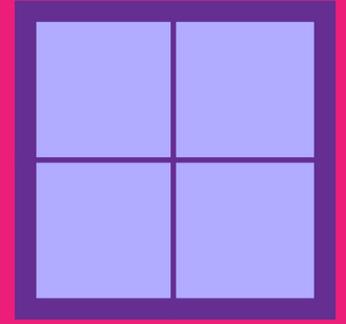
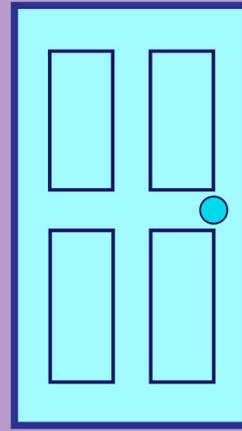
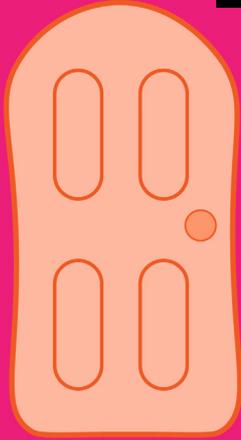
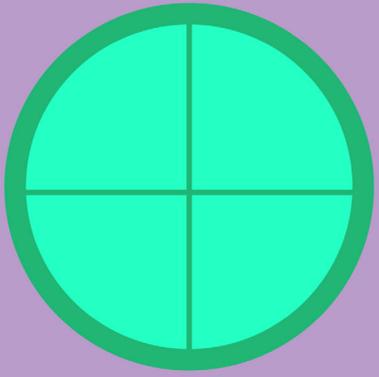
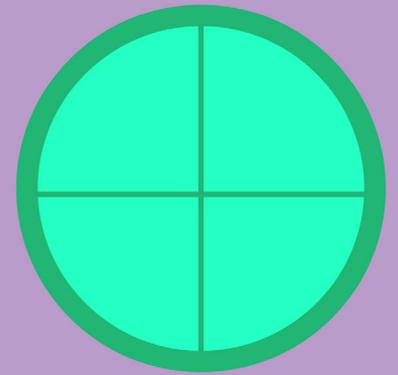
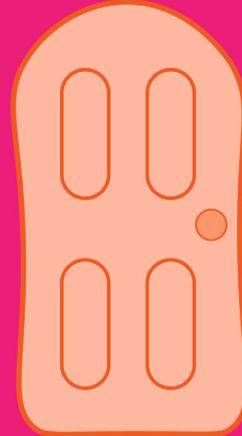
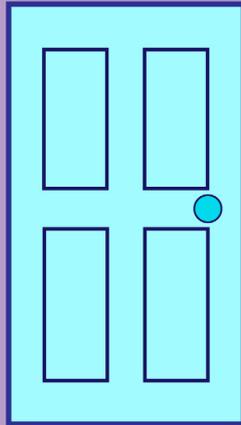
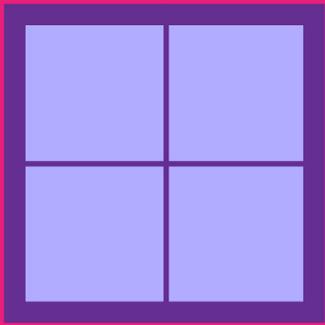


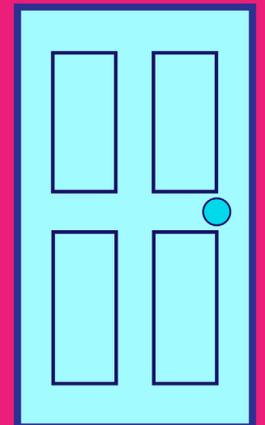
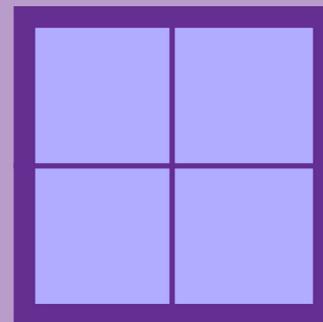
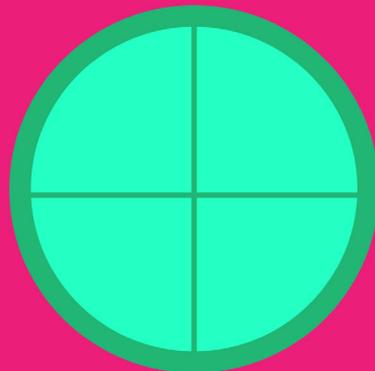
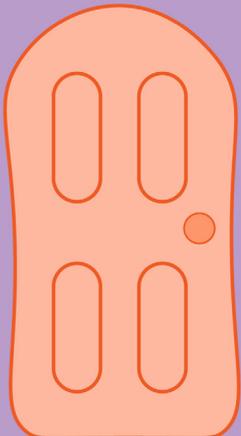
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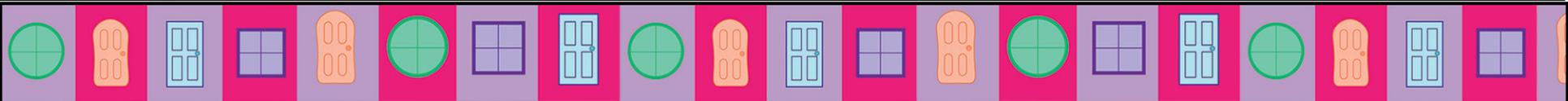
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Guide



