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THE ISSUE: SHOPPING FOR COLLEGE

Some items are not as essential

MONEY FIX

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Special to Newsday

If you believe the hype, you're a bad parent if you don't send your child off to college with everything but the kitchen sink.

Separate necessity from the noise. Here's what to do without:

■ **Tablet.** Just say no. "If your child has a laptop, a tablet is excessive, expensive," said April Lewis-Parks, director of education for Consolidated Credit Counseling Services in Fort Lauderdale.

■ **Television.** Forget HD or flat-screen TVs. Most dorms have a common area with a few televisions.

■ **Car.** "This is the number one thing to avoid buying. It can become a hassle, not to mention the insurance costs, especially for a college kid," said Lewis-

Parks. Many schools lack adequate parking and some prohibit first-year students from having a car on campus. "At Purchase, we have Zip cars if you need a car in a pinch," said Dennis Craig, associate provost for enrollment at SUNY's Purchase College in upstate Purchase.

■ **Furniture.** Dorms are minuscule. "Save a lot of money by using what is provided. Skip buying a lot of organization components until you see the space," said Miriam Caldwell of About.com's Money in Your 20s guide.

■ **New textbooks.** Textbooks average more than \$1,000 a year. Think used. Request required textbook lists in advance. Search for deals at Amazon.com and Textbookdirect.com, said Katie Coleman, an Ameriprise financial adviser in Melville. Explore renting and know that some textbooks offer downloadable e-versions for less. Check out Course Smart.com, Chegg.com, and CampusBookRentals.com.