

Tips for Tricking Out Your School Locker

Take your school locker way beyond boring.

Rugs, wallpaper and chandeliers aren't found on most back-to-school lists. But today's students seem to be snapping up these items—the more color-blazed and blinged-out the better—to creatively shore up their own little corner of daily student life: the school locker.

Students have long individualized standard-issue lockers with posters and pictures, but the personalization trend has exploded recently, with aisles of new products in stores and websites filled with DIY ideas.



“Getting your first locker in middle school is a rite of passage,” says JoAnn Brewer, a 52-year-old mom who co-founded the locker accessories company LockerLookz four years ago after witnessing her pre-teen daughter’s frustration at the lack of style in retail locker organizers. (Girls remain the main buyers—anything in pink is perpetually hot). The company’s top seller is a battery-operated beaded chandelier that lights up when the locker door is opened. Animal prints and chevron patterns on faux fur rugs or picture frames, as well as a magnet that looks like a giant jewel, are new additions to this fall’s lineup.

“Not everyone gets to see your bedroom, but everyone can see your locker,” Brewer says. “It draws attention, and that makes you feel good.”

Before undertaking any locker makeover, students should check school regulations, which usually specify that decorations must be temporary (no paint or drilling holes). And many schools don’t allow decorations outside the locker, except for a birthday or sports event. Since most lockers are metal, magnets are a student’s best friend, whether for holding up a mirror for between-class touchups, or securing baskets, clips and hooks to keep school supplies organized.

Montclair, N.J.,-based Wish Factory sells a line of locker products at Toys “R” Us that includes themed wallpaper such as “Bohemian Spirit” and “Beach Crush.” A popular item is a magnetized headset hanger that sells for under \$3. New this year at Target is a lighted rotating disco ball for \$14.99.

And don’t forget the tried and true items for lockers: plastic shelving to increase organization and a survival kit, which can include tissues, acne medication, hair bands, lip balm, contact lens solution and other necessities to get through the school day.

Add Some Flair

- LockerLookz.com Design a one- of-a-kind locker online.
- Target, Dollar Tree and Wal-Mart Browse these stores for decorations and locks.
- Most schools provide locks or offer lockers with built-in locks. If you need your own, MasterLock (masterlocks.com) sells padlocks and keyed locks with colors and patterns beyond blah grey.
- Get ideas on Pinterest at pinterest.com/explore/lockers-decorations/
- Peruse how-to videos on Youtube (search “locker decorations”).