

Student athlete's high school four-year plan

A. Freshman Year

1. Talk to your counselor about core class requirements.
2. Get to know all the coaches in your sport.
3. Work on your grades.
4. Attend sports camps.
5. Start thinking about a realistic analysis of your ability.
6. Start thinking about your academic and career goals.
7. Start a sports résumé
8. Know the NCAA rules, regulations, and academic requirements for playing sports.

B. Sophomore Year

1. Keep your grades up.
2. Take the PSAT/NMSQT®.
3. Talk to your coaches about your ability and ambitions.
4. Check on NCAA requirements and admissions requirements and plan your high school academic schedule accordingly.
5. Research and make preliminary inquiries about colleges that interest you.
6. Update your sports résumé.

C. Junior Year

1. Talk with your counselor about career goals and core course requirements.
2. Ask your coach for a realistic assessment of which college level you can play.
3. Attend college and career fairs.
4. Take the PSAT/NMSQT and the SAT® or ACT.
5. Refine your list of possible college choices. Know the colleges entrance requirements.
6. Update your sports résumé.
7. Produce a skills video with the assistance of your coach.
8. Send a letter of interest to college coaches with an unofficial transcript of your grades.
9. Return completed questionnaires to college coaches.
10. Obtain letters of recommendation.
11. Register with the NCAA Clearinghouse at the end of your junior year.
12. Attend sports camps (your last chance).

Student athlete's high school four-year plan (page 2)

Senior Year

1. Make sure you will complete all graduation requirements and core courses.
2. Make sure you have registered with the NCAA Clearinghouse.
3. Read the NCAA "College-Bound Student-Athlete Guide" found at www.ncaaclearinghouse.net
4. Retake the ACT/SAT in the fall if necessary either to satisfy NCAA eligibility or to improve your chances of receiving an academic scholarship.
5. Attend college/career center nights and financial aid workshops.
6. Narrow your college choices to a manageable list.
7. Make sure applications for admission and transcripts are sent to the colleges you are interested in.
8. Apply to at least one school that will meet your needs if you don't participate in athletics.
9. Follow recruiting rules regarding campus visits.
10. Send in federal financial aid form (FAFSA) for analysis.
11. Make copies of all forms.
12. Sit down with your parents or guardian and coach and list the pros and cons of each school you are considering.
13. Send an updated letter of interest to coaches with your athletic résumé and the season schedule.
14. Be sure of your final choice before signing any papers.
15. Let coaches know when their school is no longer in the running. Thank them for their help.

Source: Adapted from materials provided by Rich East High School, Park Forest, Illinois, and Deerfield High School, Illinois

The student athlete letter of interest

Your letter can be very simple. A coach needs to know your academic ability and athletic level. Your letter should include this information if you want to receive a realistic response from a coach.

Send the letters during your sophomore or junior year. Get on coaches' recruiting lists early. You can send the same letter to the coaches at all the colleges that seem like a good fit for you academically and athletically. Be sure, of course, to make the appropriate changes in each letter to reflect the correct college and coach name.

Suggested items to include:

1. your test scores (PSAT/NMSQT®, ACT, SAT®, SAT Subject Tests® and AP®)
2. your GPA and class rank
3. athletic abilities (events, times, positions, stats, etc.)
4. your goals and aspirations (be realistic)
5. current team, coach's name, and telephone number
6. birth date, height, weight (optional—depends on the sport)
7. interest in scholarship (if this is a priority for you)
8. whether a videotape is available

Appropriate things to request:

1. application form
2. college catalog
3. media guide or team brochure

Additional things to mention:

1. if a parent or relative is an alumnus/alumna
2. if you are new to the sport
3. other sports you currently compete in and the level you're at

Attachments:

résumé
 recommendation letters (optional)
 competition schedule

Source: Adapted from material provided by Nancy Nitardy, former NCAA Division I swimming coach

Handout 10B

Overview of NCAA amateurism bylaws

	Permissible in Division I? (Student-athletes first enrolling on or after August 1, 2002.)	Permissible in Division II? (Student-athletes first enrolling on or after August 1, 2001.)
Enters into a contract with a professional team	No	Yes
Accepts prize money	Yes. If it is an open event, and does not exceed actual and necessary expenses	Yes
Enters draft	Yes	Yes
Accepts salary	No	Yes
Receives expenses from a professional team	No	Yes
Competes on a team with professionals	No	Yes
Tryouts with a professional team before initial collegiate enrollment	Yes	
May receive actual and necessary expenses for one visit (up to 48 hours) from each professional team. Self-financed tryouts may be for more than 48 hours	Yes	
Receives benefits from an agent	No	No
Enters into agreement with an agent (oral or written)	No	No
<p>Delays full-time collegiate enrollment and participates in organized competition</p> <p>[If you are charged with season(s) of competition under this rule, you will also have to serve an academic year in residence at the NCAA institution.]</p>	<p>Tennis and Swimming & Diving: Have one year after high school graduation to enroll full-time in a collegiate institution or will lose one season of intercollegiate competition for each calendar year during which you continue to participate in organized competition.</p> <p>All Other Sports: Any participation in organized sports competition during each 12-month period after the student's 21st birthday and prior to initial full-time enrollment in a collegiate institution shall count as one year of varsity competition.</p>	<p>All Sports: Must enroll at the next opportunity (excluding summer) immediately after the date that your high school class normally graduates (or the international equivalent) or you will use a season of intercollegiate competition for each calendar year or sports season (subsequent to that date) in which you have participated in organized competition.</p>

