

# BT'S BASICS



Friends gives you information on the best back-to-school deals and strategic shopping so that even if your kids are dreading the end of summer and resuming their education, you and your pocketbook will have something to look forward to! Popular trends have influenced most in-demand, back-to-school products. Here is some advice from our school industry experts.

First, take inventory of what you already have. You could have most of what you need on your shopping list already. Check around the house, in drawers and around desks for pens, pencils, and notebooks. Why go out and spend money on stuff you might already have.

It's always a great first-thought to swap supplies with your neighbors, family members, and friends. Or, try out this new online tool, Swapmamas.com to find others willing to share. When you click on School & Office, you could find supplies like new backpacks, clothing, crayons and more.

When you are ready to buy supplies, look for stuff you can buy in bulk. Friends, of course, provides most of our school materials in bulk as teachers and school systems have been purchasing from us for years. But be careful you only buy what you can use. You'll lose money on whatever gets wasted.

Be strategic with the way you shop for supplies. Shopping the sales at a lot of stores could save you money, but you could be wasting time and gas. Friends grants you comparative pricing and will match pricing at big box structures like Staples and Wal-Mart. You can shop online at [www.friendsoffice.com](http://www.friendsoffice.com) and sign in on the left-hand side to your account, or create a guest account just to browse!

In all reality, we're coming close to the end of an era for the classic, wall mountable Boston KS pencil sharpener. But with a pack of 12 mechanical pencils running \$5, who could really argue with its demise? The bottom line: mechanical pencils save money and trees in the long term. Friends offers you national brands like Pentel and Bic, but you can also purchase from Friends' private brand Universal for the most savings and the highest quality.

Studying for a vocabulary quiz just isn't the same without index cards. Neither is that oral presentation in Spanish. Whatever the use, index cards define versatility and frugality. Mead, Oxford, and Universal are just some of the brands we offer, and you can choose the size, color and ruling that suites your student.

Binder hole punches are vastly undervalued. Syllabi, assignments, tests and papers are just some of those materials students cart around that are subject to punching from this on-the-go product. As a bonus, most collect the paper clippings, so you don't have to worry about cleaning anything up. Friends offers binder hole punching systems from Swingline in a variety of colors.

Students will need a variety of other binder supplies that Friends can find for you. Pocket folders, tabbed inserts with pockets in various colors, and even colorful binder rulers so whether they're in mathematics, science or art class they can be equipped to produce masterful work!

Whether it's two or three ring, binders are a durable protector of all things students deem important. Folders, papers and the above-mentioned binder hole punch all go here. It's also nice knowing many of the covers can be customized with artwork or photos. Let your student be creative and represent him or herself they way they like! Friends stocks Avery clear-view or Universal clear-view binders at a variety of sizes and colors.

Once your student has all of the supplies needed for their school year, how will you help make sure that they can tow all of their materials from point A to point B efficiently? Ogio backpacks are now available through Friends! Most are priced at \$25 and have all of the zippers, pockets and compartments for top of the line technology equipment, as well as room for their binders, notebooks and textbooks.

So, as you're recognizing that you forgot some supplies while anticipating the new 2010-2011 school year, check out Friends first for the best advice, style and price on back-to-school supplies. You'll be surprised how diligently your Friends consultant works for you! You won't want to shop anywhere else.

