



# Top Tips Recruiting Guide Empowering Athletes For Life By Thriving Athletes

- Do NAIA and NJCAA coaches have any restrictions on contacting potential recruits?
- No, NAIA *and* NJCAA coaches can call, email, text, send direct messages on Facebook, post to a recruit's wall, and chat online— anything at any time.

- **What is the National Letter of Intent (NLI)?**
- The NLI is a binding agreement between a prospective student- athlete and an NLI member institution.

- **Attention Seniors Families:**
- Create an account at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) and apply for a PIN so that on October 1st, you will be able to fill out the FAFSA forms. Money is first come, first serve in many states.

- Reminder to all aspiring college athletes: as we get closer to Turkey Day, communication will die down. Now is the time to reach out to those coaches.

- If an athlete fails to respond to a coach, the coach might think that athlete is not interested in the program. To stay on the coach's recruiting list, student-athletes need to be proactive, thorough, and personal when responding to correspondence.

- Connecting with the coaching staff before an *unofficial* visit is critical. The purpose of an *unofficial* visit is to allow the athlete to experience campus life, build a relationship with the staff , and meet the team.

But if the coaches are not eager to host a student, they likely are not interested in recruiting that athlete.

- An athlete who receives a scholarship to play a “head count” sport is always given a full ride scholarship. They can not divide up the money in a Head Count Sport. Head count sports are Football D1 FBS Only, Basketball D1 M/W, Volleyball D1 W, Tennis D1 W, Gymnastics D1 W.

- An athlete should send videos only to college coaches who have requested them. An athlete's video might not be looked at if a coach is not expecting it, especially if the coach is from a big program that receives 40 or 50 videos a week. If students want to email a link to a coach who has not requested their highlight or skills video, they should call or text and inform the coach that you are sending it so they can expect the video.
- Some coaches would still rather see the Athletes live due to too many “set up” videos.

The following are not signs of recruitment:

- Invitation to attend a camp.
- A generic admissions letter.
- A scout attending a game (unless the scout came to evaluate that particular athlete)

It is never too late to be a good student, according to Coaches.

An upswing in a student's grade-point average in later semesters can give a coach the ammunition to make a case for an otherwise-unqualified student-athlete to gain admissions to a college. For this reason, a student's GPA in later semesters is just as important than their GPA in early semesters.



According to a study by the University of Virginia, 80% of female Fortune 500 Top executives describe themselves as former athletes.

- The Recruiting Funnel: It is a Numbers Game

### An Example:

A college football staff might send 10k to 15k letters , and watch 1k-2k videos. Before making 500 phone calls to potential recruits. Verbally offering between 65-200 scholarships Extending up to 85 offers for official visits Before signing a maximum of 25 players per year!

- A student-athlete only has one chance to make a first impression, so parents' help in building a child's confidence for communicating with adults is critical. Parents should start this process early so that a coach does not later mistake an athlete's shyness for lack of interest.

- If an athlete fails to respond to a coach, the coach might think that athlete is not interested in the program. To stay on the coach's recruiting list, student-athletes need to be pro active, thorough, and personal when responding to correspondence.

- Parents should be the cheerleader, the mentor. The parent's job is to prepare the Athlete and assist them in the recruitment process. The athlete should turn to the Personal Recruiting Assistant or parents for help. Athletes who learn to stand on their own two feet will make better decisions and be more confident and capable. Parents let the Athlete find the right fit for college, they are attending the college not you.

- Communicating with coaches is the single most important aspect of the recruiting process.

It should come directly from the athlete or their personal recruiter passing it on, and it should come early. Even though there are NCAA rules some coaches can not respond directly to the athlete but can to the personal recruiter.

- When reaching out to college coaches athletes need to send emails to coaches one at a time. “CCing” several coaches, or sending a mass email, is not looked upon favorably. Use the coaches last name when addressing the coach. (i.e. Coach Smith)

Once awarded a scholarship, a student-athlete must maintain three criteria's, this will determine whether the student-athlete will maintain the scholarship:

- Performing well for the team
- Adhering to the NCAA or NAIA rules and regulations
- Maintaining the required GPA

- To all potential recruits hoping that college coaches will call, email, or engage socially with you: Please make sure your voicemail, email, Facebook, SnapChat, Instagram, and Twitter handles are set up professionally, and are appropriate.
- These small things make a huge difference in the recruiting process.

