

Top 10 tips on Settling into University Life

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Settling into University life is never going to be completely smooth sailing which is why I have created 10 top tips of things I did that helped me settle into university.

Spend time decorating your room

Moving into a new room can be daunting (especially when you don't really know the people you're living with), therefore I found the more I personalised my room with decorations including pictures, plants, fairy lights, posters etc, the more my room felt like a version of 'home'. In fresher's week you'll have plenty of time to make your room exactly how you want it so I would also advise don't finish it all in one day, spread it across the first week this allows you to have something to keep you occupied throughout fresher's week when things are all a bit crazy!

Explore campus

I remember when I first arrived on campus it seemed like this massive intimidating place, whereas now I know where most buildings are it's much less intimidating. Therefore, I would highly suggest before your lectures and seminars start take yourself on a mini tour of campus and find where things are. The more comfortable you feel on campus the more it will start to feel like home.

Explore outside of campus

Don't just explore the campus you are on, also explore what is around like the local town or city. Although Egham may not be the liveliest place around there is still a lot to do for example Tesco (I promise this will come in very handy), a cinema, the walk around Virginia water is stunning and will take up to 3 hours of your day (if you do the whole loop). There is also a train station in Egham which in only 40 minutes will take you to London Waterloo or 5 minutes to Staines which has quite a few shops and most importantly a McDonalds.

Calling home

I know that being away from home can be very difficult however as hard as the first week might be you are not going to be able to settle if you are constantly calling home. Therefore, the more you go and do other things the easier it will be to take your mind off the idea of wanting to call home, it will also give you lots of things to talk about when you do call home.

Board games

Nothing shows a person's true colours like a good old fashioned board game! They are a great way to bring your flat together or to invite people over and I found that some of my best memories of first year came from a games evening (with a game of spoons). Especially in fresher's week where you'll have chunks of spare time here and there, they are a great way to make friends and pass time, so definitely bring a range of games to university.

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Go out

As scary as it might be, the reality is you're not going to meet people by sitting in your room - the only way you will meet people and make friends is by going out (this does not have to be clubbing!). Of course, if you like clubbing this is a great way to make friends but there are so many other ways to meet people on campus, for example going to the student union plant or poster sale or puppy therapy, going to the local pub quiz night etc. There are many ways to meet people on campus but if you don't leave your flat this does limit the people you will meet....

Reach out to people

You will encounter so many people on campus through sports, societies, your flat and your course, which is why it's so important to put yourself out there. If you find that you're getting along with someone ask them for coffee or bubble tea (whatever you prefer!). Even just asking one of your course mates if they want to study with you, it can be as simple as that. Just try to reach out to people because when people say you meet your lifelong friends at university they aren't kidding!

Join a society or sports club

Following on from my tip on freshers fair, don't just go to a couple taster sessions for sports and societies and don't join anything - join something! It doesn't matter what it is, but University is all about trying things you've never done before and a lot of the sports people won't have done before (like lacrosse and ultimate frisbee), therefore it can't hurt to give something a try. By joining a society or sport this opens up a door to so many new people who you will at least have one thing in common with as you're in the same sport or society as them.

Fresher's fair

Go to freshers fair! It is the best way to explore the societies and sports available at the University. Each stall will be run by people who take part in the activity and are most likely on the committee, so if you have questions, they are happy to talk to you and will give you flyers about taster sessions and trials (for the sports). If you sign up for a session you do not have to go so my advice would be sign up for as many as you'd like review it later and choose which ones you actually want to attend. Try and go to freshers fair with your flat mates it's a nice thing to do together.

Everyone is in the same boat

The key thing to remember when settling into university is that everyone is in the same position you are. Meaning people are very open to new people and opportunities, therefore the more you put yourself out there the easier it will be to make friends, join a society or sport, explore campus and eventually feel settled.