



## **College Soccer Recruitment Checklist**

Last Revised on November 22, 2020

### **OVERVIEW**

This checklist guides a player thru the college soccer recruitment process. FSCI provides guidance and logistical support for the player that is seriously interested in playing at the college level.

This is not an easy process. The player must do the work in contacting schools directly, participate in extra training, and keep up with grades. A player must take a leadership role in this process. There is no coach, club, or third party that can get you into a school. Anyone that says otherwise is either misleading you or selling you something.

Please be familiar with all the information located in the college recruitment section of our website - <http://www.fredericksburgsoccer.org/college/>

### **FRESHMAN YEAR & SOPHOMORE YEAR**

1. Focus on your grades. If you are not serious about academics now, you will dig yourself in a hole that may prove difficult to overcome.
2. Create a specific list of soccer goals you want to accomplish between now and the end of your sophomore year.
  - Ask for a player evaluation from your coach
  - Discuss this player evaluation against your soccer goals.
3. Outside of games and practice, it is important to self-train.
  - What are you doing "extra" that will set you apart from others?
  - Challenge yourself to meet the goals you set for yourself.
  - Take advantage of FSCI's additional training programs.
  - Self-training is more important than anything else.
4. Register for the PSAT.
5. Do not worry about ID camps. Worry about getting better. Legitimate recruitment opportunities occur during your junior and senior year. Consider

your freshman and sophomore year as laying the groundwork for the recruitment period.

### **SUMMER BETWEEN SOPHOMORE & JUNIOR YEAR**

1. Submit your player profile.
  - Gather your academic information, extracurricular activities, and other academic related items.
  - Fill out the player profile online form in the college recruitment section of our website
2. Attend at least 1 college ID camp over the summer
  - Attending a camp is a great idea because the coaching staff of the school is a captive audience.
  - We recommend doing a camp where you can stay on campus
3. Take at least a 1-month break from soccer in the summer.
  - Playing soccer year-round without a decent break is the quickest way to burnout physically and mentally.
  - If you take the break, you will be re-energized for the upcoming season.
  - Outside of the break period, it is important to self-train

### **JUNIOR YEAR**

1. Focus on your grades. If it comes down to you and the next player, the player with the better grades wins the spot.
2. Compile a list of extracurricular and community service activities. Colleges look for the “well-rounded” student in addition to grades. If you have not participated in these other activities, find a way to increase your involvement.
3. Think about what areas of study might interest you in college. You do not need to make any decisions now. Just start thinking about this topic. Eventually this will be an important question that drives your school selection decision.
4. Visit your school’s guidance department and surf the internet during your junior year to research information on potential schools, potential majors, and potential non-athletic scholarships. Most scholarship money is non-athletic money.

5. Create a specific list of soccer goals you want to accomplish between now and end of your junior year.
  - Ask for a player evaluation from the FSCI Technical Director.
  - Discuss this player evaluation against your soccer goals.
6. Outside of games and practice, it is important to self-train.
  - What are you doing “extra” that will set you apart from others?
  - Challenge yourself to meet the goals you set for yourself.
  - Take advantage of FSCI’s additional training programs.
7. Register for the SAT or ACT. Take the SAT or ACT during the second semester of your junior year.
8. By January, research and develop a list of ten schools that meet your academic and soccer requirements.
9. By January, plan a campus visit at one of the schools on your list during the second semester of your junior year.
10. By January, get an academic transcript from your school’s guidance department.
11. By January, start sending emails to college coaches on a weekly basis. The email package should consist of an email expressing your interest, your transcript, your upcoming game schedule, your highlight video, and your player profile.
  - FSCI provides letter templates so that you can modify and send
  - FSCI creates player profiles for each player
  - FSCI creates highlight videos for players serious about recruitment
  - Please CC the FSCI College Recruitment Director on any emails sent to schools. We will follow-up on your behalf.
12. Be persistent. Email college coaches on a weekly basis with your updated game schedule and updated academic information.
  - Most of the time, schools will not respond
  - This can be frustrating, but persistence is the key
  - Remember, recruitment is selling yourself and persistence is the key.
13. If any college coach contact you, respond promptly. If you choose not to respond, the coach will quickly lose interest and focus their energy on the next player they are recruiting.
14. Work with the FSCI College Recruitment Director to do the following
  - Keep your player profile current with updated SAT scores, revised GPAs, updated extracurricular activities, or other updated academic information.

- Keep FSCI aware of all communication between you and schools
- Provide FSCI with an updated list of schools you are interested in
- Remember, this is a two-step process. We as a club will contact a school on your behalf and you must also contact the school.