The Oracle



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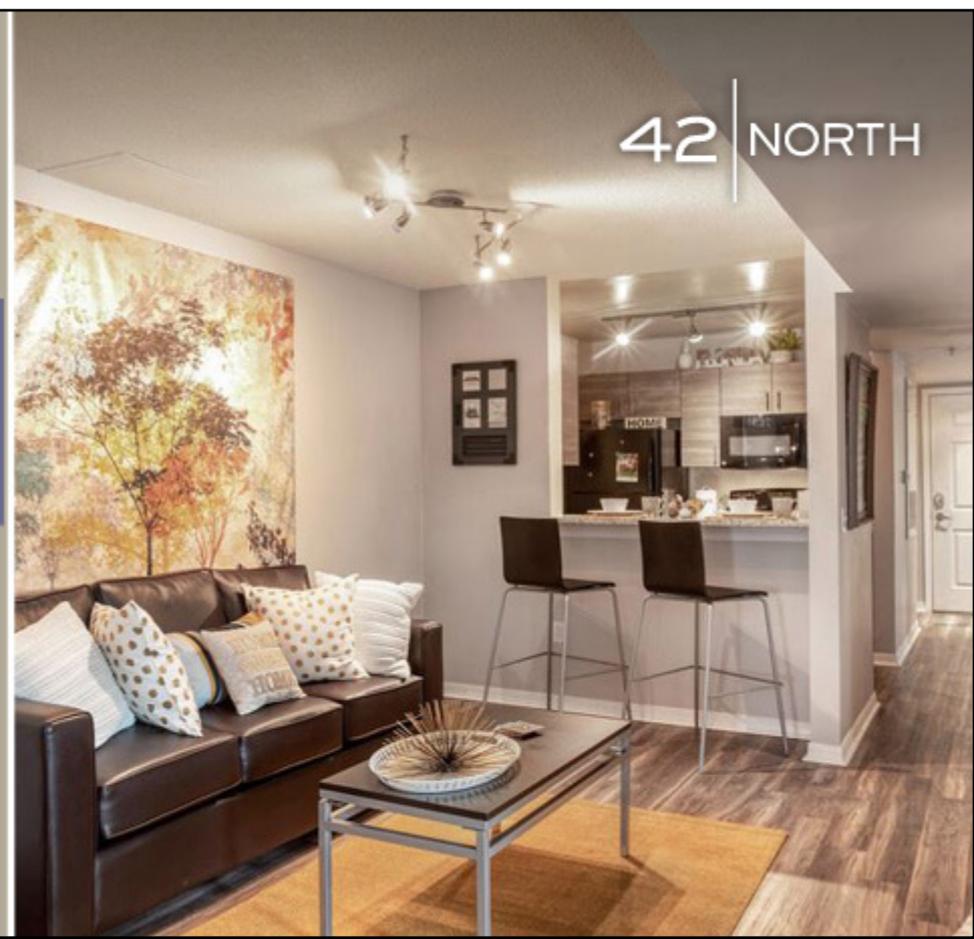
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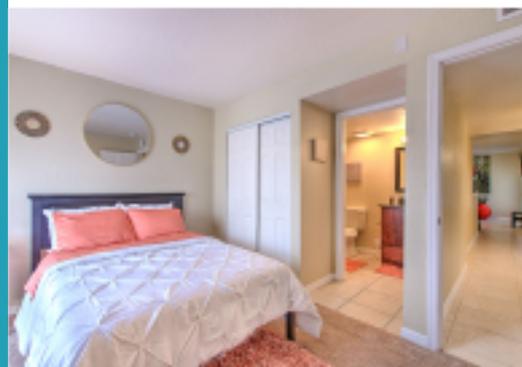


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Ways to create a minimalist apartment



If you are like many broke college students who get anxious just thinking about their cluttered apartments, trying out a minimalist style could be beneficial to both your wallet and state of mind. UNSPLASH/Bench Accounting

By Danielle Wirsansky
U LOOP

Many college students don't put much thought into their decor style, with the degree of complexity dictated by budget rather than taste. The style is usually more chaotic than anything else, like hand-me-downs matched with thrift store and clearance sale items.

