



COLLEGE RECRUITMENT GUIDE

Creating a list of potential schools

Start by developing a list of potential schools. Make sure that the schools on your list interest you both academically and athletically. Consider schools of different sizes and locations within the country.

Research each of the schools on your list. Do they offer degrees in your areas of interest? Is it the right size school for you? What types of scholarships and financial aid are available? What are the average test scores of their students? If possible, visit the campus and take a tour. Do you like the campus? Do you like the people there? Gain as much knowledge about each school as you can from their websites.

Research each of the soccer programs on your list. Who is the coach? What is the level of the players on the roster? What conference do they play in? How competitive is the team? If possible, go and see a game. What's the environment like at their home games? What's the coach's style during the game? What style of play does the team use? Gain as much knowledge about each team as you can from their websites.

Meet with your high school and/or club coaches to get feedback on your potential to achieve playing time at different schools and the various college divisions.

Meet with your high school guidance counselor to get feedback regarding your potential to gain admission to the various schools on your list.

You might start with a list of 20-30 schools. Then after some research and meetings with coaches and guidance counselors you should be able to narrow down your list to 10-15 schools. At this point you are now ready to start to market yourself to the various coaches. Remember, this is a working list. Schools can be added and dropped at any time.

Marketing yourself to college coaches

Unless you are one of the top players in the country you can't sit around waiting to be discovered. The college recruitment process doesn't work that way. Players need to advocate for themselves and actively market themselves to their prospective college coaches. College coaches want to see that you've done your research and that you're the right student for their school and the right player for their team. Here are five tools a player can use to market themselves to prospective coaches.

1. Introductory Letter/Email

This needs to be simple and straightforward yet professional in style. This is your first opportunity to show the coach that you are serious about being recruited and that you're capable of adult level communication. Your letter should include the following:

- Name
- High School
- Graduation Year
- Home address
- Phone Number
- Email Address
- Your academic interests.
- Why their school is right for you.
- Your high school soccer experience - years on varsity, position, team accomplishments, personal accomplishments.
- Your club soccer experience - team name, position, team accomplishments, upcoming schedule.
- Request for soccer program information.

See Sample Introductory Letter

2. Soccer Resume

This should be a one page document that tells the coach everything they need to know about you. Content can include the following:

- Personal Information - address, email, phone, height, weight, DOB, picture, position.
- Academic Information - school, GPA, class rank, test scores, clubs, service, awards
- High School Soccer Information - Uniform number, position, accomplishments, coach, awards.
- Club Soccer Information - Uniform number, position, coach, accomplishments, awards.
- Other sports experience.

See Sample Soccer Resume

3. Soccer References

Create a separate document that lists 2-3 references that know you both as a person and as a soccer player. These are typically your high school and club soccer coaches.

Include the following for each reference.

- Name
- Title
- Home address
- email address
- phone numbers (home, work, cell)

4. Online Player Profile

There are several free and pay online recruiting tools. The CHSC recommends using free sites that allow you to create an online player profile. It's common for coaches to reference these

sites during the recruiting process. The pay sites are no better than the free sites so it's recommended that you save your money for books. Below is a recommended free site:
<https://new.berecruited.com/soccer>

5. Highlight Video

Although it is not an essential component of the recruitment process it is hard to deny the fact that coaches are eager to see potential players in action. Videos do not have to be overly elaborate or have professional production quality. You do want the video to include the following:

- Highlight clips showing various skills - passing, receiving, heading, tackling, dribbling and shooting.
- Highlight clips showing your speed, agility, strength and work rate.
- 5-10 minutes of unedited game film so the coaches can see the impact you have on the game when you don't have the ball
- Goalkeepers will want to include: crosses and shot stopping, footwork, punts and goal kicks, verbal communication.

Recommended companies to help with videos: www.socceraspect.com

Communicating with Coaches

Most coaches prefer to communicate through emails. Players must realize that emailing a prospective coach is not the same as emailing a friend. The tone and structure of your emails needs to be professional. You want to convey that you are mature and capable of forging a solid working relationship with the coaching staff. Soccer might be a game to you but for college coaches it's their profession. They are not playing around. It's their job to win soccer games and they do this by recruiting skilled players that they feel are trustworthy and have the character to be productive members of a team.

