

COLLEGE BASICS

US Youth Soccer and The Sport Source® have partnered together to provide college planning quick tips, making the path to college an easier one to follow. Whether you are pursuing academic endeavors only, or dream of playing soccer at the college level, find out how to realize your potential and get a start on planning for your future.

[NCAA Schools that Sponsor Soccer](#)

One of the most important choices a student will make up to now is where to go to college. Whether attending college for strictly academics, and or pursuing aspirations to play a sport at the collegiate level, organizing your search, understanding academic and athletic standards, and knowing exactly what options are available to you are a key focus.

When beginning your college search, think about the following items that may influence your decision to attend a particular school, or not:

- Local vs. Distance
- Urban vs. Rural
- Commuting vs. Residential
- Large Campus vs. Small Campus
- Student life – campus activities
- Meeting admission standards
- Majors - area of academic interest
- Expense

Cast a wide net when considering the types of colleges and universities that might be available, this is especially important as a high school freshman or sophomore. As you progress through your high school career and refine what it is you do want in a college, you will find your idea of the perfect college fit becomes more concrete, and your list of schools more concentrated. By the time you are a senior, you most likely will have a defined list of 5 to 7 serious schools of interest.

Consider the different types of Colleges and Universities available

- Public
- Private
- Service Academy
- Military
- Junior College

Campus Visits

Campus visits can never start too soon, and if you have yet to take one, now's the time. Take the opportunity to establish dialogues with admissions counselors early in the college planning process, and request media packets from those schools that you want to learn more about. Connect with the Department Head in your projected major to find out about the depth of the degree program you are considering, as this can be a good indicator of whether a college or university will satisfy your academic pursuits.

Arrange visits prior to, and well before your desired date to make a campus tour. This gives admissions a chance to organize an itinerary so that you can sit in on a class, speak with current students, visit a dorm, dine in the cafeteria, and maybe even stay the night on campus.

Be sure to check out student bulletin boards, posters, the school newspaper, message boards, and find out what is going on in and around campus. Make a mental note of what campus groups are available, student concerns if any, and upcoming social activities. These can offer a wealth of information and give you insight into student life and the social side of college.

Tuition, Scholarships, and Paying for College

Tuition will vary depending on whether the college is public or private, and if you live in state or out of state. Service Academies are tuition free, but do require a military commitment after graduation. Although public universities are traditionally less expensive than private ones, consider all factors that may impact your total tuition expense.

For example, if you are a resident of the state of Texas and are accepted to the University of Texas, tuition will be much lower for an in state resident, than for one who is not. Tuition fees for non-residents can often be on par to private college cost, so consider which is the best option for you, your family, and financial situation.

While private college tuition is consistent in expense for all students whether they are from in state, out of state or even out of country, private colleges can also have a very selective admissions process. Admission standards usually apply to both public and private institutions, where a minimum GPA/ test score(s) are in place and must be met in order to be considered for acceptance.

The majority of colleges and universities will offer academic scholarships, with many having athletic scholarship opportunities as well (Ivy League schools will not have athletic scholarships). When thinking about the expense of, and how to pay for college, consider this; a great high school GPA, advanced or honor courses, SAT and or ACT scores can reap dividends when you begin applying for college.

Your grades = Money

College and universities will offer academic and merit scholarship money awards dependent on your high school GPA and SAT/ACT test score(s). The better your GPA and test scores, the more money you could receive in scholarship monies. Have a GPA of 3.5+ and an SAT of 1800+? You could earn a Presidential or Provost Scholarship!

What's even better? The amount awarded will usually be offered for each year you attend (up to 4 years total), as long as you maintain the designated GPA set forth by the college to keep the scholarship. This means your college education, or a good part of it, could be paid for due to the great grades you earned in high school.

Additional opportunities to garner scholarship monies can often come from these categories:

- Community Service work
- Religious affiliation
- Athletics
- Work Study
- Endowments and Grants
- Departmental Opportunities
- Fine Arts
- Leadership

- Environmental or Green Club
- ROTC

Each college or university web site will have information on the scholarship/grant opportunities they offer, guidelines for eligibility, and the process for application. Be mindful of application and scholarship deadlines, so you don't miss out on money to help fund your college education.

