

*A mom writes her college-bound son a goodbye letter as he prepares for freshman year:*

**A – ALARM**

Set it! But not so loud that it also wakes up your roommate. Even for naps. Set it when you need to be at work, have a test, etc. (USE YOUR PLANNER TOO!!)



**B – BREAKFAST**

Eat it! Maybe you don't normally eat breakfast. But you need to have an awake brain in your classes. One of the best ways to be ready for class and for exams is to eat. Brain power. Doesn't matter what it is – pop tarts, cereal, scrambled eggs. Never go to class on an empty stomach. Never study on an empty stomach, never go to class hungry (you get the picture).

**C – CLEAN YOUR ROOM**

You are living with a stranger for the first time ever. You are sharing a space. Be respectful, pick up your stuff. Clean the microwave and wipe down the fridge. If you use dishes, wash them right away (no bugs, no smell).

### *D – DRINKING*

Don't drink and drive. Cops love college towns and you will get caught. Drinking is also iffy. We know you will. But be smart and if you drink, don't do it at huge parties which will get busted. And if you start drinking one place, stay there.

### *E – CHECK YOUR EMAIL!*

This is so important. You will have class information, registration information, and all kinds of stuff coming to you. Check your ISU email daily (if not more than once per day). I won't be checking it any more. Keep up with it and keep it clean so you can find what you need when you need it.

### *F – FIGHTS WITH ROOMMATE*

Step away. Call me. Then Go back and talk it out. You will fight and argue. That's ok! You don't have to agree with everything.

### *G – GIRLS*

Or women! Be respectful, ask them questions about them, listen. Open doors, pay for dinner. Call when you say you will. If you aren't interested, tell them. If you are, tell them. You may find your true love during the next four years. Be open and honest. Don't be a jerk and don't be mean. Crazy is crazy...that won't change...run away from crazy women!

### *H – HELP*

Ask for it. If you are struggling with classes, ask for help. If you are missing home, call your parents. If you need money, call your parents. If you don't know what to do, call your parents. If you don't want to call us, seek out the assistance on campus. You are not the only Cyclone feeling this way. Asking for help is better than suffering on your own.

### *I – INTRODUCE YOURSELF*

Don't be too cool to meet new people. Go up to them, say hi and make new friends. Talk to those people on the fringes. You may make some of the best friends of your life. Talk to your professors. They are people too. It can make the difference between being in a face in the crowd who gets a C and a person who asks for help and gets an A. They are your best resource for the class!

### *J – JOIN*

You may notice a theme. Get involved, try new things. Meet new people. And hey, if there isn't a club to join, you could always find out about starting one.

### *K – KNOW WHERE YOU ARE GOING*

Find your classes before you need to be there. Find your books before you need them. Know what's expected before the shit hits the fan. Use your phone, use your apps, use a buddy.

### *L – LAUNDRY*

Use Tide Pods and Bounce dryer sheets (buy the name brand). The pods make it so you can't put in too much soap. Sort by colors – darks, lights, white/gray. Set a timer on your phone or use the app (I think ISU has one). Fold and hang right away so everything doesn't wrinkle. Wash and change your sheets every 2 weeks.

### *M – MONEY*

Be careful and don't spend a ton at the beginning of the semester. Make it last. If you need more, ask in advance. I'll always ask what the money is for, be ready and be honest.

### *N – NO*

It's ok to say No. No, I don't want to go to the party. No, I have to study. No, I don't want to do drugs. No, I don't like you. No, I don't love the Cyclones (use that one with caution!). Stand up for what you believe in, but know when it is ok to back down. Say no when you mean it and never when you don't.

### *O – OBVIOUSLY ATTEND CLASS!*

College is expensive (you've seen the bill). You are paying to get an education. GO TO CLASS. You can't learn if you aren't there and you probably won't pass either. You want a job, go to class. You want an internship, go to class. You want friends, go to class.

### *P – PARENTS*

Don't forget about us. We want to hear how things are going, the good and the bad. We actually want to hear your voice. Texts are great for super quick updates. A phone call is so much better. We want to know everything...even if it annoys you. We love you, we miss you, and we want to make sure you are ok.

### *Q – QUARTERS ARE FOR MORE THAN DRINKING GAMES!*

A quarter can get you ramen. 4 can get you a hamburger. Or time to park at a meter. And yes....they can be used to play drinking games. Be careful.

### *R – READ THE ASSIGNMENTS*

You will have to do more in college. More note taking, more reading, more actual studying. Don't think you know it, know it. Take advantage of study groups and friends in class. It will be hard, but you can do it!

### *S – SAFE SEX*

Be careful. Your entire life can change in one night. Take condoms everywhere. And remember, no doesn't mean maybe. Stop and leave once that word is said.

### *T – TAKE THE BUS*

Buses should make it easy to get around town. Leave your car parked (but check on

it often). If you are going somewhere that requires your car, ask if a friend needs to go as well. If you are going to Target, maybe someone else could use the ride.

#### *U – UMBRELLA*

Keep one in your backpack at all times (along with your headphones and phone charger). You never know when it will rain or snow.

#### *V – VALUABLES*

Be aware of your surroundings. Don't flash your expensive stuff and make sure your dorm room is locked. You don't want your shoes walking away, or your phone or your laptop...etc.

#### *W – WORK*

You want money for clothes, for beer, for fun? Work. We can help some, but the majority of your money is going to come from working. It also helps you manage your time. Don't work a ton, but work enough for gas, phone, beer.

#### *X – EXCITEMENT*

Be excited. Don't be too cool that you aren't having fun. You are new to college...so are 6 thousand other kids. Meet them, go to things you think will be lame because you may just learn something.

#### *Y – YOURSELF*

Be yourself, enjoy yourself. Sure you are there to learn. College is also supposed to be fun! Meet people, ask questions, and listen to dissenting opinions. Get involved, fall in love. Try new things, new foods, and be open.

#### *Z – ZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZs*

Sleep. You may not think naps are important right now. But they are. And you will love them. Sleep is essential to everything – how well you do in class, how good you look, how happy you are. Do not sleep in class.

Tags, College Admission Process, College freshman, High school, parents, Students, College, Freshman year, College