- More than 80% of athletic opportunities are at the NCAA Division II, III, NAIA, NCCAA or Junior College levels, with these schools often providing more playing time, strong academics, and a better fit for the student-athlete

- An Athlete forced to choose between two sports should choose the sport the athlete loves most, regardless of whether this is their stronger sport.
- During college, playing a sport can be a full-time job, so being passionate about the sport is critical to success and longevity.

# NCAA Division Overview

# 22

- Division I schools, on average, enroll the most students, manage the largest athletics budgets, offer a wide array of academic programs and provide the most athletics scholarships.
- Division II provides growth opportunities through academic achievement, high-level athletics competition and community engagement. Many participants are first-generation college students
- The Division III experience provides an integrated environment that focuses on academic success while offering competitive athletics and meaningful non-athletics opportunities.

Division 1	Division 2	Division 3
346 schools	307 Schools	439 School
176,000 Athletes	118,860 Athletes	187,800 Athletes
56% on full rides	61% receives some sort of Athletic Aid	82% receives some sort of Aid



- An Athlete forced to choose between two sports should choose the sport the athlete loves most, regardless of whether this is their stronger sport.
- During college, playing a sport can be a full-time job, so being passionate about the sport is critical to success and longevity.

Coach Contact Prior to September 1st of Junior Year Division I college coaches can't send "recruiting materials" prior to the start of a student-athlete's junior year of high school, (some sports have different rules on dates) but college coaches CAN and DO send the following information to student-athletes before junior year in high school:

- Questionnaires
- Camp Brochures
- General information about the college, generated by the admissions department



- Just because the visit is “unofficial” doesn’t mean you should come unprepared; think of it as a preliminary job interview. If you’re hoping for a scholarship offer from a school, why not take the time to prepared
- Questions about the program
- Ask about coaching style
- Personal questions like their favorite game or play
- School Academic reputation
- Student Athlete responsibilities

- The key to a successful recruiting process and maximize your scholarships potential is knowing what to do and when and how to do it.
- When working towards an athletic scholarship, approach your four years of high school like you would a game.
- Although the pressure might seem greatest during the third and fourth quarters, (Junior and Senior Year) the points scored during the first half can be the difference between winning and losing.

- It is extremely important to reply to all correspondence you receive. Letting the Coach know you are or are not interested is important. All the coaches talk and you have to keep a good impression in all eyes. Saying no thank you is as important as a positive response to a coach.
- Avoid judging universities based on name recognition, location, size and what your fellow athletes voice. Remember it is about finding the right fit for you, not others.
- There are over 1,700 colleges and universities at the NCAA Division I, Division II, Division III, NAIA, and Junior College levels. Don't ignore any of them!

## Recruiting Tip

# 28

The key to this process is research, research, research.

The Thriving Athletes Team researches diligently to find the right fit Athletically and Academically, it must all fit together to be a great fit.

Determining which school is a perfect fit for you involves much more than merely deciding which college you like the most.

Not every school in which you're interested will have a need for a student-athlete of your caliber or at your position, so we need to study and contact as many schools and coaches as we can determine to which one is a perfect match for you.



- Among the most overlooked opportunities are those at the DIII programs. Athletes and their parents miss out because they fall prey to the technicality that DIII programs do not offer athletic scholarships. While this is true, it is also a technicality. DIII schools offer grants-in-aid and non-athletic scholarships that often make the cost of attending less than that at their DI & DII counterparts.

- Visit as many colleges as possible during the summer, holidays, spring break, etc. There is no limit on the number of unofficial visits you may take. Target colleges you're interested in and that have shown interest in you. Be sure to contact coaches before you set up visits. Coaches are typically more than happy to meet with an interested student-athlete. Remember that any time you and your recruiting coordinator call or email a coach you gain an advantage over your competition. College coaches appreciate student-athletes who are proactive and mature.

- Many of the best packages come from “non-scholarship” Division III programs. The reality is that if a Division III program wants an athlete, the school often finds a need- or non-need-based scholarship that applies to the student. The program can be creative and create the right fit for you financially if they find you are the best fit for their team.
- In other words, Division III schools give financial aid based on how much they need a student-athlete. The key is to have multiple opportunities to negotiate the best bottom line.

- The average high school coach has contact with fewer than five college coaches, most of whom are local, or personal friends. Many high school coaches just don't have the time to contact college coaches, so do not rely on them to help with your college search. Student-athletes and families are ultimately responsible for connecting with college coaches.

- High school student-athletes who compete in college win on average more than \$12,850 per year (for in-state, public school students) to \$21,266 per year (for private school students) in scholarships, grants, and financial aid to play sports at a collegiate level for 4 or 5 years.

