statement. Whether you decide to make it the focal point of a room or you add something bold to the end of a hallway, art is the fastest and easiest way to change the overall look of a room or a space.

If you’re the creative type, consider making something yourself to add a personal touch. Otherwise, there are hundreds of options to choose from online.

An interesting chair for relaxing (or maybe just for looks) Sure, your living room probably has a couch or a loveseat but adding a chair that’ll spark some intrigue can truly change the overall feel of a room.

Whether you decide on something bold or something that matches your current decor, adding a new place to sit can really open up the room. You’ll

be able to change up your habit of coming home and flopping onto your sofa. Instead, come home and enjoy the new piece of furniture you’ve added to your living space.

A light fixture that’s the centerpiece of the room

Changing out a light fixture might not be one of the first things you consider doing when you redecorate. There are so many options out there, and choosing one can be really overwhelming. Consider making a new light the centerpiece of the room. Choose something that’s really bold.

If you change out the light over your dining room table, also consider a tablecloth or new placemats. You’ll be surprised to come home to a dining room that seems to be completely redecorated, even if you’ve only switched out a few things.

Organization that doubles as decor

More than anything, what college students and young adults need is a decorative way to store all their stuff. If you’re considering adding new decor to your home, think about ways in which you can add some organization without a label maker and clear tubs.

One of the best ways to add some organization to your space is to replace the furniture you already have with more suitable options. Consider adding an entertainment center instead of just a tv stand and use shelving to store knickknacks, photos and little pieces of decor.

Have too much empty wall



Whether you decide on something bold or something that matches your current decor, adding a new place to sit can really open up the room. **SPECIAL TO THE ORACLE**

space? Consider adding a key holder by your front door or a place to store your mail. If your closet doesn’t have doors, hang up curtains on a tension rod to hide the clutter. Even something as small as putting a lid on your dirty clothes hamper can really take your organization game to a new level.

Pillows that add a little “spice” to the room

If you’re on a budget, then

you might consider adding some throw pillows to your existing furniture. You can always pick up a few pillows for not that much money and it can change the whole vibe of your living space.

Consider tying in some colors from other rooms or choosing pillows with patterns. You’d be surprised as to how much just some simple pillows can really add to a room.

We all know what it’s like to fall out of love with the way your place is decorated. But we rarely

have the money to get rid of it all and start from the beginning. Consider sprucing up small spaces, one at a time. Focus on the rooms where you spend the most time — your bedroom and your living room.

Without having to break the bank, adding a piece of furniture here and there can make you feel like you’ve really redecorated the whole place.






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# Six ways to camouflage your messy home

By Lorena Roberts  
U L O O P

Cleaning house is something we all dread doing. I think even people who choose to be employed as cleaning professionals sometimes hate their careers. While there are some people who find cleaning to be relaxing, most of the world can't stand the fact that our houses get so messy so quickly.

When you're a college student, one of your biggest fears is probably having your parents make a surprise visit when you haven't cleaned in months. Sure, some of you might be more worried about passing all of your classes and financing an insane number of textbooks, but for the most part, if our mothers decided to "pop in" unannounced, we would be heavily reprimanded for the grossness that our houses likely are during college.

But there are great ways to "fake" a clean house without having to deep clean every nook and cranny in your home. Your mother's going to be looking for certain things, so if you want to fake a clean house when she comes to visit, these are the things you need to focus on.

Make sure your home smells delicious

One of the first things people notice when they come in your house is the way it smells. When people walk into your home, they want to breathe in a scent that's welcoming, subtle and refreshing. If your house smells like dirty socks, no one is going to want to come in your home – much less stay in your home. If



Your living room and bathroom need to be the rooms you focus on if you're wanting to "fake" a clean house, specifically how it smells. **SPECIAL TO THE ORACLE**

your parents are coming to visit and you want to fake cleaning your house, focus on making it smell nice first and foremost.

