

# How to get Recruited and get an Athletic Scholarship

Athletic scholarships are awarded by coaches based on their programs needs. This guideline will help you learn how to get recruited and be in a position to receive scholarship offers. The more closely you follow these steps, the better your opportunity will be for a scholarship.

## Create a Target List of Schools

Compile a list of schools that you are interested in attending. Keep in mind your academic level, athletic talent, and school preferences.

- Always start with a wide range of schools, and then narrow it down as you move along in the process.
- If your list of schools is too small, your chances of earning a scholarship will be very low.

## Gather All the Contact Information for the Coaches

Collect the e-mail addresses and phone numbers for all coaches on your school list. Then e-mail the following information:

- Resume – Write a professional resume with very detailed statistics on all of your past seasons. Also include a copy of your high school transcripts and test scores. [Calculate your GPA here.](#)
- Video – Have a high quality skills tape or highlight video created and put it online. Include a link to that video as a part of your resume.

## Start the Communication with the Coaches

- If you do not hear from a coach after two weeks, call the coaches to express your interest in their university.
- Respond to every coach that replies to your e-mail.
- As you communicate with coaches, get familiar with their school and sports programs so you can ask informed questions and explain why you are interested in their school.

- If you can arrange a phone call with a coach, make sure to prepare for it ahead of time. Learn about their most recent season, have answers to questions coaches might ask, and have a list of questions for the coach.
- Do not ignore any e-mails or phone calls from a coach – you never know how your recruiting process will unfold. A school you were not as interested in attending at one point may end up being one of the few options you have to choose from at the end.

## Attend Summer Camps and Showcases

- You can't rely on being 'discovered' at a camp or showcase.
- Camps and showcases can help with gaining exposure, but only if coaches are there to watch you specifically.
- The majority of coaches who attend camps and showcases are there only to watch players they have already had contact with.
- If a coach talks to you or your parents at a camp or showcase, make sure to follow up with that coach at a later date by calling or e-mailing him. Make sure you follow-up consistently.

## Know the NCAA and NAIA Rules and Regulations

- Know all the rules that apply to you based on your year in high school.
- Know exactly how coaches can contact you and how you can contact coaches. These sound similar, but are two separate rules.
- Read the NCAA and NAIA Guide for the College Bound Student-Athlete.

## Know the Academic Requirements to be Eligible

- Register with the NCAA and NAIA Eligibility Centers to be cleared for athletic scholarships.
- Research which core courses you must take and the grades you must earn to be academically eligible; then arrange your academic calendar around those requirements.
- Research which exams you must take and the minimum score requirements.
- Read the NCAA and NAIA Guide for the College Bound Student-Athlete.

## College Recruiting Timeline

Here's a helpful timeline for your high school years.

The recruitment process starts early, sometimes as soon as the 7th grade. Be proactive by playing year around on competitive club teams and reaching out to coaches. Send coaches letters and invite them to games starting Freshmen year. Starting early is the key for women's volleyball. Stay persistent and work hard to land your roster spot on a collegiate volleyball roster.

### Freshman Year

- Research 2-3 schools per week
- Create a list of 100 prospective schools consider both athletics and academics
- Film highlights tape
- Send introduction letters to coaches
- Go on unofficial visits to colleges
- Build relationships by making phone calls, send letters and emails
- Attend summer camps with the goals of honing your skills and to gain exposure
- Have fun and learn!

Rules/Tips to Remember:

- Coaches are watching your development throughout high school at camps, in school and on the court

- Standouts are proactive, it's never too early for YOU to write a letter or make a call to coaches
- DI and DII coaches can't personally contact you until Junior year, but YOU can contact them
- DIII and NAIA coaches can contact you at anytime
- Important to do be familiar with the school both athletically and academically

Club Volleyball and Exposure

### **Sophomore Year**

- Film your highlights tape
- Narrow your list of schools
- Get an evaluation of your skills tape
- Continue to research prospective schools
- Continue to build relationships by making calls, sending letters, emails
- Fill out questionnaires
- Make unofficial visits

Rules/Tips to Remember:

September 1st of Junior year marks the first day DI and DII coaches can send you personalized letters and emails

### **Junior Year**

- Film your highlights tape

- Follow-up with coaches you've contacted in a TIMELY manner
- Find camps to join
- Continue to call, email, send letters to coaches
- Ask coaches where you stand on their recruits list
- Fill out questionnaires
- Respond to EVERY coach
- Make unofficial visits to schools
- Narrow down your prospective schools list

Rules/Tips to Remember:

- DI and top DII programs will make offers to top recruits during Junior year
- DIII, NAIA and Junior Colleges do most of their recruiting during Senior year

### **Senior Year**

- Make official visits – only allowed 5
- Follow-up with coaches and respond in a TIMELY manner
- Apply to the schools- applications
- Apply for financial aid – FAFSA.ed.gov starting Jan. 1st
- Sign and Commit to a school and program (Signing period in April, last date is August 1st)
- Find out the summer workout schedule
- Get ready for an experience of a lifetime

## **How to Make a Skills Video**

Your skills video is likely the first thing a coach will ask for. It needs to be simple, to the point and show off your best qualities.