College Soccer

If pursuing collegiate soccer, there are well over 1300 men's soccer programs available, and approximately 1400 program options for women. Athletic scholarship awards will vary by affiliation, division of play, and the individual funding that each college provides to the coach for that particular athletic program(not all will be fully funded). You will need to check with the coach of each program you are interested in to determine the number of athletic scholarship options available to you.

Keep in mind, that the coach will use his or her available scholarship funds to cover freshman through seniors for the upcoming year. In addition, student athletes awarded athletic money usually only receive those funds for a one year period of time. This means that at the discretion of the coach, he or she can do the following for your return to the program the following year; renew your scholarship for the same amount, withdraw the scholarship altogether, increase or decrease it.

Connect with the Coach

If your path does include college soccer, connect with the coaches of the programs you feel would be both a good academic and athletic fit with, as soon as possible. Although athletic affiliation, division of play, and your age will impact what communication can or cannot take place with a particular college coach, being identified as a potential recruit early on is important.

Opportunity abounds everywhere, if you know where to look - consider all affiliations, the divisions within each, and what they have to offer:

- NCAA
- NAIA
- NJCAA
- USCAA

- NCCAA

An introduction of yourself via a cover letter along with your player profile is ideal. If you are participating in an upcoming showcase or tournament where college coaches may be attending, provide your game schedule as soon as possible. This gives those attending coaches you contact a good indication of your interest in their school, an opportunity to see you play, watch you develop as a player, and determine if your abilities could fit well with their program.

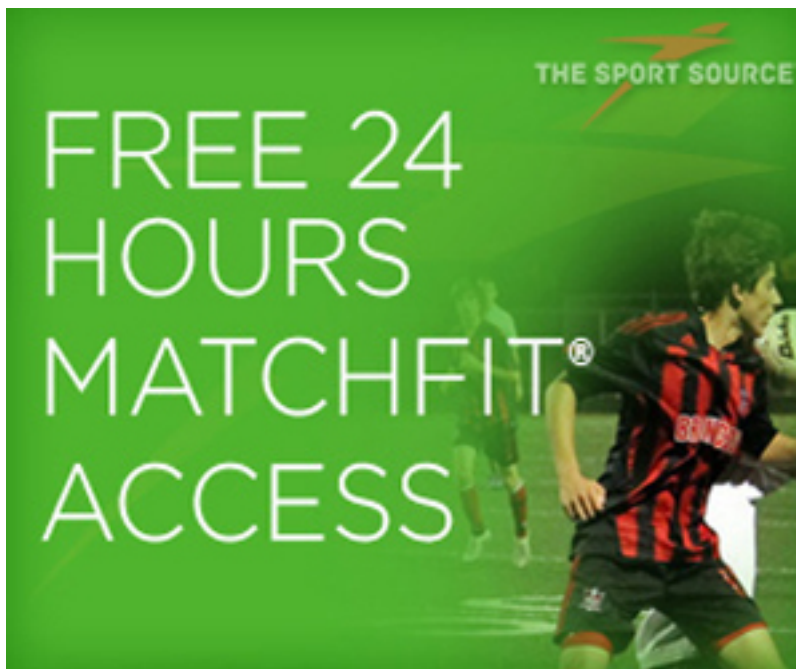
The 4 components a College Coach will look for in a potential recruit

- Tactical ability
- Technical ability
- Physical ability
- Psychological ability

If the goal is to capture the attention of a college coach, it is critical to be excellent in at least one area. As you size yourself up in ability, consider your strengths, and areas that may need improvement.

[Sample Profile](#)

Now that you've created your player profile, take the 24 Hour MATCHFIT® College Search Challenge!



MATCHFIT provides complete academic and athletic profiles for over 5800 colleges and universities, with specific information on almost 3000 men's and women's college soccer programs. Instantly link, share, and connect with college admissions and coaches alike, to find your perfect college fit.

NCAA Guide for College Bound Student Athletes -

<http://www.ncaapublications.com/productdownloads/CBSA.pdf>

NAIA Guide for College Bound Student Athletes –

http://www.naia.org/fls/27900/1NAIA/membership/NAIA_GuidefortheCollegeBoundStudent.pdf?DB_OEM_ID=27900

If you are interested in playing either NCAA DIV I or DIV II, and or NAIA athletics, you must register with the eligibility center for each one and pay the required fee(s).