Focus on the most important rooms

Your living room and bathroom need to be the rooms you focus on if you're wanting to fake a clean house. No one wants to come visit a place where dirty laundry is strung about, the toilet paper roll is empty, and there's toothpaste all over the sink. If

you're wanting to quickly freshen up your place before a surprise visitor, focus on making sure your living room and bathroom are all squared away. You don't have to deep clean every surface, but make sure to get the big stuff.

Declutter your living space

There's nothing worse than going to visit someone and not having a place to sit because there's stuff everywhere. If you're in a situation where you need to quickly get ready for a

visitor, grab a laundry basket and pick up the items that are laying around your house. You'd be surprised at how much your space can change just by simply picking up after yourself.

Quickly once-over your space with a vacuum

Grab your vacuum and do what you can to get up the big pieces of dirt. Run a vacuum over your carpet or bare floors and pretend like you've gotten every corner and spider web in your

home. Focus on the bigger rooms – the places where your guests are more likely to spend time. You don't need to spend hours and hours vacuuming in order to make your place look halfway decent.

Take care of dirty dishes

If you have a dishwasher, this step is going to be easy. Load all your dirty dishes into the dishwasher before your guests arrive. If you don't have a dishwasher, rinse off your dishes and scrub them down before laying them out on a drying rack. One of the more disgusting things your guests can experience is walking into a house full of clutter and dirty dishes. It also contributes to a musty or dirty smell.

Take a quick look in the mirror

The truth of the matter is that your guests are stopping by your house to see you, so they probably won't remember too much about your place or be paying too close attention. Before your guests arrive, consider freshening up yourself.

Whether you change your top, throw on another layer of deodorant, or brush your teeth, make yourself presentable for your guests and they'll be tricked into thinking your place is just as presentable.

When you're in college, no one expects you to live in a place that's spic and span all the time. However, if you're expecting guests and you don't have much time to clean up, these are a few of the ways you can fake a clean house.



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# How to brighten up your space

By Kailey Walters  
U L O O P

A really great way to brighten up your living space is to flood it with natural light — but what do you do if your place doesn't get much natural light? After all, it's no fun to walk around a dark, gloomy apartment during the day. Rest assured, there are a few ways to brighten up your living space and make it seem as if it's filled with natural light.

## Use Edison light bulbs

There's some artificial light that clearly looks artificial and then there's artificial light that can masquerade as natural light. Edison bulbs are a great way to add some bright, natural-looking light to your space, whether it be in your kitchen, living room, bedroom or anywhere else. They also add some wonderful decorative flair to any room or ceiling, so you can kill two birds

with one stone that way. Another option is to go with full-spectrum light bulbs, which can also help add some bright natural light to your place.

Even if you're not going for super bright light, there are other ways to add some calm, natural and peaceful lighting to your living space. For example, you can use small table lamps with warm bulbs, or put up string lights around your bedroom to create a cozy, glowing atmosphere.

## Decorate with white accents

Another great way to make your place seem brighter is to decorate with white accents, like white furniture and accessories. Go for white sofas, coffee tables, rugs, throw pillows, lamps and bookshelves. The look you can create with all these white accents is especially desirable if you're going for a simple, minimalist style.

## Use light-colored wallpaper

Wallpaper is another helpful way to add some brightness to your place. If you own your house or apartment, you can certainly paint the walls, ceilings and even floors white. If you're renting your living space and can't paint the surfaces, no worries — you can use removable wallpaper instead. Gone are the days when wallpaper looked tacky. Now, you have the opportunity to choose from a wide variety of wallpapers. Choosing a very light-colored or light-patterned wallpaper can work wonders for brightening up your space.

## Don't use drapes

Drapes over the windows will only add more darkness to your living area. That means you can forego the drapes and let any and all light come in through the windows. While that may

not be a lot, it will certainly be more than if you had drapes or curtains blocking the way.

## Get some plants

Sure, plants don't give off light the way light bulbs do, but they add a bright, vibrant splash of color to your living space. You also don't need to be an expert gardener to own a few houseplants. Some plants you can get that won't require a lot of maintenance include pothos, which are capable of thriving in dim or even fluorescent lighting, and spider plants, which can do well in shady environments. That way, you won't have to worry about placing them in real light for them to grow. If you're not up for having real plants, you can always invest in some artificial houseplants, which are just as aesthetically pleasing and require absolutely no maintenance at all.