- An invitation for an official visit is a strong precursor to a scholarship offer. One rule of thumb in recruiting is that if an athlete is not offered an official visit, that athlete likely will not be offered a scholarship. Remember when you are on an official visit let the coach offer the scholarship, don't go in there asking for money first. Showing that you love the school and the program is very impressive to a coach, then you go in and ask about money.

- College coaches do a majority of their initial evaluations by looking at videos requested or received from reliable sources (recruiting coordinators, and video sources) and delivered online or digitally. After watching a video, a coach may decide to make an in-person evaluation. Make sure your video shows who you are too, your personality has to be shown on the video also. Videos also need to show both good and bad plays, how to recover from a bad play is equally important as a great play.

- January 1st is the first day seniors are able to submit the FAFSA. Reminder for families you need to get your FAFSA submitted ASAP! Most states money is given on a first come, first serve basis.
- If you don't have your taxes done use last year's tax returns.
- There are so many ways to maximize your FASFA please contact Thriving Athletes specialist on how to maximize your FASFA dollars.

Student-athletes who take the initiative to schedule unofficial visits should be prepared for the visit.

- Express knowledge about the program
- Arrive on time and at the right location on campus
- Bring a copy of your resume and highlights or skills video.

- Remember that the greater the distance, the greater the opportunities.
- Lets say that again the greater the distance the greater the opportunity... open your opportunities to a great fit.
- Parents should make sure the Name Game does not blind the child and encourage the athlete to search high and low, in every nook and cranny, for the right college fit.

College coaches send admissions material, brochures, and questionnaires to high school students to see which ones respond.

- Those who respond will stay on the recruiting list; those who do not respond will be removed. If a student-athlete receives a questionnaire, admissions material or brochure from a college coach, he/she should respond immediately, regardless of whether she wants to attend the school.

Before sending emails to twenty-five coaches and administrators, an athlete or Recruiting coordinator might want to call, make an introduction, and ask for the name of the person to whom the athlete should forward information in order to be evaluated to compete for the program.

- If the coaches do not answer leave a message that you are sending an email and interest in the program.
- Sometimes the head coach is not the person doing the recruiting for that particular sport.

Student Athletes should consider the answer to these two questions when considering specific camps:

- Has a coach from the school called me and specifically invited me to the camp?
- Have I had any face-to-face contact with any of the coaches holding the camp?

If the answer to both of these questions is a NO, the only reason to attend the camp is to build skills or gain experience.

If the answer is YES there is interest of you being part of their program.



## Recruiting Tip

# 42

Student-athletes should make the most of official visits, you only get 5 total for your Junior and Senior year of high school.

Athletes should:

- Walk around campus and get a feel for the atmosphere.
- Do the students seem friendly?
- Is this a place they can imagine living for the next four years?
- Student-athletes might also want to try to meet the team, sit in a class, or watch a practice.
- They need to be sure this is a school they would want to attend if athletics were not part of the picture. **THIS IS HUGE KEY POINT!!!**



These few questions you should be ready to ask the coach.

Regardless of whether the student is a freshman or junior, or whether this is the first or fifth call with the coach, an athlete should always ask two questions:

- What else would I need to do to have a chance to compete for your program and earn a scholarship?
- What is the next step I should take with you?

Request to ask the coach a few questions.

Remember that the coach is a busy person. If he doesn't have time, the students should ask when he/she can call the coach back. If an athlete calls a Division I or II coach before September 1<sup>st</sup> of her/his junior year (depending on sport and excluding football or basketball), the coach is not allowed to return the student's call, so if the coach is unavailable, the student-athlete should ask his assistant when he can reach the coach. Leave a message of the intended time you are going to call back, then call back at that time. Be real with the coaches and respect their time and that they are abiding to the NCAA rules.

- Start researching institutions to get a feel for the different types of campuses. A student-athlete should be directed to evaluate a wide range of schools, understanding that bigger is not always better, and Division I schools do not always offer better playing time, opportunities, or education than Division III, NCCAA, NAIA schools, and Junior Colleges.

When communicating with coaches, a parent should not be a “helicopter mom” or “we dad”. Parents should loosen the reins and let the child take the lead. College coaches are not interested in dealing with their player’s parents, so an overly involved parent might hurt a child’s chance of being recruited. Remember that your athlete is going to college not you.

Student-athletes cannot redo the recruiting process. They cannot take a mulligan. The recruiting process is a once-in-lifetime experience that requires all parties, the parents, recruiting coordinator, and the students to jump in full steam ahead.

High school consists of only about 720 days.

- How will you, the student-athlete make the most of this small window of opportunity?



