

Hi there! To any future Mitchells, my name is Genevieve and I studied Creative Writing at Trinity in 2021-22. Here are a few things I wish I knew/did during my Mitchell year. Some may be obvious, some may not apply to you, but maybe you might find one or two helpful!

Ten tips for any incoming Mitchells:

1. Keep a budget starting from the beginning of the year and set aside part of your stipend for moving costs. I think several of the Mitchells in my year, myself included, were surprised at some of the random stuff that was associated with the cost of moving. I think I spent close to 1000 euro moving over from California and I hadn't expected it to be that much.
 - a. Also, keeping a budget was very helpful. I'd never had to before because I'd always had a regular income, but with the Mitchell money being a lump sum instead of money in and out every week steadily, I found myself spending a lot more rapidly and running pretty close to zero by Christmas. During my second semester at Trinity, I just tracked my expenses through Notion and ended up with thousands more euro leftover to spend than I thought I had.
2. Get a LEAP card immediately. You can use your LEAP card on the DART, LUAS, local Dublin buses, and often Bus Eirann buses in rural Ireland, too. The student discount you get is very helpful. You can reload your LEAP card via an app or just going into Centra and asking at the till.
3. Invest in a hot water bottle, candles, lamps, and warm clothes early (like, in October), and consider taking supplements. Moving from California was pretty hard for me, as I'd never lived in a cold place before. Seasonal depression hit pretty bad until I figured out that I basically had to romanticize the cold and make the darkness seem really cozy instead of scary.
4. Buy things in bulk at the beginning of the year. I was glad I did this – I bought a giant bottle of handsoap in September and it's still going strong. I wish I bought the box of Maldon salt from Tesco way earlier than I did in December; I use it every day and it's still not run out.
5. Prepare for the shower to possibly ruin your hair. Ireland's water is very "hard" (I wasn't used to this) and if you want, you can buy some products to help alleviate that.
6. Download the app Too Good to Go. You can purchase "Surprise Bags" from local businesses full of good food that might otherwise be thrown away. Using this app made life a bit more affordable and was really fun and a good way to explore Dublin when I first got here.
 - a. The consistently best Too Good to Go bags I've gotten were from Silk Road Cafe and YumThai.
7. Consider having your friends visit you in October or November, which is when you're settling in and may not know many people yet. I found that I was pretty lonely during those months and would have loved friends from the States right then, whereas in the spring I was quite busy with dissertation stuff and celebrating my flatmates' graduations and things like that.
8. If your friends from home ask if there's anything they should bring you, a good answer, at least for me, is always snacks from Trader Joe's. I missed those a lot and they're fun to share with your Irish friends.
9. "The further west you go, the better it gets." A former Mitchell from a few years prior told me this about traveling in Ireland, and I'd say it's pretty accurate. The best trips I've taken have been all about getting into nature and rural Ireland.
 - a. My favorites were Letterfrack in Connemara, Achill Island in County Mayo, and West Cork.

10. A fun shot to order at a pub is a Baby Guinness, which is Bailey's and Kahlua. Very sweet and tastes like dessert.

Ten Trinity-specific tips:

1. Go to Trinity Ball. I know it's not for everyone, but I personally really loved it and highly recommend. It's really nice for us since we live in the GMB and can take a break from the action any time we like, instead of having to wait hours in line to leave and come back in or having to buy alcohol at the bars instead of just keeping it in your kitchen.
 - a. If you want to go, make sure to get your tickets the minute they're released online and keep trying really hard even if the website crashes. Also, you have the option to get two tickets if your computer does get through when the tickets go live – take it. You can sell the other one later or give it to a friend who doesn't end up getting one.
2. The laundry room is hard to find. It's down a winding alley on the side of the Dining Hall Steps. The laundry payment app is called Circuit and you can load money onto it. If Circuit doesn't seem to be working for you when you go to pay, try resetting your wifi to TrinityWifi instead of TrinityGuest. Also, get one of those big blue IKEA bags for the laundry instead of a sack or suitcase or something.
3. If you need a Health Center appointment, try calling five to ten minutes after they open in the morning. I think the phone lines get really busy right when they open so it's tough to get through, but then if you call any later in the day, all the appointments are gone. I'd say the sweet spot is the slot of time right after the morning phone call rush.
4. It is in your best interest to be on a first-name basis with Caroline in the Accommodation Office. She's very nice! And helpful, especially to international students. She helped me sort living with my closest Irish friend in Goldsmith for the summer instead of randoms.
5. Do your groceries at Lidl if you want to save money. I used Dunnes for specific ingredients I wanted, Tesco when I just needed something convenient, M&S if I wanted something really fancy, and Asia Market for certain produce or specialty things. And Gay SPAR (the SPAR on Dame Street next to The George) for if you're really hungry late at night because it's open 24 hours.
6. Avoid Temple Bar if you can, it's very touristy and I've been harassed a few times there. Also, a lot of the drug use in Dublin happens near the river. You'll generally be quite safe if you just pay attention to your surroundings, but that information is good to know regardless. [Here is a map](#) the Brazilian Dublin Deliveroo drivers have used in the past to demarcate risky areas. It's not an end-all, be-all and it makes some big generalizations, but it might be helpful.
7. The bed sheet size you need is twin if you're planning to do a single bed or king if you want to push the two beds together.
8. The stoves in the GMB are induction stoves and you need to buy special pots and pans to use them.
9. Get a Keep Cup and use it whenever you get coffee, you'll get discounts. Also, Shane, the barista at The Buttery is really nice. Make sure to get a stamp card from him.
10. Keep an eye out for Sam the Fox when you're walking home from going out at night. I've seen him the most at night *not* on campus but in alleyways a few streets over.