

Your Home, in a Suitcase

If you are looking for more information, join the [official freshers' group 2021](#) on Facebook for any queries.

For most of us, the feeling of going to college for the first is tumultuous. Everything is about to change and you have no idea what you'll find on the other side. One of the more daunting tasks you face is packing for college. With a 32 kg weight limit on flights, what is considered essential?

As your friendly neighbourhood college kids who went through these motions ourselves, we here at the MITPost bring you this list of what you need to land on your feet in the next chapter of your lives.

CLOTHING

Let's start with the most critical part of packing: clothes.

Manipal experiences very, very heavy rains for almost six months. The climate is hot and humid for those months, and just hot for the rest. So, ideally, get:

- **T-shirts:** About 10-15 would do. You might like giving your clothes to the laundry people, in which case you'll get them back washed within three days. This can get really expensive though, as the humid weather means clothes get dirty faster. If you choose to wash your clothes on your own, get **polyester or cotton shirts**. These **dry faster in the wet climate**.
- **Jeans:** Get 2-3 pairs of **tough, durable jeans**. These would be **worn almost every day**, and if not of good quality, can get frayed very easily.
- Other **full-length pants**. For guys and girls alike, **wearing shorts or any form of clothing above-knee length is prohibited in the Academic Blocks**. So if you don't feel like wearing jeans, you can wear **trousers, track pants, joggers or tights**. Get something that washes and

dries easily.

- **Shorts:** At least one for every day of the week, very crucial in the weather. They are worn everywhere except the Academic Block.
- A couple of **formal and ethnic dresses**. While formals aren't necessary for the first year, for the most part, ethnic is a fun get-up on festivals.
- **Footwear:** These take packing space but are very important to the Manipal terrain. You'll definitely need more than one pair though, so get :
 - Nice, **thick-soled comfy shoes**. The average daily walking distance is around 6-7 km, mostly uphill, so comfort is of utmost importance. It is better if these are **water-resistant and airy**, otherwise, they can smell horrible
 - Getting something akin to **football trainers** is a good idea, these are waterproof and good for walking too.
 - **Sandals/slippers** for short trips inside the block or to the food court.
 - **Formal/ethnic** for the ethnic clothing
 - If you plan on joining Marena, the sports complex, get the appropriate footwear. Make sure it has **non-marking**
- **Any sport-specific wear:** The campus has basketball, football, hockey, cricket, badminton, tennis, and swimming grounds.
- It can get chilly at times, especially in classes or labs, so get a **light jacket**.
- **Masks** are mandatory, so get some N-95s and cloth masks.
- **Gloves** might be mandatory in some labs, so get some of those too.
- Any other accessories you deem absolutely necessary

EDUCATION

While books can be bought on campus, get a **thin notepad** and

some pens for the first week.

Having a **laptop** helps a lot, especially with online classes and labs going. It is also a great way to make friends. Play whatever multiplayer is trending and you are set for post-curfew fun.

For first years, it helps to have **old notes from the school days** since the syllabus overlaps a lot. Photographing the concerned topics and saving them as pdfs helps save space and your grade.

Get some **LAN cables**. Most classrooms, the library, and even the Food Courts have RJ-45 jacks for cabled connections. Because Wi-Fi is usually super slow, a LAN cable is your key to a high-speed connection.

Most other material is available online, or in the library.

Get a nice, **high-speed data plan for your mobile connection**. You'll end up using mobile data more than anything.

FOR YOUR ROOM

Rooms in Blocks 16 and 17 are relatively spacious and are furnished with a table, a tiny dresser, shelves, and a single bed and mattress. While you can get most of the essentials from the campus stores on the first day, pack in the following:

- **Newspapers, polythene sheets** for lining wardrobes and shelves
- Various airtight bags for any food you might be getting.
- Bedsheets, pillowcases, pillows, blankets, towels.
- Some **water bottles or jugs**. Water coolers are available on each floor, but these can be farther away if your room is on the edges of the building, so it's a good idea to have water stored.

- Some basic utensils. A **plate, bowl, glass, wide steel container with an airtight lid, forks, and spoons** are frequently used, especially if you order food in frequently.
- Some cleaning rags
- Various other containers, like **penholders** or a small **storage basket** for any accessories
- Spare charger, some power adapters, power banks.
- Get a **backpack** or a **school bag**. **Smaller bags** are useful for everything from compartmentalized storage to beach trips.

A lot of these might take space, but with the constant possibility of the campus being under lockdown, buying things from stores off-campus is hard. A lot of these things can be bought on or off-campus, so viewer discretion is advised.

An important thing I have noticed in my stay is that **umbrellas** are a tricky topic. They are liable to *disappearing* if left unattended. The sheer brutality of Manipal rains requires sturdy umbrellas. A lot of the umbrellas on campus might not last long due to various factors (I have had to buy 3 and questionably acquire one over the course of my two years)

A good idea, in my opinion, is to get a nice umbrella that you find comfortable carrying around from home. Keep it safe and it shall serve you well.

TO BUY ON CAMPUS

The campus has a lot of stores that sell everything you could need for daily living. Most furnishing and utilities are better off being purchased here in the interest of the weight of luggage.

To buy from the campus stores:

- **Clothes stand** or clothesline. To dry out the clothes that you'll invariably end up washing.

- Solid soaps are weirdly slimy in the recycled water here, so **liquid soaps** are preferred. The same goes for **liquid detergent**. It smells better too.
- **Moisture absorbers** or naphthalene balls. Constant moisture=fungus. Moisture absorbers are a lifesaver.
- **Disinfectant** and **sanitizing spray** keeps you and your clothes safe from viruses and fungi
- **Bucket and mug** for the clothes washing
- **Dustbin**
- **Laundry bag**, useful for hiding away chores till a later date
- **Bathroom mat** so you don't slip when you're running late for class
- **Bug spray**. You'll find a LOT of bugs. Kill them.
- **Broom** to remove the dead bugs from your room
- **Shampoos** and other self-care products. **Deodorants** and **perfumes** are a good idea
- **Locks** for your doors and cupboard door
- **Notebooks, pens**, other educational apparatus. **Only get calculators from the campus stores**. Only these calculators are allowed in exams, so the fancy TI-Nspire CX CAS you bought for too much money is going to be pretty useless ☐
- **Medicines**: these are going to be indispensable in the early days. Most people fall sick due to the rains and exhaustion. Having **Paracetamol, Chlorzoxazone and Diclofenac (Mobizox tablets), antacids, insect-bite creams, and aspirin** is a good idea.

MISCELLANEOUS

You should definitely bring along stuff for your **hobbies**. I have my guitars, amplifier, and other recording equipment. It's a great way to make friends and shine in social circles. Get your **instruments, art bags, sports equipment, cameras**, whatever your heart desires. This obviously would make packing harder, and you might need to get extra luggage add-ons, but

college fosters creativity, and it is totally worth it.

It is scary coming to college, being away from home, and alone for the first time. Give it time and college would be home, and like me, you'd be dreading the day you'll have to leave. Efficient packing and having all the things that make your stay here comfortable surely help too.

I hope this list helps you find yourself feeling at ease when you start your life in what is the closest you can get to paradise. We look forward to having you here, and on behalf of the MIT Post, good luck!

Cover Image: Ann Mathew