



Students and their families continue to look for ways to save money on college-related expenses given the high cost of tuition at schools of higher learning. As textbooks have become a significant investment each semester, the New York State Consumer Protection Board (CPB) is offering the following tips to save on these items.

College Textbooks Savings Guide

Purchase used textbooks!

Previously used books cost considerably less than new ones and can often be found in the campus bookstore or online.

Additionally, check the bulletin boards on campus for students selling their books from previous semesters.

Buying online can save money & time!

It only takes a moment to search online for that needed textbook. Textbook price comparison search engines often offer a significant number of choices for low cost used texts. However, make sure you pay reasonable shipping and handling costs and that the book will get to you in time. Use a reputable website before supplying any credit card information.

Textbook Rentals — Who knew?

Check out some of the web-based textbook rental services. Some services offer students the ability to rent a text for the semester for about 1/3 of the purchase price. However, make sure that the textbook comes with any relevant supplementary materials for class.

Further, you should keep it in good shape or you will end up having to pay full price for the book.

Check out book swap programs!

Book swaps offer students the ability to get together and exchange books they no longer need for ones they do. If your school does not offer a book swap, consider organizing one yourself with the student affairs office. If this is not a possibility, go online to join a book swap club.

E-texts -- the next generation of textbooks!

Tired of lugging around that heavy textbook? An e-text may be for you. A subscription to an online text is often half the price of purchasing the actual book. A number of textbook publishers offer electronic books and even some campus bookstores are providing electronic access to texts for a fee. However, make sure you stay enrolled in the class, as e-text subscriptions are usually not returnable or refundable. Keep in mind that some publishers may restrict how many pages of the book you print out at any given time.

New edition requirement limiting your options?

If your professor has listed a new edition for your class and it is out of your price range, ask if you are able to use a previous edition. Often there is little difference between editions and you may be able to photocopy some of the new material from a classmate or the professor.

Don't forget to check the library!

As soon as you find out the name of your textbooks, check to see if the campus or local library carries them. Inquire whether you can borrow and renew them for the semester.

Sell your textbooks when you no longer need them!

Saving money upfront on your texts is a great start but do not forget to sell it back to the bookstore, to another student or online when the semester ends so you can recoup some of your original investment.

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