Recently, however, more college students have been embracing minimalism as a way to achieve style without breaking the bank.

When minimalism comes to mind, many think of emptiness, white, sparsity, a definite dearth of things. But it doesn't mean your home has to be void of any possessions. Minimalist design is centered on living with a "less is more" approach and being mindful of the space you're in, according to London-based interior stylist Cate St Hill.

Clearing your home of clutter, chaos and distractions is something most college students could use. Keeping objects that "spark joy" for you — as organizing consultant Marie Kondo would say — can help you lead a happier, healthier and more productive life. Here are some strategies to help you cultivate a perfect minimalist style.

Pare Down

The first step to creating a minimalist apartment is to pare down your belongings. Most college apartments or dorms are pretty cramped. If you feel there isn't anywhere to place your next purchase, you might very well have too much clutter.

Objects taking up space in your home but not in your life can probably take a hike. Old kitchen appliances, smelly futons

and clothes you haven't worn since last year should be at the top of your list to toss.

Once you've successfully decluttered your dorm, you can use university Facebook groups to sell your furniture and clothes to make some quick cash or be a good Samaritan and donate it to your local Salvation Army thrift store.

Organize

The next step after decluttering is to organize what's left over. To make the process as efficient as possible, you will need to go against the minimalist mantra and buy a few items that don't spark joy for you but will allow you to more easily categorize what you plan to keep.

Baskets, drawers and bookcases can be helpful and are cheap items you can pick up from places like a dollar store or even

the Salvation Army store after you donate your clothes. This will make sure everything has a place so you can get one step closer to achieving a minimalist apartment.

One Room at a Time

It might feel overwhelming to scale back, pare down and reorganize. A way to make it more manageable is to minimize your space one room at a time.

Think of the time you set aside to do this like meditation. Use the time you work on your space to get yourself in a good headspace. Make a plan for yourself and keep yourself accountable. When one room is done, move to the next.

Separating the cleaning and reorganizing into increments gives you time to process the change and get done tasks every college student needs to do, like

attending class, going to work and finishing homework.

Eventually, you will make it through the whole apartment. A sense of accomplishment will permeate throughout your new minimalist apartment, now that you've made room for it.

If you have anxiety from being away from home, having to do chores or handling the sheer amount of your belongings, don't be afraid to give the minimalist design a try. Creating a minimalist apartment is easier than it seems, and when done with the right convictions, can lead you to a happier and healthier life.

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Rules to establish with new roommates

By Zoe Marzi
U L O O P

Whether you're planning to live with longtime friends or move in with someone new, it's essential for you to feel comfortable with your roommates.

The best way to avoid confrontations is to communicate clear expectations and establish certain essential rules. The earlier you do this, the easier it will be to discuss other situations that could arise later.

Chores

While it may feel juvenile to create a chore chart, it's important to divide chores among roommates. People inherently have different levels of preferred cleanliness, making it important to inform your roommates of your preferences and to take the time to listen to their opinions as well.

Assumptions can often leave some roommates unhappy and having to do more than their fair share of the chore load. You do not have to hang a chore chart on the fridge, but rather simply discuss how often the trash should be taken out, when the kitchen should be cleaned and any other chores you feel are necessary.

Common Areas

The goal of sharing an apartment is to cultivate a friendly and healthy relationship with your roommates, however, that should not come at the expense of others. This is especially true when establishing ground rules for common areas within the apartment.

If you would prefer that certain areas remain cleared of personal belongings, you should bring these concerns to the attention of

the group. This will help prevent roommates from accidentally moving your important personal belongings while also ensuring there's always space for you to move around with ease.

Dishes

The kitchen and dining area of any living space can easily become a subject of contention if ground rules are not established. Certain chores, such as cleaning dishes, will arise on a daily basis and deserve particular attention since this chore occurs in a public space.

