

DRIVEN BY THE JOURNEY™

College Recruiting Checklist

A step-by-step guide to help student-athletes prepare for the college recruiting process.

TRACK 1: HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETE → COLLEGE

Use this checklist to organize your academics, athletic profile, coach communication, college research, visits, financial planning, and final decision. Check each item as you complete it.

Your journey is within. Preparation makes it visible.

Prepared by Coach Rhonda Jackson
Driven By The Journey™

How to Use This Checklist

College recruiting is not one conversation, one highlight video, or one showcase. It is a process. The goal of this guide is to help you control what you can control, stay organized, communicate professionally, and make a college decision based on fit - not attention.

Coach Jackson's Gem: Being talented can get you noticed. Being prepared helps you stay ready when the opportunity arrives.

1. Academic & Eligibility Readiness

Before recruiting can become an opportunity, you must be academically prepared for admission and athletic eligibility.

- Know your current cumulative GPA and review your transcript for accuracy.
- Meet with your school counselor to confirm graduation requirements and your projected graduation date.
- Identify the eligibility requirements for the college athletic associations and divisions you are considering (NJCAA, NCAA, NAIA, etc.).
- Create accounts with the appropriate eligibility or admissions systems when required.
- Track required core courses and make a recovery plan immediately for any missing or failed course.
- Know whether your target colleges require SAT/ACT scores for admission or scholarship consideration.
- Create a monthly academic check-in for grades, attendance, missing work, and tutoring needs.
- Save unofficial transcripts, report cards, test scores, and academic awards in one recruiting folder.
- Know your intended major or at least 2-3 academic areas you want to explore.
- Research whether each target school actually offers the academic program you want.

2. Build Your Recruiting Profile

A coach should be able to understand who you are as a student, athlete, and person within a few minutes.

- Create a one-page athletic resume with name, graduation year, position, height, school/team, GPA, contact information, coach contacts, honors, and key statistics.
- Use a professional email address that includes your name and is checked regularly.
- Create a short highlight video that shows your strongest, most transferable skills early.
- Label your video clearly with name, graduation year, position, jersey number, and team.
- Keep at least one full-game video available for coaches who want to evaluate decision-making, effort, defense, and consistency.
- Keep verified or coach-supported statistics current.
- List your high school, AAU/club, or travel coach contact information accurately.
- Maintain a recruiting calendar with games, tournaments, showcases, camps, visits, deadlines, and coach conversations.
- Review your public social media presence. Remove content that does not represent the person or teammate you want a college coach to recruit.
- Prepare a 30-second introduction explaining who you are, what you are looking for, and why you would add value to a program.

Recruiting Profile Quick Check

Item	Ready?	Last Updated
Athletic resume	■	_____
Highlight video	■	_____
Full-game film	■	_____
Transcript / GPA	■	_____
Statistics	■	_____
Coach contacts	■	_____
Recruiting calendar	■	_____

3. Build a Smart College List

- Build a balanced list of schools based on academics, athletics, cost, geography, campus environment, and opportunity - not just school name.
- Research each program's roster by position, class year, height, and returning players.
- Review the team's recent record, conference/region, coaching staff, and style of play.
- Identify whether your athletic level realistically matches the program.
- Research admissions requirements and application deadlines.
- Estimate total cost of attendance, including tuition, fees, housing, meals, books, transportation, and personal expenses.
- Identify scholarship, grant, FAFSA, institutional aid, and work-study opportunities.
- Track every school in one recruiting spreadsheet or notebook.

4. Communicate With College Coaches

- Create a personalized introductory email for each coach; do not send a generic mass message.
- Include your name, graduation year, position, school/team, GPA, video link, upcoming schedule, and contact information.
- Explain briefly why you are interested in that specific college and program.
- Use a clear subject line such as: 2027 PG | 3.5 GPA | Rhonda Example | Recruiting Video.
- Follow up professionally when there is no response; do not send repeated daily messages.
- Respond to coach messages promptly and professionally.
- Keep a written log of coach contacts, dates, responses, next steps, and level of interest.
- Ask your high school/club coach to advocate for you when appropriate.
- Never exaggerate offers, statistics, interest, grades, or conversations with other programs.
- Thank coaches after meaningful conversations, evaluations, visits, or workouts.

5. Prepare for Visits, Calls & Evaluations

- Research the school and team before every phone call or visit.
- Prepare at least five questions before speaking with the coaching staff.
- Dress appropriately and arrive early for campus visits, workouts, and meetings.
- Bring your transcript, athletic resume, and any requested documents.
- Meet academic/admissions personnel when possible - not only the coaching staff.
- Tour the athletic facilities, classrooms, student support areas, housing, and dining options.
- Observe how current players interact with coaches and one another.
- Ask what happens if you are injured, do not start, struggle academically, or the coaching staff changes.
- After the visit, write down what you liked, what concerned you, and what still needs an answer.
- Send a thank-you message within 24 hours.

Questions Every Student-Athlete Should Ask

- Where do you see me fitting into your program?
- What are your expectations for my position?
- How many players are you recruiting at my position?
- What academic support is available to athletes?
- What does a typical in-season and off-season week look like?
- What costs are covered, and what costs would my family be responsible for?
- What are your expectations regarding attendance, study hall, strength training, travel, and conduct?
- How does your program support mental wellness and injured athletes?
- What is your team culture when players are not getting the minutes they want?
- What are the next steps in your recruiting process?

6. Financial Aid & Offer Readiness

- Complete the FAFSA as soon as the appropriate application cycle opens.
- Know each school's financial aid priority deadline.
- Ask for athletic aid details in writing when an offer is made.
- Understand exactly what an offer covers: tuition, fees, books, housing, meals, or other expenses.
- Compare renewable versus one-year aid and understand renewal requirements.
- Ask whether academic, need-based, institutional, and athletic aid can be combined.
- Calculate the estimated out-of-pocket cost for each school.
- Do not commit based only on the headline scholarship amount; compare the total financial package.

7. Before You Commit

- Confirm the academic program is a fit even if basketball or your sport ended tomorrow.
- Understand your projected role without assuming playing time has been guaranteed.
- Know the coach's expectations and the team's culture.
- Review the financial package with a parent, guardian, counselor, or trusted adult.
- Understand housing, transportation, meal, medical, and insurance responsibilities.
- Read every agreement before signing it.
- Know the admissions, enrollment, eligibility, and financial-aid steps required after commitment.
- Withdraw respectfully from other recruiting conversations after making a final decision.
- Keep copies of all signed documents and important emails.
- Choose the place where you can grow academically, athletically, personally, and professionally.

My Recruiting School Tracker

Use this page to compare schools based on fit, not emotion or attention.

School	Coach / Contact	Academic Fit	Athletic Fit	Cost / Aid	Next Step

My Next 3 Recruiting Actions

1. _____

Deadline: _____

2. _____

Deadline: _____

3. _____

Deadline: _____

YOUR NEXT STEP WITH DRIVEN BY THE JOURNEY™

Do not leave your recruiting journey to chance. Use this checklist to identify what is complete, what is missing, and what needs attention next. For additional recruiting guidance, Track 1 resources, workshops, and coaching support, visit www.coachrhondajackson.com.

Remember: The goal is not simply to get recruited. The goal is to be prepared to choose, enter, and succeed in the right college environment.