

FAMILY

The time to catch up is now

Dear Heloise: With all the recent downtime, I've been making a point of doing the many things I've been meaning to do!

Deep cleaning the house is an obvious goal, but I deep cleaned my car and garage also!

Visiting people was off-limits for the most part, but I video called some of my close friends to check in on them.

Finally, researching those odds and ends subjects I come across that I've always meant to look up.

These past few months were the perfect time to do that. There are lots of things in life we don't have control over, but my goal is to make the most of the things I can control. — *Edie in Pennsylvania*

Handbag storage

Dear Heloise: I see some girls store their leather handbags in plastic dust covers. This is a no-no for me. Leather needs to "breathe." I store my bags in plain white pillowcases. I attach a picture of the bag on the outside, so I know what's inside. — *Gia in New Mexico*

Gia, great storage idea! I love reusing old pillowcases, and picture labeling makes a lot of sense.

— *Heloise*

Better TV watching

Dear Heloise: During the quarantine, I imagine lots of people were binge-watching TV shows and movies. My family and I have a better solution. Instead of mindlessly watching show after show, we research the shows and watch those that we are most interested in. This makes a better experience for us. — *Ginny in Florida*

Moving pictures

Dear Heloise: I love to work jigsaw puzzles, and I know some of my friends and neighbors do too. When I complete a puzzle, I break it apart and pass the puzzle on to my neighbors. They get a kick out of working them too! — *Helen in Florida*

Helen, how nice of you to share. I have some friends who like to frame their favorite completed puzzles. Both are great ways to recycle.

— *Heloise*

Cast-iron skillet

Dear Heloise: I try not to use soap when cleaning cast-iron skillets, so I found that an easy way to clean a cast-iron skillet that has stuck-on food is to scrape out what you can, then add some water to cover the bottom. Return to the stove and heat up. As the water boils, it will lift most of the baked-on food with a little help from a plastic or wooden spatula. Let the pan cool before emptying, rinsing and wiping out residue. — *Stephanie H., Rockingham, Vir.*

Buttermilk

Dear Heloise: I love buttermilk but worry that it might be high in cholesterol. Is it? My husband and I are trying to reduce the amount of cholesterol in our diets for health reasons. — *Suzanna in Maryland*

Suzanna, buttermilk does not contain butter. The name originally was derived from being a byproduct of traditional butter making.

The good news is that buttermilk contains a type of milk "fat" that can lessen the uptake of LDL (bad cholesterol), so go ahead and enjoy.

— *Heloise*

Leftover breads

Dear Heloise: When I have leftover hot dog buns, bread or stale dinner rolls, I tear them into pieces and put them in a food processor or blender.

Then I pulse to make bread-crumbs for meatballs, meatloaf or casseroles. I package them up in 1 cup measures and put them in the freezer. — *J.T., Dayton, Ohio*

Send a money-saving or timesaving hint to Heloise, P.O. Box 795001, San Antonio, TX 78279-5001, or you can fax it to 1-210-HELOISE or email it to Heloise@Heloise.com. I can't answer your letter personally but will use the best hints received in my column.



METRO CREATIVE CONNECTION

Most people tend to pack every 'just in case' item they think they might need. With a limited space like a college dorm room or apartment, err on the side of not taking items you aren't sure you'll need. Before your first visit home, make a list of items you need to bring back with you.

What to bring with you to college (or not!)

I'd like to begin with a big congratulations to all 2020 high school graduates. It's been such a challenging year for all students, teachers, staff and parents. For the 2020 graduates, their senior year was drastically different than anything they could have



Angie Hyché

anticipated. Now many of those graduates are among those students headed to a college campus this fall.

Because uncertainty still abounds, planning is even more important. Here are some tips for making your campus housing as organized as possible. I'd like to thank my business Facebook page followers and my daughter Lydia for their ideas!

The biggest challenge of campus housing is a lack of storage space. Whether you're in a dorm room or an apartment, your lodging is likely much smaller than you'd like. The smaller the space, the more important it is to use every bit of space you have as efficiently as possible. You'll need to plan ahead and look for inventive ways to use every square inch of space. Don't forget to consider using wall space if possible.

Most people tend to pack every "just in case" item they think they might need. With a limited space like this, err on the side of not taking items you aren't sure you'll need. You can always buy them later. Parents may want to allocate some funds for these unanticipated expenditures.

You can find plenty of college packing checklists online. Those lists are useful, but even better is a list specific to the college and building in which you'll be living. Ask for measurements, pictures and ideas for organizing products and furniture that work especially well in that specific space. Ask current or recently graduated students what they brought but didn't need, or what they wish they had brought but didn't. Students and the campus housing office are great sources of accurate and up-to-date information. Their input is extremely valuable!

Even more important than using space efficiently is the need to limit and prioritize what you take. I frequently use a principle called the Container Concept. A container holds items, but it also limits how many items can fit. When you use the Container

Concept, you limit what you take to the space available to you. Your dorm or apartment is a container, a limited space. You won't be able to fit everything you might want to take. So you'll need to focus initially on identifying what you absolutely must have. Make a list of all those must haves, and figure out how they will be stored. Then you can broaden your list to items that are not quite as essential as your space allows. If you know who you'll be rooming with in advance, work together on items that can be shared (mini fridge, microwave, etc.).

