

Year by Year Recruiting Timeline in High School

Freshman Year

- Commit to doing things the right way -- at and away from the pool. One inappropriate post or unfortunate incident could affect your future.
- Alert your coach of your desire to swim in college. They can be a difference maker in your recruiting journey.
- Inform your high school guidance counselor of your desire to swim in college. They can help you decide which colleges are appropriate from an academic perspective.
- Research and identify a list of colleges that match your abilities and in which you have an interest.
- Research the benchmarks for athletes at the colleges you want to attend. Once you understand where you need to be you can set athletic goals.

Sophomore Year

- Take the PSAT to determine where you stand academically.
- Review and update your list of appropriate colleges. Create a Favorites List of 20-30 colleges you realistically qualify for.
- Check the entrance requirements at the colleges on your Favorites List. Even if they offer you an athletic scholarship, you still have to get into the school!
- Fill out the Recruiting Questionnaires for the colleges on your Favorites List. This is a no-brainer way to get on their radar!
- Reach out to the coaches at the colleges on your Favorites list. Express specific interest in their program. If they don't know you, they may never know you unless you introduce yourself!
- Develop a plan to work on your weaknesses and enhance your strengths. The harder you work, the faster you will improve.
- Discuss the family college budget with your parents. Most athletic scholarships are partial scholarships, so family budget might be a factor in which colleges you pursue.
- Work hard in the pool and in the classroom. After all, we are talking about going to college.

Junior Year

- Prepare yourself for the SAT or ACT.
- Use the NCAA Division I core course worksheet to be sure you will meet the core course requirements.
- Review and update your Favorite Colleges list. Things may have changed since you first created it.
- Register with the NCAA Eligibility Center. If you're serious about swimming in college, this must be done.
- Take the SAT and/or the ACT.
- Get your current coach involved as a reference. Ask him or her to reach out to a few of your favorite colleges. Provide them with an athletic resume and the contact information for the coaches at each college.
- Schedule a few unofficial visits. Make sure the colleges are realistic for your abilities and that you have a genuine interest.
- Prepare a list of questions to ask college coaches.
- Prepare yourself for questions a coach might ask you.
- Send follow up emails to the colleges you have not heard back from. The first email was an introduction. Be persistent.
- If you aren't generating much interest yet, DON'T PANIC. Step up your efforts and reconsider the colleges you are pursuing.
- Don't stop pursuing colleges just because a few coaches have expressed interest. Keep your options open until you sign a National Letter of Intent - or until you give a Verbal Commitment to a school. Your word should be as good as your signature.
- Be careful on social media. College coaches pay attention to the social media behavior of recruits.

Senior Year

- Review and update your Favorite Colleges list. At this point, it's a numbers game. The more colleges you contact, the better chance you will find the best fit - and potentially a scholarship.
- Schedule official recruiting visits! Division I is limited to 5 official visits, and you can take unlimited official visits to Division II, III and NAIA schools.
- Ask your current coach to review your list of Favorite colleges. Ask if he/she would reach out to a few more schools on your behalf.
- Retake the SAT or ACT if necessary. Obviously, the higher your score, the more options you'll have!

- Connect with the coaches at the colleges you are pursuing. Send an email, connect on Twitter, or you can even give them a call. Do whatever it takes to get noticed!
- Get any financial aid forms submitted as early as possible. With the increasing cost of college and the fact that most athletic scholarships are partial scholarships, financial aid is an important factor.
- Keep in contact with coaches who have contacted you. Make sure you have reached out to the coaches at schools in which you have interest.
- Request final transcripts to be sent to the NCAA. College is right around the corner!

Source: <http://usatodayhss.com/2017/recruiting-column-your-year-by-year-recruiting-timeline>