



The Oregonian

Lap up new uses for that laptop, students

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It's that time of year again. Students are returning to college with a mountain of worldly possessions in tow, among them, computers.

They'll use those computers constantly, to watch funny YouTube videos, to listen to music and to check their MySpace profiles.

With a little help, students also can employ that expensive technology to improve their academics, manage their money, make travel plans and maybe even have a little fun.

Here's a guide to give or e-mail your student: **Online academics**

Note-taking, organization and even choosing the right professor just got a lot easier. With a few clicks, you can find exactly the tools you need to be a successful, and very savvy, student.

HipCal.com can help you stay organized and will even send messages to your cell phone when important deadlines are coming up. You can use this free online calendar (www.hipcal.com) to track your own schedule, or use it in collaboration with others for group projects.

MynoteIT.com lets you take, track and organize your notes or research. Upload notes from your computer, or sign on and save them directly to the site. Also, www.mynoteIT.com will track when your assignments are due.

I-lighter.com takes traditional highlighting to the Web. Highlight, make notes, save, and share Web pages for research or for fun at www.i-lighter.com.

EasyBib.com lets you create bibliographies without consulting your MLA or APA handbook. The site, www.easybib.com, prompts you to fill in your sources and then formats a bibliography for printing.

Looking for a little extra homework help? Use TutorLinker.com to find a tutor in your area. Or, make money by registering as a tutor at www.tutorlinker.com.

Find out how other students have rated the faculty members at your school by checking on www.RateMyProfessors.com, and schedule your classes with the best. **Book-buying**

Start with the Web site of your school bookstore. Often you can preorder books online and beat the rush. Many bookstores also have buyback programs at the end of the term.

Bookfinder.com lets you search by ISBN, author or title to find the textbooks you need. Your results on www.bookfinder.com will show new, used and even international editions of your book from sellers around the Web.

Tip: If you buy books online, check to make sure that you're getting the correct edition (some professors are particular). Leave time for shipping so you don't end up bookless the first weeks of class. **Money**

matters

Just because you live on a student budget doesn't mean you have to eat ramen noodles every meal. A little planning, and maybe a bit of income from a part-time job, can help you enjoy the finer (or at least the mediocre) things in life.

Wesabe.com lets you securely track all your bank accounts from one site. In the online community www.wesabe.com you'll benefit from any money-saving tips other Wesabe users have provided.

Zoho Sheet (www.zoho.com) is a free online spreadsheet that can help you track expenses (tuition, books, travel, etc.) and avoid missing important due dates. Zoho is a lot like Google Docs and Spreadsheets, but has applications such as an online presentation tool (Zoho Show) and online note taking (Zoho Notebook).

Tip: You can access your bank account info and even pay your student loans on the Web.

CollegeHelpers.com (www.collegehelpers.com) lists part-time jobs, summer jobs, and internships specifically for college students.

Freelance Switch (www.freelanceswitch.com) is a great resource for those not looking to commit to an internship or regular job. Freelance work can be a great way to get a foot in the door of your profession.

Wherever you work, make tax time as painless as possible by checking out what student tax breaks you might be eligible for on the IRS Web site's student section.

Tip: Your school's career center Web site will probably have a job board or database. This can be a great way to find a student-friendly job. **Travel**

Whether you want to plan a trip home for the holidays or just get out of town for a bit, on the web you can find some interesting (and affordable) ways to travel.

At www.bookingbuddy.com, you can search multiple travel sites without entering your trip information again and again, so you can easily compare airfares.

www.farecast.com provides cost predictions for certain flights so you'll know whether to buy tickets now or wait for prices to drop.

Tip: You can always try the student travel sites to look for cheap flights; STA Travel (statravel.com) and Student Universe (studentuniverse.com) both offer student discounts.

Roadside America (www.roadsideamerica.com) can help you plan a road trip around unusual roadside attractions. If you aren't looking to go far, select your own state and see what wacky wonders are nearby.

The site www.roadfood.com has photos and reviews of the diners and dives you'll encounter on the road. You'll have to stop somewhere to eat; you might as well take that time to experience a bit of local flavor.

See and do

In college, your social life can be just as important as your studies; use the following sites to help you plan what to do, or find some entertaining diversions online.

Movie night

Jumpcut (www.jumpcut.com) lets you upload and edit photos and videos for free. This could be a great way to send a video diary to Mom and Dad to let them know what you're up to, or to start your film career without buying expensive editing equipment.

Zunafish.com is a cheap way to trade media without breaking the law. When you get tired of a CD, movie, book or video game you can trade with another user at www.zunafish.com for something else. Each trade will cost you \$1.

Pandora.com will create a free "radio station" for you with music similar to an artist or song that you like. Listen to your station on www.pandora.com while you surf the Web, and you may discover a new favorite band.

StubHub.com can help if you are looking for tickets to a sold-out concert, game or other event (and will sometimes let you preference a seating area). Have tickets but can't go? Sell them on www.stubhub.com, too.

Tip: If you use iTunes as your music player, find out when your favorite bands are coming to town by downloading www.iConcertCal.com; it will track the local tour dates for the musicians on your computer.

With all the tools on the Web, you could manage most of your college career without leaving your room. But you'll make the best memories if you take a break from the computer every now and again and see what the real world has to offer.

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