A good rule to set is for everyone to clean their own dishes soon after they use them, ensuring the kitchen doesn't accumulate a level of messiness someone else might feel obligated to clean up. If multiple people choose to cook and eat a meal together, generally whoever didn't cook should offer to clean.

Food

Food in a communal space is a complex subject to tackle, as it's shared as easily as it's claimed by a single individual. You should discuss your food plan, keeping in mind a budget that you're comfortable with. This may include cooking individual or shared meals. If cooking separately is decided, you should clearly define space in the fridge, pantry and freezer for every member of the household.

If you find yourself in need of a food item that one of your roommates has, be sure to ask them for permission to use some and offer to replace it the next time you go to the store.

Leftovers

If you decide you're



As a way to maintain a healthy living situation among roommates, establishing rules like implementing a chore chart can be the best way to preserve the apartment and relationships between roommates. FLICKR/ Miles Kennedy

comfortable sharing meals in any capacity, it may be helpful to clarify if there are select foods that you would like to keep to yourself, such as leftovers that you are relying on to serve as subsequent meals. Again, it's always better to check with your roommates if you are unsure whether a particular food item is available to the group.

Social Hours

Almost a year into the pandemic, many people find themselves taking classes or working from home. It may be helpful to share your schedule with your roommates so everyone is aware of when certain meetings

are occurring.

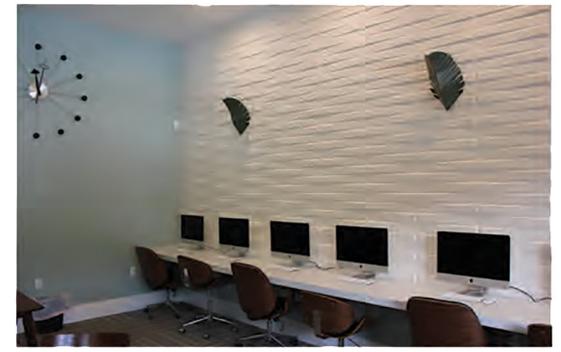
While it's important to enjoy socializing with the members of your pod, it's also important to respect the fact that people can be very drained after spending long hours on their computers. Establishing quiet hours is a good idea to avoid loud noises late at night and allow all roommates to recharge.

COVID-19

It's especially pertinent during this time that people don't put others' safety at risk. In the case of sharing living conditions, all roommates need to be aware of how important it is to follow proper safety guidelines. If you're

worried one of your roommates isn't following social distancing guidelines, you shouldn't feel ashamed about saying something to secure the safety of the entire group.

Every roommate situation is different. It may not always be necessary to discuss all the topics on this list, however, it never hurts to talk to your roommates if there's something that bothers you or that could develop into an issue in the future.



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Make your off-campus apartment feel like home

By Ashley Paskill

U L O O P

Moving into an off-campus apartment is a huge step toward gaining more freedom. While it can be hard to make your apartment feel like home, with time and patience you can personalize your apartment to your liking.

Decorate

Decorating your apartment is a great way to make it feel more personal. It is a better alternative to coming home to a bland apartment at the end of a long day. While there may be rules set by your landlord on how to hang things, using Command strips to hang photos of friends and family can make decorating easy.

Think about each room individually and get decorations for those rooms. For example, if you have a magnetic fridge, use fun magnets to hang photos on your fridge.

If you are sharing your apartment with roommates, consult with them to decide how to decorate. Consider designating a room for each person to decorate aside from individual bedrooms. Make sure everyone has a say in how the apartment is decorated so all of you feel at home.

One room you can make your own is the bedroom. It is where you will be sleeping and where you're likely to spend most of your time. Get comfortable pillows and blankets for your bed, and make sure your room reflects what home means to you.

Befriend neighbors

Even if you have roommates, it is important to introduce yourself to your neighbors. If

your landlord puts on community events, make an effort to go to one to meet those who live near you. Greeting people you pass in the halls can make a difference.

It is likely that at least some of those in your apartment complex are fellow students, so connecting with them can help you make professional as well as personal connections.

Keep it clean

As a student, your schedule may be busy with classes, student organizations, internships and jobs. However, it is still crucial to keep your space clean and organized. This will go a long way in making your space feel like your own.

You may feel tempted to leave your belongings in boxes and suitcases, especially if you're only living in the apartment during the semester. However, unpacking can help your apartment feel like home. Create a cleaning schedule so you don't become overwhelmed at the thought of doing everything at once.

Reflect on what's making you uncomfortable

A huge part of feeling at home is a feeling of safety and comfort within your space. However, there may be thoughts that could make it difficult for your space to feel like your home.

