How to be a Green Student

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A popular topic nowadays is "being green" and doing what you can to help the environment.
Here are steps you can take to become a more environmentally conscious person student. Whether you are or aren't an environmentally friendly person, we should all do our part to ensure we reduce energy consumption and keep our earth green.

Textbooks

Textbooks are one major product used by college students that really is costly to our environment. Over 30 million trees are being cut down every year to produce books sold in the U.S. Imagine all the trees that are cut just to be used as paper for your textbooks.

What you can do

Your best bet is to reuse. I know this is hard with new editions of textbooks coming out every so often (with often little or no change), but you have a few options.

Of course, reusing means used textbooks, which are cheaper anyway and will help your budget. You can also rent textbooks (same idea pretty much but less costly to you). CampusGrotto has been analyzing textbook options for years, and we recommend renting as the best way to go. Check out our favorite, Chegg. They will even plant a tree for every book ordered, even further helping the green cause.

One form that is gaining in popularity is digital textbooks (See: Where to Download Textbooks). Although not all textbooks are or will be available in digital (usually e-book) form, it's nice to know this option is becoming more available. Of course, it will take some adjustment reading/scanning textbooks on your laptop, but perhaps the new Amazon Kindle could make something like this easier.

Those interested in digital textbooks should check out CourseSmart for the best savings. They are currently offering a free trial for you to test it out.
Other ways to be green

Basically, your goal is to reduce consumption as much as possible. We listed textbooks first, because that is one huge item that directly relates to students. There are other things you as a student can do to be green:

- Wash laundry in cold water.

- Recycle cans - all those cans of PBR you have stashed can easily be recycled (and turned into cash).

- Solar Backpack - Might seem kind of nerdy, but if you're always on the go, you can still charge your electronics by sunlight.

- Take notes on both sides of the paper, or just use your laptop.

- Carpool or Bus and save money - Most of you may do this anyway. It's not always easy to find people to carpool with, but they're out there. Usually your student I.D. will give you a pretty sweet discount on bus fare, and besides...you won't have to deal with parking.

- Bicycle - Environment friendly and a good work out! Everything you need should be within biking/walking distance of your campus anyway.

- Shop at a used clothes store. These can usually be found near college campuses. If you look good enough, you can find some pretty sweet and rare vintage T-shirts.

- Used Furniture - Who says you need to buy new? Check thift stores or places like Craigslist for used furniture. There is all kinds of good stuff being given away in the free section of Craigslist. It may not be the prettiest, but hey you're in college and it will more than likely get trashed anyway.

Other Tips

- Conserve energy by turning off lights, computers, and appliances when not in use!

- Conserve heat in your room!

- Reduce! Reuse! Recycle all cans, bottles, paper, and cardboard!

- Lead, join, or support an eco-project team or club.

More Tips

Check out these resources for other ways (tips) to be green.
GreenStudentU.com
DailyEcoTips.com
Sustainablog.org
TreeHugger.com
BeGreenMinded.com
EcoGeek.org
TheDailyGreen.com
ecosalon.com
inhabitat.com