Source: NCAA

Handout 10B

Getting yourself recruited for college sports

Do you feel that you have “what it takes” to participate in collegiate athletics? Perhaps the program of your dreams doesn’t even know that you exist! The starting point is to send information about yourself to prospective colleges. Here are some tips to help you get started:

- Have an honest talk with your coach about your athletic ability. Your coach can give you some suggestions as to the size and type of program for which your talents are best suited.
- Treat this like a job search. Write a cover letter and résumé.
- Be certain to obtain the name of the college coach to whom you are writing. Most colleges have Web sites that will provide the information. Do not send impersonal mass mailings or information that is false or misleading.
- Research the colleges’ athletic and academic programs. Do not contact colleges for which you cannot meet the stated athletic and academic standards.
- If you receive profile forms or questionnaires from coaches, complete them and return them as soon as possible.
- Send a letter with athletic and academic information to coaches at schools that interest you, and let them know you have a video available.
- Follow up with a telephone call from you, not your parents.
- Be patient.

Source: Rich East High School, Park Forest, Illinois

Handout 10C

Questions for student athletes to ask during the college visit

Before you make your first visit to a college campus, you should think carefully about the kind of information you will need during the college admissions process. Once you have decided what information you need, you'll be able to ask the right kinds of questions. The following are some good ones to get you started.

Ask the recruiter:

1. What position (event) do you want me to play (perform), and how many students are you recruiting for the same position?
2. What is your philosophy of offense? Defense? Are you considering any changes?
3. Will I be redshirted (that is, held out of competition for a season, in order to remain eligible for a fifth year?)
4. If I need a fifth year, will the college finance it?
5. What happens to my scholarship if I'm injured or become ineligible?
6. Who do I see if I have academic problems?
7. Has drug use been an issue at your school or in the athletic program?
8. Are all injuries handled by a team insurance policy?
9. If injured, may I use my family doctor? Who determines my fitness to compete after an injury?
10. What is expected of players during the off-season?

Ask the players at the school:

1. What does your typical daily schedule look like? In-season? Off-season?
2. Approximately how many hours a night do you study?
3. What are the attitudes of professors in different fields of study? In my field of study? Toward athletes?
4. How do you like the living arrangements?
5. Do you have an academic adviser? Is he or she helpful?
6. Are the coaches available to help if you have academic problems?
7. Has drug use been an issue at your school or in the athletic program?

Questions for student athletes to ask during the college visit (page 2)

Ask nonathletes at the school:

1. What do you think of the quality of the education you are receiving at this school?
2. If you had to do it again, would you choose this school to attend? Why or why not?
3. What is the general opinion of athletes on this campus?

Ask school officials or admissions officers:

1. Are my scores and high school records adequate to project success at this college?
2. What is the graduation rate for athletes?
3. About how long does it take someone in my sport to earn a degree from this school?
4. What is the eligibility for additional financial aid?

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Sample thank-you note to the college coach after a college visit

Coach's Name
College/University
Address
City, State Zip

Date

Dear (Coach's Name):

I want to take just a minute of your time to thank you for the recent visit to your campus. I enjoyed having the opportunity to meet the coaches and several of your players, to walk the campus, and to accept your hospitality. The trip was everything I expected it to be—and more. I'm not surprised that your school and athletic program enjoy such widely recognized reputations.

My parents asked me to thank you, too. They say they enjoyed a weekend of peace and quiet, and they appreciate your generosity!

Thanks again for the time you spent with me. I will be getting back to you soon regarding my decisions for the future. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please call me or my coach at your convenience.

Sincerely yours,

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Handout 10E

The student athlete's résumé

The résumé should have all pertinent data, including your grade point average, SAT® or ACT scores, the sport you play, awards and honors received, personal statistics and references (such as your high school coach, who will either call or e-mail the college coach to offer a recommendation). Where appropriate, include your time for sprints and longer distances. A field hockey coach, for example, may be impressed to know that you can handle a stick, but the coach may be even more impressed to learn how well you move—and how long you can continue moving.

The idea behind the résumé is to give coaches a quick idea of who you are, what you've done, and what your potential may be. If you play a sport such as tennis, by all means include your ranking. A college coach who is unfamiliar with the caliber of your competition probably won't be impressed to know that, in your junior year, you won most of your matches. The same coach will be impressed, however, to know that you were highly ranked and made it to the county or the state finals.