One simple way to make sure you don't get overlooked by coaches is to put your name in on everything you send them. This makes it easy for them to reference the materials sent to them. Start by creating an email account with an address that is your name. Try to include your graduation year as well (ie. samantha.smith.2015@email.com). This way the coaches are sure to know who the email is from when your message appears in their inbox.

Make sure that any attachment that you email a coach is a PDF (.pdf) file. Limit content to a single page for each document and create as small a file size as possible so that you don't crash a coach's email system or require long download times. Large files like videos should be uploaded to youtube or vimeo (preferred) and then email the coaches a link. Coaches will appreciate how quickly they can access your video over the internet and the fact that they will not have to store a DVD.

Your initial communication with a prospective coach will be your Introductory Letter/Email. You'll include your soccer resume and references. In this email you should request that the coach send you all available information on their soccer program. Some programs have online forms for prospective players to fill out. You should fill these out but also follow up with an Introductory Letter/Email as well.

After sending your initial email you'll want to send follow up emails to the coach. These follow up emails would be used to deliver an updated resume or reference list. You could email coaches to update them on your upcoming games or showcases. You could also let them know of a campus visit that you're planning and see if you could schedule a chance to meet with a member of the coaching staff. You want to email at a frequency that shows that you are interested without becoming overbearing. If you are emailing once a month you're in good shape.

It's also important for players to understand the NCAA rules that limit when coaches are allowed to contact players. Here is a brief summary.

- **Sophomores:** No calls or letters allowed **from** the coach to the player. Coaches are allowed to send out letters that include general information about the school, its soccer programs or the camps that the soccer program hosts.
- **Juniors:** (starting September 1st): College Coaches can send out letters of interest to prospective players.
- **Seniors:** (starting July 1st): College Coaches can call prospective players.

Tip - Review your social media exposure. Coaches will use social media sites to research the lifestyles of prospective players.

Tip - Parents should not initiate or be the driving force when it comes to communicating with coaches. College Coaches want to work directly with prospective players. Overbearing and controlling parents will not be perceived positively by College Coaches.

Camps and Clinics

Almost every college soccer program hosts a variety of off-season camps and clinics. The purpose of these camps and clinics are twofold. These camps and clinics are a wonderful way for coaches to generate extra revenue for themselves. But more importantly to you, the prospective player, these camps and clinics serve as a powerful recruitment tool. The camps and clinics are the perfect opportunity for prospective players to get to meet the coaching staff and see what they are like. Do you like their practices? Do you like their coaching style and philosophies? Does their manner of providing feedback match your learning style? It's also an efficient way for coaches to assess the abilities of their recruits. Coaches can learn more about players in a controlled setting like a camp or clinic then they ever could from a single league game or showcase game.

Official Visits

This is a visit that is financed by the school. The school will pay for your transportation, lodging and meals. Typically a recruit will be hosted by one of the players on the team. They will stay in the dorms overnight and eat with the players in the school cafeterias. During on official visit the recruit will get a 1-2 day picture of what life is like on the team and at the school. Recruits are allowed a total of 5 official visits and no more than 1 official visit per school. Although official visits are limited to 5 a recruit is allowed an unlimited number of unofficial (self financed) visits. A recruit can not take an official visit until after their first day of classes during their senior year. Recruits can not tryout, compete, play or practice during their official visit.

NCAA Eligibility Center

The NCAA Eligibility Center certifies whether prospective college athletes are eligible to play sports at NCAA Division I or II institutions. It does this by reviewing the student-athlete's academic record, SAT or ACT scores, and amateur status to ensure conformity with NCAA rules. If you think you might want to play at a Division I or II school you'll need to register with the NCAA Eligibility Center during your Junior year in high school. This can be done online at the [NCAA Eligibility Center](#).

Recruitment Time Line

Summer Before Junior Year

1. Develop list of potential schools
 - a. Research school and soccer programs
 - b. Meet with Club/High School Coach regarding viability of college soccer and level
2. Draft and send introduction letter
3. Draft and send resume
4. Plan unofficial visits

Winter of Junior Year

1. Revise list of potential schools
2. Update and resend resume
3. Update and resend introduction letter
4. Update showcase and league game schedules
5. Plan to attend college team's camps and/or clinics (spring and summer)
6. Plan unofficial visits

Senior Year

1. Revise list of potential schools
2. Update coaches on accomplishments from fall season
3. Plan official visits
4. Select School