What the student does off the field is just as important as what takes place on the field. As the recruiting process begins, maintaining good grades becomes more and more important.

- Performance in the classroom tells a coach plenty about an athlete's likelihood of reaching their potential on the playing field. Coaches know that good students tend to make the most of their abilities and stay out of trouble.
- Social Media leaves a lasting trail... Watch what you put out there in the world you cant take it back.

## Recruiting Tip

# 49

In most cases college coaches will begin the recruiting process by sending letters and questionnaires to the student-athletes on their lists during freshman year. Relationships are developed by student-athletes who take advantage of their ability to call, write, and take unofficial visits to these college coaches at any time.

Waiting to connect with a coach might be the biggest mistake a young student-athlete can make! You and your Recruiting coordinator should have your name in front of the coaches as much as possible but not so much that you are being annoying. A fine line to walk, be aware of the coaches responses. Once a coach stops responding usually means they are no longer interested. Ask your recruiting coordinator to affirm the interest of the coach so you respect their time and your time.

Coaches from DIII and NAIA schools can call a student-athlete at any time, though some opt to follow the Division I and II rules.

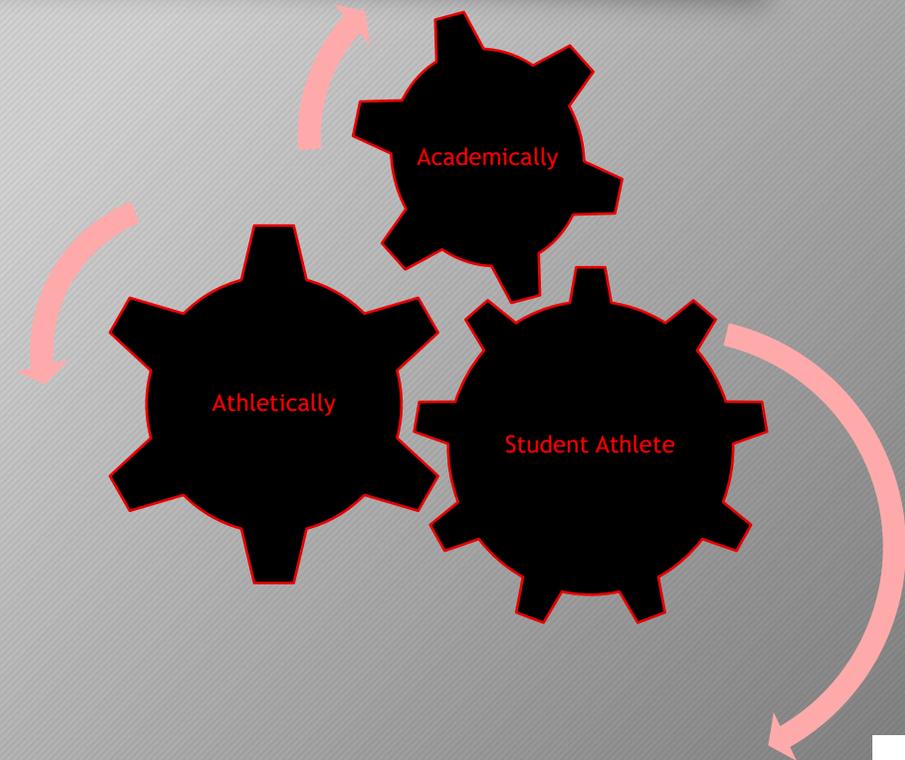


Only about 6.76% of high school athletes will play at a college level, and only 1.68% will receive a full or partial athletic scholarship to an NCAA- affiliated school. Only 0.98% will make the cut to play on a Division I college team.

- There are many great schools that are not Division I school? Williams College, Amherst, or countless other colleges that offer world-class education.
- Only about 15% of collegiate athletic opportunities are at the Division I Level. The rest are at the DII, DIII, NAIA, NCCAA, and JUCO.

# 3 Points to Stay Strong

- The Student Athlete must maintain to be strong Athletically and strong Academically. All the aspects of a Thriving Athlete will help your Athlete get recruited.
- ACT/ SAT Scores, GPA, class rank are contributors to finding the right fit.
- Mind set, eating healthy, knowing your body and how it works, motivating, finical knowledge, FASFA experts are all key needs to a successful Thriving Athlete.



# To Contact Thriving Athletes

Go to web site and fill out Scholarship Generator or email

[Mary@ThrivingAthletes.org](mailto:Mary@ThrivingAthletes.org)

Or Text 708-289-0596

[www.ThrivingAthletes.org](http://www.ThrivingAthletes.org)