

College Preparation

Choosing a college that is right for you is probably the biggest decision you've ever made so far. Below is a list of things to think about as you make your way through the process. If you do your homework and start early, you will find that it can be an enjoyable process rather than a stressful one!

1. Academic Requirements to be eligible for Division I.

Graduate from high school

Complete a core curriculum of at least 16 academic course:

- > 4 years of English
- > 3 years of Math (Algebra 1 or higher)
- > 2 years of Natural/Physical Science (at least 1 laboratory class)
- > 2 years of Social Science
- > 1 additional year of English, Math or Science
- 4 years of core courses (any of the above, foreign language, philosophy...)
- Achieve a combined SAT or ACT in accordance with your GPA
- > There is a sliding scale
- > [2009 SAT test dates](#)

NOTE: No athlete will be eligible for NCAA competition at any level without a minimum SAT score of 820.

2. The steps to take with NCAA 'to get in the system.

NCAA Initial –Eligibility Clearinghouse. If you meet the above criteria, then you will need to register with the clearinghouse to certify your athletic eligibility. This should be done no later than by the end of your junior year.

[Go to the NCAA Clearinghouse web site](#)

Customer service number: (877) 262-1492

When you register you will need the help of your high school counselor as they will need to submit your high school transcripts.

3. What to consider when choosing a school.

Location

- > Do you want to be close to home?
- > Do you want to stay in California?
- > Do you want to stay on the West Coast?

Major

- > Do they have what you want to study?
 - Weather
 - > Make sure you know what it is like year round; especially if you don't think
 - > You can handle the rain or snow!
 - Size
 - > Small school vs. large school
 - > Class size
 - Coach/team
 - > Will their style of play match the type of player you are?
 - > Creative, physical, long ball, etc.
 - Find out the program history
 - > Is it a new coach building a program?
 - > Are the coach and team successful?
 - > Alumni success? (Graduation rate, do they continue to play?)

Narrow down your choices. Once you've done your research, start narrowing down your choices to 5-10 schools. When? Everyone is different; so don't feel pressured by how quickly others are at this point. Take your time!

After you narrow down your choices, start contacting the coaches if you haven't already. Just remember the recruiting rules as to whether they may return your calls or not. If they can't, continue to contact them until you get through.

4. The RULES of being recruited.

Basic rules:

- > Sophomores - can't receive any phone calls or emails
- > Juniors - may receive emails
- > Seniors - may receive emails and phone calls

More advanced rules:

- > Players become "prospective student athletes" as they begin 9th grade classes.
- > They become "recruited prospective student athletes" with a particular college when a representative of that college's athletic interests, usually a coach, approaches the athlete about enrolling and participating with the team at that college.
- > Letters from coaches are not permitted until September 1st of your junior year of high school.
- > A college coach may contact a student athlete in person off campus only on July 1st, after completion of your junior year in high school.

> An evaluation is any off campus activity used to assess a student athlete's academic and/or athletic qualifications. A college coach may not make more than four evaluations during each academic year.

NOTE: These rules are in place to protect you, the athlete, from being overwhelmed at too young of an age. However, this does not mean that you can't continue to call and email the coaches. If you are interested in their program, keep contacting them, just know whether they can or cannot respond. You may have to just keep trying to reach them if you are a sophomore.

Activities that cause a student athlete to be considered recruited:

- Receiving phone calls from a coach (representative) of that college
- Receiving an off campus visit by a coach (representative)
- Athlete taking an OFFICIAL visit to that college

5. Do's and Don'ts when contacting college coaches.

DON'Ts:

- > Avoid "cut and paste" emails
- > Make sure you have the correct coach's name and the corresponding college
- > Avoid mass emails with 20 or so different coaches in the address box

DO'S:

- > Keep sending profiles, schedules, and transcripts
- > Keep sending updates

6. Visiting schools and what to expect during your visit.

Official visit. An official visit is allowed to take place during the student athlete's senior year of high school. The student athlete is invited on an official visit by the coach and the school pays for the visit. Every student athlete is allowed a maximum of 5 official visits, so make sure you choose them wisely. An official visit cannot last longer than 48 hours.

Unofficial visit. Unlike an official visit, you are allowed to take as many unofficial visits as you would like. I highly recommend you taking an unofficial visit to all the schools you have narrowed your list down to, as long as it is possible. With unofficial visits, your family will incur all of the costs.

To make your unofficial visit useful:

Set up a meeting with the coach but come prepared with questions. Don't let

your parents do all the talking; the coaches like to see the athletes involved.

Take a tour of the campus. Some schools have tours you can sign up for that will give you a lot of useful information.

Try to meet with the team or some of the players. Talking with the players will help you get a true sense of their team chemistry. Ask the players questions! You will get honest answers from them, which can help you get a better sense of the coach and their style of play.

Watch the team play! This will allow you to see the coach in action and their sideline demeanor. This is also the best way to see how the team plays and if you feel that you can fit in with their style.

7. What the coaches look for in their recruits.

Coaches are looking for the “complete package.” They want players who are good people and who are going to be team oriented. They are also looking for players with good grades. If you don’t have the grades coming into their school, you will struggle to stay eligible enough to play. They are also looking at where their team currently is and where you would fit in, as each year the team will differ. Are you going to come in and be an impact player right away or are you going to be a role player. It is also important for you to know their expectations for you in regards to this as well and if you are going to be comfortable in that role.

Enjoy the process! Although this may seem like a lot of information and this whole process may seem overwhelming, just remember that it is your decision! Take your time and don’t let anyone pressure you, whether it be your friends, family or the college coaches. It is important that you choose a school where you are going to be comfortable.