

# KEY RECRUITING CHECKLIST

## PRIOR TO JUNIOR YEAR

- Set realistic seasonal, yearly and overall high school athletic and academic goals
  - Write them down
  - Keep them where you'll see them regularly
  - Assess your progress at the end of each season/school quarter
- Stay in good academic standing
  - Don't cut class
  - Strive for good grades
  - Take advantage of study halls and tutors
  - Don't cheat, and avoid detentions and suspensions
- Identify athletic weaknesses; research safe and effective methods, or professionals, to help you eliminate them
- Develop good relationships with teachers who will eventually write your college letters of recommendation
- Get involved in extracurricular and volunteer activities
- Be aware of your off-field lifestyle and the image it portrays
  - Choose friends wisely; avoid troublesome crowds
  - Keep your online profiles clean
  - Avoid drugs, alcohol and tobacco
  - Don't fight or break the law
- Meet with your guidance counselor to discuss NCAA curriculum and grade requirements
- Consider playing multiple sports to develop and display well-rounded athleticism
- Maintain poise and sportsmanship at all times. College coaches watch you during competition, even when you are not playing.
  - Cheer on teammates
  - Respond to referees and/or bad calls in a professional manner
  - Interact positively with coaches on the sideline
  - Keep your head up. Don't pout regardless of score or situation
  - Avoid fighting
  - Celebrate with class
- Have all athletic competitions videotaped for future use
- Create a filing system to organize athletic awards, newspaper clippings and outstanding achievements
- Research the best non-school-sponsored athletic leagues in your area—club teams, AAU, summer leagues, etc.
- Participate in non-school-sponsored athletic competition
- Create a résumé detailing aca-

- demical and athletic achievements
- Send initial contact letters to college coaches at schools you are interested in attending
  - Find name, address and other information about coach on school's website
  - Express your interest in playing for the program
  - Include athletic and academic résumé
  - Attach a schedule of your games for the upcoming season
- Create a filing system for materials and info you receive from colleges and coaches
- Complete and return all questionnaires
- Inform college coaches about camps and clinics you'll be attending
- Attend camps and clinics at schools you are interested in attending
- Begin pulling clips and creating a highlight tape
- Attend a college competition in your sport
  - Contact parents of athletes on the college team's roster to find out if they're happy with their son's or daughter's experiences with the team
  - Observe the way the coach interacts with his or her team
  - Gauge the level of play compared to your ability
- Assess your athletic ability
  - Talk to your coaches
  - Measure yourself against other players at your position in your state/district/conference
  - Compare your accomplishments to the high school accomplishments of players on rosters of colleges you think you could play for
- Begin thinking about the academic area of study you might want to major in, and research which schools excel in that area
- Solicit information about colleges by talking to friends, guidance counselors and college alumni
- Talk with parents or guardians about the cost of school (and what you can afford), potential locations and their academic and athletic expectations for you.
- Create a target list of colleges and categorize them as "likely admission," "safety net" or "reach"
- Send follow-up letters to coaches who haven't responded to your initial contact
- Assess benefits of using a recruiting service

## JUNIOR YEAR

- Familiarize yourself with the NCAA Guide for the College-Bound Athlete
- Open a dialogue with your high school coaches about the college coaches who have contacted them about you and the colleges that most interest you
- Register, prep for and take standardized tests
- Register with NCAA Eligibility Center (this **must** be done by end of junior year)
- Schedule and take unofficial visits
  - Find time to meet with coaches around their busy schedules
  - Bring pen and notepad, and have a few questions ready about the program, the coach's level of interest and his or her plans to remain at the school during your four years
  - Provide coaches with your highlight tape and stat sheet
  - Talk to players on the team
  - Check out the facilities
  - Go to a class in your area of interest
  - Keep a journal to list pros and cons of each school and coaching staff after visits
- Continue to update college coaches about your athletic successes
- Update highlight tape with recent clips
- Talk to athletes from your school who now play at the collegiate level. Ask about:
  - The level of competition
  - How college life and sports differ from high school
  - Any additional advice they have
- Update wardrobe with clothes appropriate for meetings with college coaches
- Send thank you note after any meeting with a coach
- Have high school coach call college coaches to recommend you as an athlete
- Prepare a list of questions for coaches when they call (they can call after May 1 of your junior year for football and after July 1 for most other sports). During the conversation, cover these topics:
  - Their level of interest
  - Chance of an official visit
  - Possibility of a scholarship
  - Who they have at your position (height, weight, stats)
  - Your upcoming game schedule and the possibility of their attending one of them

## SENIOR YEAR

- Be prepared for in-school visits from college coaches at any time
  - Have questions ready
  - Dress appropriately at all times
- Retake standardized tests if necessary
- Avoid senioritis and continue to take challenging courses and strive for good grades
- Narrow down schools you're interested in and eliminate those that definitely do not interest you
- Plan and take official visits. Remember, only five are allowed
  - Bring a pen and notepad. Have questions ready for coaches
  - Talk to as many players as possible, not just the happy ones
  - Attend a class in your expected major
  - Stay on campus
  - Keep a journal to list pros and cons of each school and coaching staff after visits
- Set standards for when you want to take calls from coaches
- Assess financial needs by talking with parents and various schools' financial aid offices
- Apply for financial aid
- Research and apply for alternative sources of funds
- Once you begin receiving financial aid offers from colleges, share them with other coaches to improve your final offer
- Research application deadlines
- Ask for teacher recommendations or references
- Calculate your GPA and find out your class rank
- Request official transcript from guidance counselor
- Ask college coaches to waive application fees
- Decide whether to apply early action or early decision
- Write application essays early, give yourself time to revise them
- Complete the rest of applications and mail before deadlines
- Narrow college choices to your top three opportunities
- Make final decision
- Notify all college coaches you've been speaking with of your final decision
- Contact your new college coach to request the team strength and conditioning manual
- Mail thank you letter and/or graduation party invite to STACK at [letters@stack.com](mailto:letters@stack.com) or 1228 Euclid Ave, Suite 1000, Cleveland, Ohio 44115