

TIPS TO LIVE LIKE A COLLEGE STUDENT

Understand the two keys to life as a happy student are setting goals and finding a balance that works.¹



- **Make a list of your goals: the things you want to accomplish as a student.**
 - Prioritize your list of goals.
 - Your goals will be a dynamic list, you will be adding and deleting from this list your entire life as you and your priorities change. In college you are likely to change your values and priorities a great deal, so don't be nervous about editing your list of goals.

¹ How to Live like a College Student. (n.d.). In Wikihow.com. Retrieved from <http://www.apastyle.org/learn/faqs/cite-website-material.aspx>

- Find balance. Balance is how you are going to manage your time in order to accomplish all your goals. It is vital to find the right balance between your competing priorities, which will be different for every individual student. For example:
 - A student who works and attends school full time will need to find balance between work and studying. Other students will need to find balance between sports, studying and socializing.
 - Remember, you may not have time to do everything, and will have to make some hard choices.
 - As a college student nobody is checking on you anymore. You are an independent individual. Nobody cares if you miss class, don't do your homework, don't eat properly, or don't go to a party. It is up to you, now, to set these goals and keep them.
- **Determine where you will live.** One of the most important choices faced by all college students is where to live. UNM offers dorms to students, and some students are required to live in them (e.g. Regents' Scholarship Recipients are required to live in Hokona Hall). You can also choose off-campus housing. Your decision will depend on your goals and balance choices. You may also choose to live at home.²



- Living in a dorm can be a great experience but is not for everybody. Understand that most modern colleges offer a variety of dorm experiences on the same campus. To set up a tour of UNM dorms contact [Residence Life](#).

² How to Live like a College Student. (n.d.). In Wikihow.com. Retrieved from <http://www.apastyle.org/learn/faqs/cite-website-material.aspx>

- Live off campus. For returning students in particular, and those ready for more responsibility, living off campus can provide many benefits, but also has disadvantages.
 - Advantages:
 - Living off campus gives you privacy and independence.
 - Food and other costs can be cheaper, especially if you develop good budgetary habits.
 - Richer social life, especially for shy students
 - Disadvantages:
 - Higher costs in rent, groceries and utilities, depending on area.
 - More work and responsibility maintaining an apartment.
 - A commute.
 - Feelings of isolation or loneliness.
 - On-campus housing options also include [Living Greek](#). The Greek lifestyle often provides an alternative housing to both dorms and off campus living.



- **Living with a budget.** For many students [managing money](#) is a major new challenge. A budget does not mean you are poor, it simply means spending what you have on what you need. That said, many students are on limited budgets. Some techniques for learning to manage your money include:



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- Learn to live cheaply. You can buy clothing in thrift stores, buy groceries using coupons or shop in cheaper neighborhood markets, put unnecessary purchases on hold and do many other many things to reduce your cost of living.
- Learn to cook. By cooking your own foods it is possible to eat sensible, delicious food, but spend very little money.
- Apply for financial aid. Step one in receiving Grants (free money), Work Study (wages from an on campus job and Student Loans (money you have to repay) is filling out the [FAFSA: Free Application for Student Aid](#).⁴
- Get a part-time job to supplement your income. Student Employment and Work Study jobs are flexible on-campus jobs for UNM students. Search available jobs on the UNM [Student Employment website](#).

³ Cartoon Image. Northern Arizona News. October 30, 2012. Retrieved from <http://northernarizonanews.com/blog/2012/10/30/maddie-staff-ed-generous-budget-increase-benefitting-nau-and-arizona/>

⁴ Fafsa.gov

- **Transportation.** Transportation is also an important choice for most college students. Your transportation options are principally determined by your needs, budget, lifestyle, available facilities, location and possibly political beliefs.



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- Cars. A car on campus gives you the freedom to get away when needed, but can also be expensive to park, use and maintain. Having a car may mean added cost because you'll need a [parking permit](#).
- UNM offers free shuttles to transport students around campus and to parking lots. The [UNM parking and transportation office](#) offers free buses, night escorts and other benefits for students. Learning to use these facilities can be both fun and rewarding.
- A bicycle may be your best option for transportation at college. Bicycle theft is a serious problem at most colleges so be sure to have a good lock. UNM has [bike lockers](#) available.
- ABQ ride also offers [FREE bus passes](#) to UNM students.
- Scooters and motorcycles can also work well, especially if you live off campus. They are far cheaper to operate than a car.

⁵ UNM Parking and Transportation image. (n.d.). Retrieved from: <http://pats.unm.edu/>

- **Getting involved.** UNM offers far more activities than you could possibly explore in just four years. Check out [the UNM Student Activities Center](#) to see what UNM offers.



- Get involved in sports.
 - Join clubs, associations and organizations. Whatever you are interested in there will be a club for it at UNM, and if there isn't, start one!
 - Become involved in campus politics. UNM has Student Government organizations for Grads and Undergrads.
 - Explore the local community. UNM is located in a diverse and exciting area. Exploring some of the countryside and surrounding areas can add precious memories to your college experience.
 - Volunteer for your favorite charities or other organizations.
- **Health.** Getting sick on your own is part and parcel to living like a college student. Taking good care of your health is the best way to insure a good college experience. Visit [UNM's Student Health and Counseling web site](#) (SHAC) to see what resources are available to UNM students.
- Stress is the most common new ailment faced by college students. Living on your own, new pressures and the immense workload involved in college can create stress you may not have encountered before.
 - Counseling service are offered to students to deal with stress and other mental health issues. You should contact SHAC directly to learn about resources available to students.