Be realistic about what you will actually use. For instance, if you know you would never make the effort to iron or steam your clothes, don't waste any space on those supplies. A college packing list may suggest taking multiple sets of linens, but you probably won't change linens as often as your parents hope, so you can probably get by with less.

When planning what clothing you will take, remember that your drawers and closets are also containers that will limit you. The California Closets website suggests using the rule of allowing one-half inch of rod for every space-saving hanger (the skinny felt ones).

In my closet, for a rod length of 22 inches, I had around 30 plastic hangers with clothing (the standard tubular ones that come in different colors). I could fit more, but it became pretty crowded if I tried to fit two or more per inch. For clothes that will be stored in drawers, rolling your clothing is more efficient than stacking it. Start small. Pick your favorites first and plan well. You can get by with much less than you think! If you'll be able to go home during the semester, you can switch out and/or add more clothes if needed.

Take advantage of stores that allow you to order online for pickup at a location closer to the campus or to have the items shipped. This service is particularly helpful if you have small vehicles or if your college is far from home. Relying on something like Amazon Prime shipping may be risky as many people may be doing the same, resulting in longer waits.

These are a few recommended supplies for small spaces like campus housing. Products that are versatile, allowing you to store many different categories of items and to be

used in future locations are especially helpful.

— Cube organizers with fabric (or other) containers.

— Over-the-door organizers.

— Underbed storage (bed risers may be helpful).

— Stacking baskets or cubes.

— Hanging organizers (shoes, sweaters, jewelry, etc.).

— Command strips or hooks. (Find out what actually works without pulling off paint and is permitted for use on the walls.)

Following are a few helpful items that may not be on your list:

— Consider bringing your bicycle only if you are in the habit of riding, you have a specific place to store it, it can be locked securely, and your campus is easy to bike.

— First aid kit with commonly used as-needed medications.

— Small set of basic tools (hammer, screwdriver, etc.).

— Laundry basket. (Rollable ones are especially useful if the washers and dryers are not close by.)

— While most communication of information is done digitally, portfolio folders with pockets are useful for storing loose papers. One binder with dividers and pockets for all class papers may make it less likely that you will grab the wrong folder.

— Basic cleaning supplies (broom and dustpan, multi-purpose cleaner, paper towels, wipes).

— Desk lamp, night light, bedside lamp.

— Trash can and bags.

— Lap desk.

— Small tabletop fan.

Before your first visit home, consider taking items you haven't needed back home, and make a list of things you need to bring back with you. My "Tips for an Organized Move" article from last month contains helpful hints for the move itself. You can find it on my website <https://shipshape.solutions/blog>.

I wish you all the best this next semester. Study hard and have fun!

Angie Hyché is a professional organizer and owner of Shipshape Solutions and the author of "Unholy Mess: What the Bible Says about Clutter" (coming soon!). Email her at angie@shipshape.solutions.

Let's hear from the Karens

By CELIA RIVENBARK
TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE (TNS)

I've been wondering what it feels like to be a real-life "Karen" these days.

Through no fault of their own, Karens everywhere have had their name co-opted to signal that a privileged white woman is on the premises. And she would very much like her dressing on the side. Unless that's too much to ask, in which case please summon the manager. Also, look at this water glass. Is that lipstick? You can't see that? Are you blind AND incompetent?

It's worse for real-life Karens lately. Bad enough to be associated with a jacked-up bob made famous by Kate Gosselin and the ultimate waiter's nightmare but far worse to be used as a catch-all name for the suburban bigot who calls the cops when a black man is spotted breathing

in and out while walking in HER cul-de-sac.

Because I have exactly 19 Facebook friends named Karen, my research was easy like Sunday morning.

Before I get to real-life Karens and their responses to my ridiculous version of journalism, let me just say I'm guilty of using the Karen slam and I'm sorry.

When Duh hubby asked what took so long for my curbside pickup at the hardware store, I responded: "Because Karen had to have her !@#%ing mulch!" Sorry Karens everywhere.

In addition to being a code word for demanding harpie and blond bigot with the local precinct on speed-dial, Karen is the now universally accepted term for the entitled white woman who doesn't wear a mask or social distance because she just doesn't wanna. She's the one who secretly meets her mani-

curist because it takes more than a pandemic to keep a Karen from her pink and white full set.

All of this made me wonder if real-life Karens care. As someone whose name is most often associated with an extremely promiscuous woman in a Simon & Garfunkel song, I can only imagine how much Karen-shaming must sting.

Karen S. told me "It doesn't bother me. I know it's some type of dig, but I don't pay attention to it."

Karen H. said "I just laugh and go on. ... Although I do brace myself when people I don't know first ask my name."

Karen M. said "My gut instinct absolutely hates it. My clinical, logical side says it's not about me (and) recognizes that to openly not like it means the childish ones

have a heyday at (my) expense. The practical side of me just says, Oh, well and keeps on scrolling."

Wow. My Facebook friend Karens are such grown-ups! Most admitted to mild irritation at worst to amusement at best. One noted "Karens are often the badass bosses one would be asking to speak to."

Is there a male counterpart? Yep. "The Guardian" describes "Kyle," as an angry, aggressive white teenage boy who loves Monster energy drinks, body spray and punching drywall. As one commenter put it: "Karen might be Kyle's mom, and they don't have a very good relationship."

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