

PLAYCED RECRUITING CHECKLIST

A year-by-year checklist on how to get recruited.

If you wait until your senior year in high school to start the recruiting process, the only sport you may be playing in college will be intramurals. You might dominate, but that won't pay the tuition. In today's competitive college athletic environment, the recruiting process actually should start earlier than most people think. College coaches are looking to connect, develop and maintain relationships with athletes as early as their freshman year in high school. In fact, some athletes commit to a college before they even suit up for their high school team.

Unless you are an exception to the rule, freshman year is an ideal time to start the college recruiting process. You don't have to start as a freshman, but it gives you the best chance at a successful recruiting experience. The earlier you start, the more time you have to learn about all your college options, to research colleges and to plan college visits.

Given the fact that recruiting is really a four year process, you really need to follow a recruiting timeline. There are many tasks to do if you want a successful recruiting experience.

FRESHMAN YEAR

- Fall in love with being a student and an athlete! Passion is a must for every student athlete that wants to play in college.
- Make good decisions and commit to doing things the right way, on and off the field.
- Enlist your parents to be your administrative assistants.
- Review the NCAA Guide for the College Bound Student Athlete.
- Inform your high school guidance counselor of your desire to play in college.
- Familiarize yourself with the recruiting rules.
- Ask your current coach for an honest assessment of your abilities and where he/she projects you as a college athlete.
- Research and identify a list of colleges that match your abilities and in which you have an interest.
- Research the athletic benchmarks necessary to play at the colleges you want to attend and set athletic goals.
- Alert both your high school coach and summer coach of your desire to play in college.
- Begin building an athletic resume and start accumulating video clips for a highlight video.
- Send an introductory email to the coaches at the colleges in which you have an interest.
- Be careful on social media. College coaches watch the social media behavior of athletes they are interested in.
- Work hard on the field and in the classroom. After all, we are talking about going to college.

SOPHOMORE YEAR

- Take the PSAT to determine where you stand academically.
- Use the NCAA Division I core course worksheet to make sure you are on track with the core course requirements.
- Meet with your coach to review his or her assessment of your abilities.
- Review and update your list of appropriate colleges. Create a Favorites List of 20-30 colleges at levels you realistically qualify for.
- Check the entrance requirements at the colleges on your Favorites List. Even if they offer you an athletic scholarship, you still have to get into the school!
- Fill out the Recruiting Questionnaires for the colleges on your Favorites List.
- Reach out to the coaches at the colleges on your Favorites list expressing interest in their program.
- Ask your coach or an objective third party for an honest assessment of your strengths and weaknesses.
- Research how coaches in your sport evaluate athletes.
- Develop a plan to work on your weaknesses and enhance your strengths.
- Pick a quality summer team to play for. It doesn't have to be the best team, but it should be a team with solid coaching, a good schedule and one where you will have a significant role. You can't be seen or get better if you don't play.
- Sign up for a few strategic camps and/or showcase events. Pick events where coaches from the schools you are pursuing will be in attendance.
- Discuss the family college budget with your parents. Most athletic scholarships are partial scholarships, so family budget might be a factor in which colleges you pursue.
- Play every game and finish every play as if a college coach is watching.
- Work hard on the field and in the classroom. After all, we are talking about going to college.

JUNIOR YEAR

- Prepare yourself for the SAT or ACT. A review course may pay big dividends.
- Use the NCAA Division I core course worksheet to make sure you are on track with the core course requirements.
- Review and update your Favorite Colleges list.
- Register with the NCAA Eligibility Center.
- Take the SAT or ACT.
- Create a highlight video and download it to YouTube or Vimeo. Include the link in any correspondence you have with college coaches.
- Get your current coach involved as a reference. Ask him or her to reach out to your 5 to 7 favorite colleges. Provide them with an athletic resume and the contact information for the coaches at each college. The easier you make it for your coach, the more they will be involved.

- Meet with your coach to review his or her assessment of your abilities.
- Review and update your list of appropriate colleges. Maintain a Favorites List of 20-30 colleges at levels you realistically qualify for.
- Schedule two or three unofficial visits to colleges that have expressed an interest in you.
- Prepare a list of questions to ask college coaches.
- Prepare yourself for questions a coach might ask you.
- Attend any camps or combines that make sense.
- Send follow up emails to the colleges you have not heard back from.
- If you aren't generating much interest yet, DON'T PANIC, step up your efforts and reconsider the colleges you are pursuing.
- Don't stop pursuing colleges just because a few coaches have expressed an interest. Keep your options open until you sign a National Letter of Intent.
- Find a summer team that makes sense, where you will have a significant role and play against quality opponents.
- Keep track of where you stand with each college.
- Be careful on social media. College coaches pay attention to the social media behavior of recruits.
- Work hard on the field and in the classroom. After all, we are talking about going to college.

SENIOR YEAR

- If you haven't found your college, step up your efforts. Follow up with the colleges in which you have interest and explore other options.
- Ask your current coach to review your list of favorite colleges and ask he or she if they would reach out to a few more.
- Re-take the SAT or ACT if necessary. The higher your score, the more colleges you can consider.
- Connect with the coaches at the colleges you are pursuing via email, Twitter or you can even give them a call.
- Work hard on the field and in the classroom. After all, we are talking about going to college.
- Review and update your Favorite Colleges list.
- Meet with your coach to review his or her assessment of your abilities
- Review and update your list of appropriate colleges. Maintain a Favorites List of 20-30 colleges at levels you realistically qualify for.
- Get any financial aid forms submitted as early as possible.
- Keep in contact with coaches who have contacted you, or coaches at schools in which you have interest.
- If you have financial aid needs, don't be afraid to let coaches know that.
- Request final transcripts to be sent to the NCAA.

- Once you accept a scholarship offer from a school, get the college team's suggested workout schedule and do it.