Statistics to include in a résumé, listed by sport

Baseball and Softball

Batting average
Fielding average
Earned run average, or ERA
(pitchers)
Win-loss record (pitchers)
Runs batted in (RBI)
Stolen bases

Basketball

Assists (per game)
Rebounds
Free-throw percentage
Field-goal percentage (2 point and 3 point)

Cross-Country, Track and Field

Distance in field events: Shot put, discus, long jump, triple jump
Height in field events: high jump and pole vault
Time and distance
Conference, invitational, or state places

Field Hockey

Goals
Assists
Blocked shots

Football

Tackles (defensive player)
Assists (defensive player)
Sacks (defensive player)
Interceptions (defensive/back/linebacker)
Fumbles recovered
Yards rushing (running back)
Receptions—yards, average, touchdowns
Attempts, completions, total yards passing/rushing (quarterback)
Punts—attempts, longest, average
Kickoff returns—attempts, longest, average
Points scored—touchdowns, extra points
Field goals—attempts, longest, average, total points scored

Golf

Scores
Assists
Handicap
Blocked shots

Gymnastics

Events and scores
Conference, invitational, or state places

Soccer

Goals
Assists and blocked shots

Swimming

Event and times
Dives, difficulty, scores
Major conference, invitational, or state places

Tennis

Record and ranking
Major conference, invitational, or state ranking

Volleyball

Blocks
Assists
Kills
Aces

Wrestling

Individual record and at what weight
Season takedowns
Season reversals
Season escapes
Season 2-point and 3-point near fall points
Falls
Conference, invitational, or state places

Source: Adapted from material prepared by Libertyville High School, Illinois

Handout 10F

The student athlete's résumé (page 2)

Sample Résumé

Student's name

1701 Independence Parkway
Plano, TX 75075
972 555-5555
seriousathlete@aol.com

Current School:

Plano Senior High School
2200 Independence Parkway
Plano, TX 75075
469 752-9300

Expected graduation: May 2006

SAT Scores: 510 (critical reading) 630 (math) 540 (writing)
GPA 3.8 (4.0 scale)
Class Rank: 101/1170
Expected field of study: Engineering

Personal statistics

Date of Birth: November 12, 1988
Height: 5'9"
Weight: 164 lbs.
40-yard time: 4.95 secs.
100-yard time: 10.9 secs.
Mile time: 5.12 mins.

Athletic History:

- Soccer, freshman: left wing, junior varsity; 11 goals, 21 assists. Team finished second in league, 12-4.
- Soccer, sophomore: right wing, varsity; 9 goals, 24 assists. Team finished first in league; named Honorable Mention All-County.
- Soccer, junior: right wing, varsity; 23 goals, 19 assists. Team reached state quarter finals; named to third team All-State. Elected team captain for senior year.
- Track, sophomore year: quarter mile, best time, 52.8

References:

M. Weir
Varsity Soccer Coach
Plano Senior High School

P. Goldwater
Director
All-American Soccer Camp

Source: Adapted from materials prepared by Plano Senior High School, Texas, and Libertyville High School, Illinois

Making highlight tapes

The development of highlight tapes—regardless of the sport—involves a few important considerations. It's a good idea to provide two kinds of highlight tapes for college coaches. Ask your coach for suggestions. He or she will probably be able to help you secure various tapes of games you've been in.

1. A performance video, showing the athlete in a contest, usually against formidable competition. Accompany a performance tape with a player information or stat sheet (see sample below) that identifies the player and describes the competition.
2. A skills video. This type is especially important for sports like ice hockey and field hockey, track, tennis, gymnastics—even basketball and football. These tapes show the athlete executing the kinds of skills required in the sport: stick handling in ice and field hockey, beam routines in gymnastics, high jumping in track, or passing in football.

Avoid lengthy tapes, whether performance videos or skill videos. In general, the video should be no more than five minutes. Unless they are particularly interested in a prospect, most college coaches won't take the time to watch all the tapes submitted to them.

Ask your coach if the school has video editing equipment that you can use to edit your tape. There may also be local companies with editing rooms available for rent (look in the Yellow Pages under "Video").

Sample Player Information Sheet	
<p>The accompanying videotape illustrates the athletic ability of</p> <p>_____</p> <p>The video is a: <input type="checkbox"/> highlight tape <input type="checkbox"/> skills tape <input type="checkbox"/> other</p> <p>Relevant Information (As Appropriate)</p> <p>Player's position: _____</p> <p>Player's number: _____</p> <p> Offense: _____</p> <p> Defense: _____</p> <p>Color of jersey: _____</p> <p>Player size: _____</p> <p> Height: _____</p> <p> Weight: _____</p>	<p>Relevant Game/Contest Statistics</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Academic/Career Information</p> <p>SAT/ACT scores(s): _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Class rank number _____ in a class of _____</p> <p>Cumulative grade point average on a 4.0 scale: _____</p> <p>Educational and career goals: _____</p> <p>_____</p>

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Handout 10G