

FAQ on Used Books

Why do college stores sell used books?

College stores sell used books as a service to students. The process of buying back and reselling used textbooks is perhaps the most direct way for students to save on textbook expenses.

Are used valued by students?

Yes. According to the NACS *2010 Student Watch*[™] report, students ranked the ability to purchase used textbooks as the number one factor when considering what textbooks to buy.

Because of student demand, used books accounted for \$1.8 billion in college store sales during the 2008-09 academic year and made up 18% of U.S. college store total sales, according to NACS' *2010 Industry Financial Report*. Used textbooks made up 35% of all textbooks sold. Many stores believe that given students' demand for used books, these percentages would be higher if more used books were available.

What is the average price for a used textbook?

Used textbooks are typically priced at 75% of the retail price of the new book.

Does the sale of used textbooks raise the price of new textbooks?

No. In 2005, the U.S. Government Accountability Office, the independent investigative research arm of Congress, investigated the rise of textbook pricing. The GAO concluded: "While many factors affect textbook pricing, the increasing costs associated with developing products designed to accompany textbooks, such as CD-ROMs and other instructional supplements, best explain price increases in recent years."

How do college stores acquire used books?

College stores use a variety of methods to secure used books for students. One familiar strategy for obtaining used books is through buyback events, where books are purchased from students for resale. College stores also work with textbook wholesale companies to secure additional copies of used books, or books that may not have been available during their campus' buyback.

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