A skills video is a 2-5 minute video of you doing reps in each of your best skills. You don't need a lot of resources to make a great skills video.

### **Here's what you need to do it on your own:**

- a court
- a setter (if you're a hitter)
- someone to video-tape you
- a tripod/monopod
- an iphone/go-pro/video camera

### **What to do:**

1. Start with a short introduction, like, "Hi, my name is Aimee and I'm a 5'10 class of 2020 outside hitter. My GPA is 4.0 and I would love to play college volleyball. I hope you enjoy my skills video!". Keep it short and sweet. Be colorful, fun and interesting. Don't be monotone or nervous.
2. Tape yourself doing 5 quality reps of a few different skills that you're great at. If you're an outside hitter, start the film off with 5 big kills on the outside. Make sure to hit in the middle and the right side - you never know what position a coach might see you in! It's OK if you have to start and stop between reps- your reps don't have to be uninterrupted.
3. Include some passing, defense and serving. Don't linger too long on these skills, unless of course you're a libero or a defensive specialist,

in which case it's appropriate to show off a multitude of situational skills (ie: digging line, run-thru's, dig/dive/roll, serve receive).

4. Don't overthink your production. You do not need music, transitions, intros/outros. Coaches literally just want to see you play volleyball!
5. Use iMovie to edit your clips together, and upload your movie to YouTube! Be sure to include the player's full name, grad year, position, club and team name!

## **Sending Letters & Emails to Coaches**

Writing to coaches is the best way to initiate a relationship with your target schools. Read below about how and when to write.

### Introducing Yourself to Coaches

You can't expect college coaches to know who you are and want to give you an athletic scholarship simply because of your athletic success. There are thousands of other student-athletes out there that you are competing against. You have to set yourself apart and get in contact with the coaches you may want to play for. Email can be a quick way to reach out to coaches, but taking the time to send written letters may get you noticed as well.

### Guidelines for Letters and Emails

*Get your name out there.* Contact at least one coach each week, or around 50 a year. That may sound like a lot, but building relationships with multiple coaches might just result in several scholarship options when it's time to choose a college.

*Research each school and coach.* Find out specific information about the athletic program you're contacting. Mention important wins or other recent success the coach has had. This kind of personal touch shows that you're interested in the coach and the college.

*Avoid using a form letter.* Coaches can tell when you do. Take the time to personalize each letter or email.

*Include some essential aspects.* There are several basic things that every letter or email should include.

- A personalized salutation including the coach's name. Never start with, "To Whom it May Concern."
- Your basic information including your high school, the position that you play, or events that you compete in.
- Include some of your important athletic stats as well as academic stats like your GPA and placement test scores.
- Tell the coach of any club sports or camps that you're participating in.
- Include any recognition you've received like all-conference honors, MVP mentions, and academic awards.
- Explain why you want to play for that college and coach. Be specific.
- Link to your athletic profile. Give the coach an option to find out more about you.
- Don't forget your contact information. Make sure you've included your street address, phone number, and email address.

### Sample Letter/Email to Coach

Dear (Coach's Name),

My name is (Your name) from (City and State) and I am writing to you because of my interest in playing (sport) at (college name). I play on my high school team and I consider myself (add something about your athletic ability).

Just to tell you a little bit about myself. I am an (position) on my school and (Now talk about your high school and club experience, any awards or honors, your work ethic, what you contribute most to the team).

As a student, I am (about you). I currently have a -- GPA and scored an -- out of 1600 on my SATs. I plan on retaking the SAT (date). My goal is (score). (Put in some extracurricular activities if applicable). (Your academic strengths). (Say something about the college/University's academic record and your interest there)

(Include some upcoming plans and goals in this paragraph). I hope that you are able to see me play. Below I have included a link to my recruiting page for you to view as it includes highlight videos and my athletic and academic information.

I would love to meet you and talk about the possibility of being a part of your team in (Grad year). If there is anything I can do to help you decide whether I might be a good fit for your program please don't hesitate to ask. I will follow up with you soon by phone and if you have any further questions I look forward to answering them for you.

Thank you very much for your time and I look forward to hearing back and contacting you via phone very soon.

