



A Green Gael Move-In

Welcome (back) to Saint Mary's College! As you and 1,600+ other students plan your move to our beautiful campus, let's make your move-in as green as possible. As you begin to plan your dorm room, let us consider the words of Pope Francis in his recent Encyclical on the environment:

"This shows us the great need for a sense of social responsibility on part of consumers. "Purchasing is always a moral – and not simply economic – act.""

Here are some of our highly recommended tips:

Green up your packing:

Use reusable packaging and ditch the cardboard.

Pack your materials in suitcases, backpacks, reusable bags or plastic tubs. As an example, you can stash your clothes in bins before moving and keep them under your bed... you don't even need to unpack once you move-in.

Old cardboard boxes or even trash bags are second best, as they can be recycled. If you do use cardboard boxes, make sure you break them down and recycle them after unpacking. This saves space in our bins.

Forget the bubble wrap and packing peanuts

Protect your breakables with clothes, towels and other soft buffers that you were already planning on bringing to campus. You can also reuse old newspapers and then recycle these items when you unpack.

Buying Strategies

Talk to your roommates – For larger items that you and your roommate will share, talk to your roommate and decide who will be responsible for buying certain items. You don't want to get to your new room and find out that you have two mini-fridges or an unexpected sofa. Plus you'll save money by agreeing to share supplies and appliances.

Reuse first – See what you can bring from home. Often times family members, neighbors have gently used household items that you can have – think dishes, sheets, throw pillows, curtains, small kitchen appliances and even furniture... Reusing saves money, time and resources!

Buy Reusable – water bottles, coffee mugs, dishes, containers, utensils and more. Reusable items are perfect for on-campus living as they save you money, take up less of your valuable living space and they are much better for the environment.



Buy Efficient – look for the Energy Star® or EPEAT label when buying appliances like computers, printers, stereos and mini fridges.

Buy Recycled – look for school supplies made from recycled content. Shoot for 100% post-consumer content recycled copy or printer paper, and post-consumer content recycled notebooks, Post-Its, and more.

What specific items should I bring?

Reusable water bottle & water-filtering pitcher – keep your pitcher in the fridge so you always have cold, filtered water to drink in your room. Save money and the environment by not buying bottled water or running the tap for a long period of time to get cold water.

Tip: We have water bottle filling stations at the Recreation Center and Dining Hall for you to fill up!

Power strips – this is an easy way to reduce your energy consumption. Charging cords, TVs and many other devices draw energy even when they are not in use. Plug in all your electronic devices to a power strip and flip the switch when you are not using them.

Laptops, not desktops – If you need to buy a new computer, a laptop is more energy efficient. Plus our campus buildings are completely wireless, meaning you can drag your computer everywhere you need to go.

Tip: Green your computer before arriving on campus by using the power saving settings. We recommend that you put your computer in sleep mode after 5-20 minutes of inactivity and in standby/hibernate mode after 30-60 minutes.

CFL or LED light bulbs – they use about a quarter of the energy of incandescent light bulbs and last longer, meaning you save money.

Bike – if you have a bike, bring it! This is a fun way to get to class quickly and avoid the carbon emissions and the cost of gas associated with driving. You can also put it on the bus (which you have a free pass for) to get even farther off campus.

Drying rack – It's a theme. Save energy and money by drying your clothes on a rack. Don't want to dry all of them? Start with non-cotton fabrics (they dry faster) and clothes you don't mind having a bit wrinkled (undergarments, t-shirts). Plus, your clothes will last longer.

Reusable grocery bags. Safeway is around the corner and Whole Foods is in Lafayette. Keep some reusable bags by the door or in your car trunk.

Green cleaning supplies. Lots of cleaners have toxic chemical ingredients or other ingredients that can affect your health and damage the environment. The Environmental Working Group has ranked some of the best [green cleaning alternatives](#) here.



What NOT to bring?

Garbage and Recycling Bins – We provide both to you. Just don't take them at the end of semester or you'll be charged!

Don't bring your entire closet with you! We know it is tempting, Resident Life notes that most students bring more stuff to campus than they actually need! Their advice is to pull out everything you want to bring, and cut it by half. If you find you desperately need something later on, ship it to campus or grab it during a break at home.

Leave the car behind

As a full-time student at Saint Mary's, your Saint Mary's ID card gets you access to the Gael Rail Night Bus and County Connection, serving Central Contra Costa cities and BART, meaning you have the Bay Area at your disposal. Bring your bike and put that money towards books or socializing instead.

There's always more to be done, but this will get you started on the right foot here (and by right foot we mean green foot).

Check out our other efforts – including the 'Green Living Certification' program, which gives you prizes for green living – at [our website](#).