15. Register with the NCAA Clearinghouse. Google search the word “NCAA Clearinghouse” or visit [www.NCAA.org](http://www.NCAA.org)

## **SUMMER BETWEEN JUNIOR AND SENIOR YEAR**

1. Start narrowing down the list of potential schools. Continue to email schools on a weekly basis.
  - Develop a list of pros and cons for each school as you narrow the list
  - Fill out the Recruit Form on the athletic department’s website for prospective student athletes
  
2. Attend a school’s college ID event or camp. We recommend attending at least 2 or 3 college ID events because it allows you to:
  - Get solid training from the coaching staff at that school.
  - Have an opportunity to sell yourself to that coach
  - Get a feel for the coaches, the campus, the program, and the school
  
3. To get the most out of a college ID event or camp, plan and prepare as follows:
  - Arrive fit and sharp. Ideally, you want to attend while you are in season. If not, make sure to work out and figure out a way to play soccer in the weeks ahead of your arrival.
  - Research the school. Know everything about the school, the program, and coaches before you arrive.
  - Email the coaches ahead of the event
  - Be prepared with a list of questions for the coaches at the school. Ask the coach questions about what positions they are recruiting for, what the coach looks for in players, style of play, etc. The coach should encourage you to contact him or her after the camp as well for feedback.
  - At most ID camps, players currently on the college team will work the camp. Ask the college players questions such as
    - What is the traditional (fall) season like?
    - What is the nontraditional (spring) season like?
    - How does the team travel?
    - What is it like socially?

- What is the coach like?
  - Is the coach somebody you can live with for the next four years?
  - Walk around the school to get a good sense of the campus. If you're attending an ID camp when class is out of session, plan on making another visit when the campus is full of students to see what the atmosphere is really like.
  - After the camp, update your "pros and cons" list for the college.
  - Relax. Enjoy yourself. Just go have fun.
4. If your SAT score needs improvement, take an SAT prep course and schedule another SAT early in your senior year.
  5. Consider potential areas of study in more detail. Visit the two links below to help you explore careers as well as look at the job outlook in your field of study
    - Occupational Outlook Handbook - <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/>
    - Explore Careers - <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/explore-careers>
  6. Take at least a 1-month break from soccer in the summer.
    - Playing soccer year-round without a decent break is the quickest way to burnout physically and mentally.
    - If you take the break, you will be re-energized for the upcoming season.
    - Outside of the break period, it is important to self-train
    - Start thinking about introducing weightlifting to your weekly schedule

## **SENIOR YEAR**

1. Address any items on this checklist that were not addressed during your junior year. Continue emailing prospective schools on a weekly basis and follow-up on any opportunities.
2. Do not develop a case of "senioritis". Maintaining your grades is important. Opportunities can disappear if you choose to stop focusing on your grades.
3. Do not take it personally if the school you are interested in shows no interest in you.
  - For example, if you are a goalkeeper and the school has no need for a goalkeeper, the college coach will probably not spend much energy responding to you.
  - Please keep an open mind and a list of multiple prospective schools.

4. Narrow down your list of prospective schools. Make an “official” or “unofficial” visit. Attend any college ID events that occur.
  - You may end up liking the school when you see it in person rather than in a brochure or on a website.
  - Attend a training session to get a feel for the coach and watch the school play.
5. When visiting a school, spend a lot of time asking questions and talking to the coaches and players. Try to get honest answers on how the players feel about the coach and look for red flags. The coach will make or break the experience.
  - Is the coach perceived as fair, knowledgeable, caring, and passionate?
  - How does the coach treat the players?
  - Ask yourself this important question - If I get injured or stop playing for whatever reason; is this a school I am happy to attend and meets my academic needs?
6. If there are any schools that express interest in you, promptly communicate with them. If any school develops a late sudden interest in you, then consider this possibility carefully. Believe it or not, this does happen.
7. Start sending out applications to schools.
8. Fill out the FAFSA no later than January of your senior year
9. Research and apply to any academic scholarships that may exist. Most scholarship money is in the form of academic money instead of athletic money.
10. Work with the FSCI College Recruitment Director to do the following
  - Keep your player profile current with updated SAT scores, revised GPAs, updated extracurricular activities, or other updated academic information.
  - Keep FSCI aware of all communication between you and schools
  - Provide FSCI with an updated list of schools you are interested in
  - Remember, this is a two-step process. We as a club will contact a school on your behalf and you must also contact the school.
11. Do not be afraid to ask for advice. Talk to your family. Talk to the FSCI coaches as many of them have played soccer in college. Arm yourself with information so that you can make a well-informed decision.

## OTHER THINGS TO KNOW

1. We strongly urge a player to take at least a 1-month break during the winter and summer offseason. It will make a big difference in your performance and motivation level. The worst thing that you can do is play soccer year-round without a break. It is the quickest way to burnout physically and mentally.
2. NCAA schools can start approaching players on September 1 of their junior year. Players that perform well may receive communication from schools.
3. Some school will send “feelers” that are either sent to gauge your interest or get you to attend their college ID camp. Feeler letters are characterized by the generic wording in the letter. The wording of non-feeler letter is very specific such as stating the player’s name, where they saw the player, etc. If you receive a non-feeler letter, then chances are that the school has a genuine interest in you.
4. If a school invites you to attend an ID camp during your freshmen or sophomore year, its usually to make money for the program and not genuine interest.
5. Note that the core college soccer season occurs between August thru November. Coaches may not be that responsive during that time period.
6. As a general rule, we encourage you to make a decision no later than March of your senior year. We have seen players drag out their decisions until early May of their senior year but we do not recommend that approach.