Sincerely,

Aimee Student/Athlete

1234 Broadway Drive

Email:

Phone: 555-555-5555

Cell: 555-555-5555

## 5 Types of Questions You Need to Ask a College Coach

While knowing what questions to expect from a college coach and how to answer them is important, any conversation with a coach also allows the student athlete an opportunity to find out some critical information that will help them through the athletic recruiting process. The key is to know the right questions to ask in order to maximize your short time with a coach.

Every conversation with a college coach will be unique. Since the recruiting process moves at different speeds for prospects and coaches, the current relationship should dictate the type of questions that are appropriate. However, regardless of where you're at in the process, we wanted to give you some advice that every recruit can take advantage of.

Before we go into specific questions that potential recruits should ask college coaches, let's go over a few basics to keep in mind while preparing for the conversations.

- First and foremost, PREPARE! While a prospect might not know the exact time a college coach will be calling, every recruit should recognize that phone conversations will be a significant portion of a recruiting relationship. With that in mind, prospects should write down a list of 15 questions that they could ask a coach...and keep it handy! While the conversation should flow naturally, it will only help a potentially nervous student-athlete to have a set of questions prepared ahead of time that they can always ask a coach.
- A prospect should never ask if they will receive a scholarship during an initial conversation unless a coach brings up the topic.
- Recruits should maximize the conversation by only asking questions that they can find answers to by talking to the coach directly. They should not waste this valuable opportunity by asking questions that can be answered through a brief visit to the college's website. Each

conversation serves as a limited chance to develop a real relationship... make the most of it!

- Do not be afraid to ask coaches about themselves. Often times, recruits only ask questions that pertain to their life and neglect to find out anything personal about the coach. It's important for a recruit to get to know a coach (their interests, their family, etc...)

Now, let's go over some questions recruits can ask to make the most of the conversation. As we mentioned earlier, every conversation will be dictated the by current recruiting situation, but here are a few topics that should be covered and some sample questions from each...

### **Academics**

Simply put, academics are the most important part of the process. If the college coach does not share your academic goals then it might be time to look at other options. Here are some academic questions every recruit might want to ask:

- What are the admission requirements for an athlete?
- Will my specific major interfere with the athletic schedule?
- What are some of the most popular majors for athletes on your team?
- Does your team have a full-time academic advisor?
- Do your players graduate in four years?
- Can the application fee be waived for athletes?

### **Athletics / Recruiting**

These two topics overlap in many cases, as an athletic evaluation will determine how heavily the coaching staff will be recruiting a prospect. Here are some "must ask" questions for recruits at any point in the process:

- Has your coaching staff evaluated me?

- Where do I fit on your recruiting board?
- Have you offered scholarships to others in my class? At my position?
- Have any other athletes in my class accepted the offers?
- How many players will you be recruiting at my position?
- Where will you be recruiting this season / spring / summer?
- What types of off-season activities are expected?
- What does the training program consist of at your school?
- What is your recruiting timeline?
- Is there a good time to come visit your school?

### **Scholarship**

As we noted, it is rarely appropriate for a recruit to ask if they will receive a scholarship in an initial phone conversation, however there are a few questions that will help you gauge your scholarship possibilities at that school...

- How many scholarships do you have available for my class?
- Am I under consideration for a scholarship?
- What types of academic scholarships are available? What about other sorts of grants and aid?
- Do I have to apply before a scholarship is offered?
- What happens if I get injured?

### **College Life Questions**

Even though athletics will obviously play a major role in the life of a collegiate student-athlete, every recruit should make sure they are going to be happy on campus even when they are not with the team. Make sure to ask about some of the following:

- Are the players on your team close with each other?
- What is the housing situation like? Do teammates typically live together?

- Do student-athletes stay on campus during the summer?
- Is it possible to work part-time in addition to playing a sport and studying?
- What is a typical “day in the life” like for a member of your team during the season? What about during the off-season?

### **Important Final Questions**

While there are many directions that a conversation might take with a college coach, one key goal should be to find out what comes next:

- What are the next steps in this process?
- When is the next time we can speak / meet?
- Is there anything I can provide you with that will help you further evaluate me?

Hopefully this list will provide recruits a starting point for the types of questions they should ask a college coach. By no means is this list comprehensive, but it should assist a student athlete as they prepare for their first conversation with a coach.

As you can tell, there is quite a bit of information that student-athletes need to gather...This is one of the most important decisions a young person will make in their life. Get as much information as possible! That is also one of the main reasons why recruiting is all about building relationships. This process does not happen overnight, and will consist of a number of different situations in which a recruit communicates with a college coach. Phone conversations just happen to be an important initial step in building that relationship.

If you are prospect, *at any age*, who has yet to begin developing a relationship with a college coach, you might be falling behind. There are other prospects, starting freshmen year or earlier (your competition), who have already started speaking with college coaches. The earlier you start that relationship, the more time you will have to make the best decision possible.