

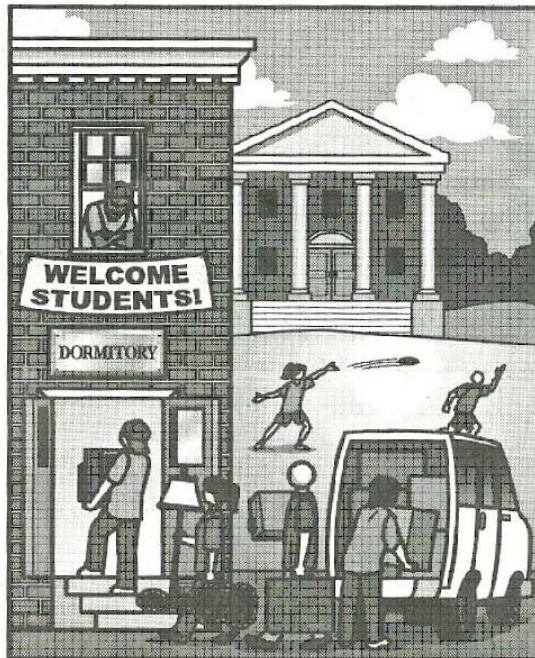
# Getting comfortable in cramped quarters

(NAPSI)  
From communal bathrooms and late-night study sessions to finding the perfect spot for that already tiny minirefrigerator, dorm life is often an unforgettable college experience.

Many schools, however, are finding it hard to meet housing demands of the growing student population, and often resort to filling their dorms beyond capacity. Often, when two students are assigned to a single-unit room, finding space to live comfortably can be difficult--but that doesn't mean students have to sacrifice comfort or amenities.

There are many strategies that can help college students and even young adults in starter apartments better organize their small space. Here are some tips to get started:

- **Consider double-duty items.** Flat-panel TVs can easily double as computer screens. There are also gaming systems that play DVDs and alarm clocks that have docking



stations for iPods and other MP3 players, allowing them to serve as the main stereo. Combination refrigerator/microwave units free up valuable counter space as well.

- **Try temporary furniture.** Look for furniture items that can be easily used, when guests visit. Unlike traditional futons, Aero Products International Inc. offers pieces such as sofabeds and tailgater chairs that can be fully inflated, then folded up and easily stored when they are not in use. Look for adjustable straps and other convertible features that allow temporary items to change from a couch to a lounge to a

bed to maximize usage.

- **Make storage decorative space.** Another way to maximize space when square footage is limited is to move items from the floor to vertical storage. Many manufacturers make stackable storage cubbies and shelves that can hold textbooks, linens and towels, toiletries and even nonperishable food items.

Try mixing in electronics and a few personal items like frames and

trophies to turn shelving into a clever display.

- **Be creative.** There's no reason to feel crowded when space is sparse.

"You don't need to be an architect or contractor to create enough space for entertaining or simply living in a dorm," said Corey Lewison, product manager for Aero Products. "Just because space is sparse, there's no reason to feel limited when it comes to the design and functionality of a room." For more information on space-saving furnishings, visit [www.aerobed.com](http://www.aerobed.com).