## Use lots of mirrors

Having many mirrors in your place will help any natural light bounce around the room — a great trick to make your place seem brighter. Mirrors are great for making your place appear more spacious as well. You can place the mirrors on your walls or get mirrored decor pieces, such as a mirrored accent table. Experiment with different styles and sizes of mirrors, too — they can become a form of artwork on their own.

Even if your place doesn't get a lot of natural light, there are still many ways to create the illusion of a naturally well-lit space. Take advantage of all the options available to you to spruce up your home or apartment, and you'll be sure to be satisfied with the result.



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# Declutter and restructure your kitchen

By Alyssa Laffitte  
U L O O P

A kitchen cabinet can get disorganized very quickly. It's easy to accumulate way too many kitchen accessories that you barely use. This makes it hard to find the kitchen tools you actually use often. So, you should clean out your kitchen cabinet regularly. It will save you space in your cabinet, save money and time.

Do a complete inventory of your kitchen cabinet

The first thing you should do when organizing your kitchen cabinet is a complete inventory. Look through all your cabinets to find out how much of each item you have. You'll be able to see if you have duplicate items or if there's an item you need but don't have.

You can take an inventory by removing all items from your cabinets and laying them all out on the table or counter. Once you do that, you are ready to begin decluttering.

Declutter by getting rid of duplicates, things you don't use or things that are in bad condition.

Now that all your kitchen tools are laid out, declutter and determine which ones you don't use. It will give you more space for the items you actually do use.

While you declutter, take a look at your items and pick out the ones you don't use. You can donate or recycle these items. You can do the same thing for duplicate items or items you have way too much of. (Yes, it's possible to have too many coffee mugs or baking sheets.)

On the other hand, you can also look for items that are in bad condition. This includes broken or burnt items. Instead of donating them, you can throw these away or recycle them.

This decluttering procedure to remove kitchen items you don't use will create much more space in your kitchen cabinet.

Time to organize

Now that you have removed the items you don't use, you can focus on the kitchen items you do use. One good way to organize the items you use is to put similar items together. For example, all the plates go together and all the bowls go together.

When you put similar items together, you can easily find what you are looking for in your kitchen cabinet, and you won't waste space with unnecessary items. In other words, it will save you time and space.

Use kitchen cabinet organizers to save space

Before you load your items back into the kitchen cabinet, consider using cabinet organizers to help you save even more space. You can buy some on Amazon or at a local store. You can search Pinterest for inspiration on how to use these organizers to create an aesthetically pleasing, well-organized cabinet.

Place items strategically in your kitchen cabinet

Once you put up the organizers,

it's time to put the items back in the cabinet. As you place your items back in the cabinet, consider where in the cabinet you are putting your items.

You should put the items you use most frequently on a shelf that is easy for you to reach.

You can put items you use less on a higher shelf, such as bakeware you only use during the holiday season, or the "fancy" dishes.

Placing items strategically will save you time when you cook because the items you use frequently will be easy for you to reach.

Similarly, it's a good idea to separate edible items, linens and dishes, cookware and bakeware. Edible items like boxes of food should be placed in the pantry, away from the dishes in which you will serve them.

Linens, such as tablecloths, placemats, napkins, should be placed in the linen closet. Cookware and bakeware, including dishes, and pans can go together in the kitchen cabinet. Placing items in strategic locations in your kitchen cabinet will make it easier for you to find the things you need.

It's important to keep your kitchen cabinet clean. With a clean cabinet, you won't need to dig to find an item you need, and you won't accidentally buy a duplicate of an item you already have. You can also get rid of broken or unused items.

If you follow these tips, I guarantee you will have a clean kitchen cabinet.



Take an inventory of your kitchen by removing all items from your cabinets and laying them all out on the counter. **SPECIAL TO THE ORACLE**



Donate or recycle items that you no longer use to avoid too much clutter. **SPECIAL TO THE ORACLE**



# Balancing a small bathroom space

By Ashley Paskill  
U L O O P

Storage in your college apartment is crucial. One area that many tend to forget about is the bathroom. It is likely that you have a roommate or two and your apartment is not too big. Organizing your bathroom using various types of storage units will help you make the most of your limited space.