Reflect on what's bothering you and take action. You may feel overwhelmed and stuck because of limits on how to decorate, or you're only renting for a short period of time so you don't actually own the space.

Many universities offer counseling services to address issues like this that new college students face all the time. If you feel like you can't express more complicated feelings about the

new move, these services are sure to help you get back on track.

It's important to tackle these issues so you can quickly adjust to apartment living and get back to your studies or making new friends.

Explore the neighborhood

One of the key factors of selecting an apartment complex is the surrounding neighborhood. This is just as important as the inside of your apartment.

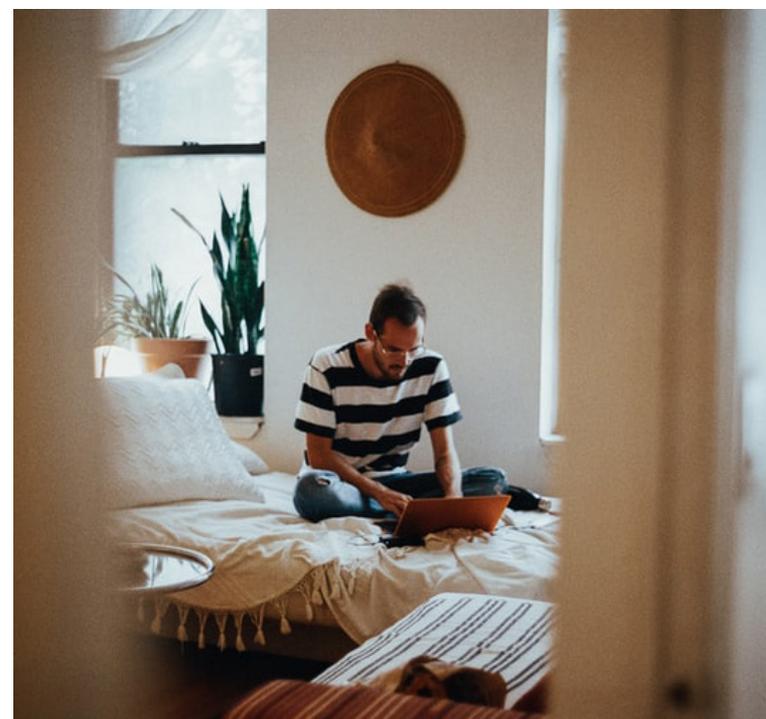
Take time to check out any stores, restaurants and cafes nearby, especially locally owned places to support your community. Also, consider joining a community group to meet new people in the area around you.

Throw a housewarming party

One common way to feel at home is to host a housewarming party. Have people over to help you celebrate you moving into your apartment, especially if it's your first time living on your own.

Start planning in advance so you're not tempted to cancel. Hosting a party could help motivate you to unpack boxes and get the space decorated. You may even decide to take pictures of friends who come over to hang up, or you could opt to host a craft night to create decorations with friends.

It can be tough to make your new place feel like home, but if you're patient enough, it's possible to make your apartment feel like home.



Moving away from home or living on your own can be exciting but overwhelming, so taking time to personalize your apartment and integrate yourself into the community can make you feel more comfortable and at home. UNSPLASH

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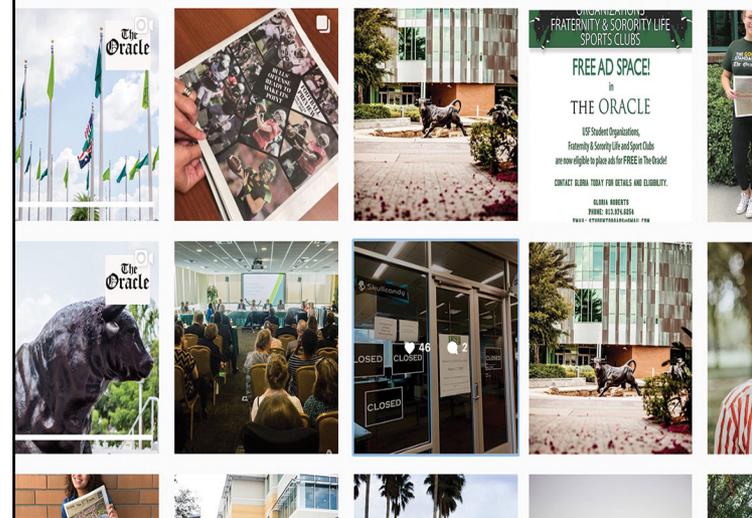
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