





talent evaluation

The first step in marketing yourself to college coaches is an honest evaluation of your talent level. There are over 2,000 colleges competing intercollegiately and it does not make financial sense to send your recruiting packet to all of them. The first step is to try to identify what level of competition is **a good fit for you.**

The simple process of marketing yourself to college coaches breaks down if the first step is not done properly. Are you regarded as a Division I, II, III, NAIA, or Junior College prospect?

In some sports there are no charts or graphs or measurements that can tell you **what division** you should be competing in at the college level. In track, cross country and swimming you have times and distances you can rely on. In golf you can count strokes. It's not so black and white in other sports like football, basketball, soccer and the like.

In the evaluation process, make sure to consider the credibility of the source. **Your coach can be an excellent judge.** Opposing coaches can also contribute honestly. Camp performances and evaluations can help. Compare yourself with people you have competed against and see how they are doing in college.

Sometimes, parents may be too close to you to judge objectively. Anyone who wants payment for their services may not be the best person to judge your talent level. You want someone you can trust who has nothing to gain in the recruitment process.

Gather all the information you can, consider the sources, and get the ball rolling!



In determining which schools to send your packet to, make sure you have an interest in that school. Make sure you can meet the school's academic standards. Make sure you can contribute athletically at that school.

Refer to the NCAA or NAIA sports sponsorship reports in **The National Directory of College Athletics** to see who competes at what levels in the sports of your interest. These can be found in the white pages just prior to the yellow listings section. Make a list of the schools that meet your criteria.

If you are interested in a particular state or region, use the **State-by-State index** in the back of the book.

Using those two cross references, you have the beginning of your list. Get the coaches' names and contact information from the School Listings Section (yellow pages) for each school on your list.

If you are competent on a computer, you can create a database in Excel or other database software. You can use that to make mailing labels, do a mail merge on letters, etc. Of course, good old fashioned letter writing will work just fine, too. Keep copies of everything you send out and keep detailed notes of every conversation you have.

When contacting a coach, be aware that they will want to communicate directly with you, not your parents or other representatives.

Tip:

study the rules, regulations, & time periods for your sport carefully. Your eligibility depends on these factors.

prepare your list of schools

prepare your packet

Tip: Ask your English teacher, a parent or guidance counselor to proofread.

Cover Letter

A cover letter introducing yourself written in your words with your goals for your college experience. Be sure to include academic & athletic goals. Personalize each letter. Use the coach's name. A generic "Dear Coach" letter may not get the attention you want. Try to keep the letter to one page.

Resume

Important data should include:

- Contact Information: *name, address, phone number & email address*
- A photo of yourself: *school or team picture is fine*
- High school, Address & Phone Number
- Coach's name, phone number & email address
- GPA, SAT &/or ACT scores if available
- Accomplishments, honors & awards (list in chronological order)
- Athletic, academic, service information
- Include factual information only, do not embellish

Schedule

Include a schedule of your upcoming season(s).

Letter of Recommendation

A brief letter from your coach, an opposing coach, an official or a camp counselor that knows you and your skills well.

Get on it!

know the rules

Each of the associations below has valuable information regarding rules and guidelines to adhere to throughout the recruiting process. These are available in printed form as well as on the internet. Starting your research during **your junior year** is a good idea, but do not contact coaches outside of the contact periods mentioned in the guidelines.



National Collegiate Athletic Association

www.ncaa.org
317-917-6222



National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics

www.naia.org
913-791-0044



National Junior College Athletic Association

www.njcaa.org
719-590-9788

Note: any student wishing to be recruited by NCAA division 1 or 2 schools must register with the NCAA Clearinghouse. They can be reached at www.ncaaclearinghouse.net or at 877-262-1492. A good time to contact them is during your junior year.

Your **guidance counselor** can make sure you have met all the academic requirements necessary for college entrance. Your **coach** can help you decide which collegiate level **suits your athletic abilities** best. A **parent or guardian** can provide moral support and administrative assistance.

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