## Countertop organizers

It is likely that you have some space on top of your counter around your sink. Even if you just have a sink, you might have a bit of space for a toothbrush and toothpaste. If that is the only space you have, you can buy a decorative cup to store your toothbrush and toothpaste, and have your roommate get one too so they can be separate. For bathrooms that have more countertop space, you can get a larger organizer to hold your toothbrush and toothpaste as well as other items such as razors and a hairbrush.

## Storage under the sink

Since you are probably renting your apartment, it's likely that you will not be allowed to build cabinets if your bathroom doesn't have them already. If you just have a sink without anything underneath, you can purchase a cabinet unit to go underneath the sink that does not need to be attached to the walls. This gives you space for towels, washrags and feminine hygiene products.

You can also get a rack that fits at the base of the sink. There are racks that are created specifically for different sinks, so make sure

you find one that fits your specific sink. This kind of rack is perfect for any odds and ends that you may have in your bathroom.

## Use command strips

If you use items such as a hair straightener, a water pick or a hair dryer, it is likely that these items get twisted up in each other's cords. To avoid this, use command strips to help organize the cords. This is especially useful if you and your roommate both use these items.

## Use magnets for storing makeup

For those who store makeup in the bathroom, instead of storing your makeup on the countertop, use magnets and a magnetic board to store your makeup. This will help free up counter space while allowing you to easily find your makeup essentials.

## Tower of Baskets

Use a suction cup to create a tower of baskets to store odds and ends such as your hairbrush, makeup brushes, lotions and appliances such as hair straighteners and hair dryers. Buy small buckets that have hooks on the side and use a clothesline to link them together. Hang them using a suction cup. You and your roommate can each have your own tower, so buy buckets in your favorite color so that you can differentiate between the two.

## Organize your medicine cabinet

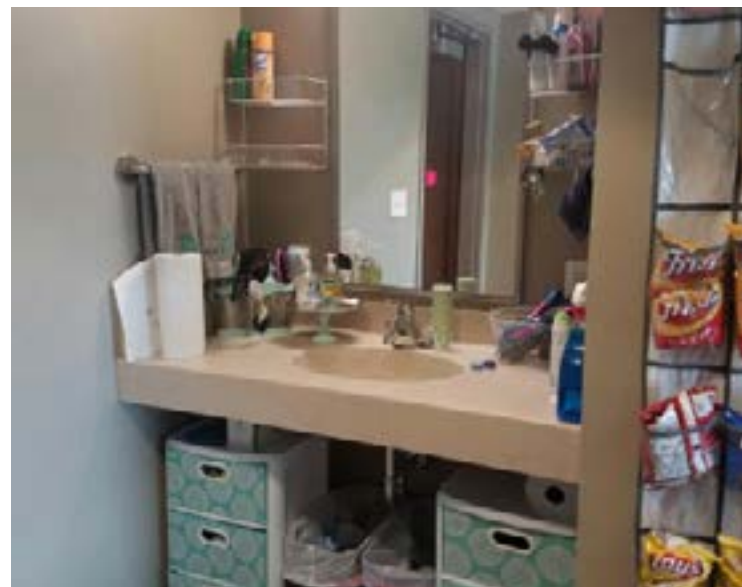
If you have a medicine cabinet, make the best use of this space by hanging organizers on the door of the cabinet. You and your

roommate can each have a door if your cabinet has two doors. Otherwise, you can each take a section. Also, use organizational containers within the cabinet to help keep your items organized.

## Utilize shower space

Use hooks and storage containers to create more space in your shower, especially if you do not have any ledge room in your shower.

College apartments are known for being small and this includes the space in the bathroom. It is important to make the most of the limited space you have so that you can make sure you have a spot for everything you need.



Use hooks and storage containers to create more space in your shower, especially if you do not have any ledge room in your shower.  
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