NCAA-

- The NCAA Eligibility Center registration fee is \$65.00
- The registration fee is \$95 for international college-bound student-athletes
- Fee waivers are available to those student – athletes who meet the criteria set forth by the NCAA – refer to the NCAA web site for specifics
- Students should register for the NCAA Eligibility Center at the beginning of their Junior year of high school

NAIA -

- The NAIA Eligibility Center registration fee is \$70.00 for both U.S and Canadian students enrolling full-time for the first term of college following high school graduation
- The registration fee is \$90.00 for U.S and Canadian transfer students who are current NAIA attendees, or students with more than a summer break after high school graduation
- The registration fee is \$120.00 for international applicants
- Fee waivers are available for U.S students – refer to NAIA web site for specifics

- Students should register for the NAIA prior to their senior year of high school.

For students and parents with questions - visit the NCAA and NAIA Eligibility Centers for registration policies, fees and information regarding eligibility procedures.

NCAA Eligibility Center - http://web1.ncaa.org/ECWR2/NCAA_EMS/NCAA.jsp

Phone: 317/223-0700

Fax: 317/917-6888

NAIA Eligibility Center - <http://www.playnaia.org/>

Phone: 816-595-8300

Toll free: 866-881-6242

Fax: 816-595-8301

Email: ecinfo@naia.org

International student questions, contact: ecinternational@naia.org

International Students

International applicants should begin the process as early as possible to determine academic and athletic eligibility. Apply no later than 6 months prior to the semester in which you wish to begin your studies. You will need extra time to obtain your official school records, arrange for required examinations, forward bank certification of your financial resources, and obtain your Visa.

It is important to note that many U.S. colleges and universities require international students applying for undergraduate studies (bachelor's degree) to pay all expenses themselves. Many universities do not give scholarships or financial aid to international students seeking undergraduate studies. Be sure to check with each school of interest before applying, to determine what financial aid is available to you.

Requirements

International students are usually required to be proficient in the English language and good students in their own countries before they will be considered for attendance at a U.S. college or university. Students will typically have 12 years of study (beginning at age 6), with the last 4 to 5 years to include studies in

English, history, mathematics and science. Although each university or college will have their own individual guidelines, this is an overview of what most will require for application from an international student.

Application Form

- Answer all questions on the form
- Your principal or headmaster may be asked to do the same
- There may or may not be an application fee

Financial Certification

The student or parent must often submit proof that the family or sponsor can pay the tuition

expense. This amount can vary greatly depending on the school of interest and will include

tuition, room and board, books and miscellaneous expenses. The university needs an official

statement from a bank, employer, sponsor, or other official affidavit of support.

School records

These are transcripts or certificates of satisfactory study. Records should include English

translation of subjects the student has studied, grades for each, and overall GPA if available.

It is very important to explain the grading system of each school attended.

Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)

This is required for all international students except those whose native language is English.

Information about the TOEFL can be found at U.S. Embassies, Consulates, offices of the

United States Information Services, or at schools in your home country.

Aptitude Tests (SAT/ACT)

The Scholastic Attitude Test (SAT) or American College Testing, which measure verbal and

Mathematical ability, are required for both international and American students alike.

For additional information about examinations, dates of testing, and fees, contact:

ACT - Student Services, 2727 Scott Blvd., P.O. Box 414, Iowa City, IA 52243-0414 USA

Phone 319-337-1270

Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m., Central Standard Time

SAT - College Board SAT Program, P.O. Box 025505, Miami, FL 33102

Phone 1-866-756-7346 International 212-713-7789

Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 9 p.m. Eastern Standard Time

Visa

Once admitted to college and all financial certification information/bank statements have been received, the university will send you a Visa qualifying document. In most cases, you will be sent an I-20 Form, which is used to get an F-I Student Visa. To get the Visa, you will need to go to the nearest American Embassy or Consulate and provide the following three items:

- Your Passport
- Your I-20
- Your current Financial Certification

Since you may be asked to prove your financial resources, you should retain certified copies of the original financial information that you are sending to U.S. colleges when applying. If you are currently in the United States, you will not need to get a new Visa; you will receive a transfer which will extend your time to the dates of the appropriate academic program. An I-20 will be sent to you to do your transfer.

Need more information?

NCAA Rules

National Collegiate Athletic Association
700 W. Washington Street
P.O. Box 6222
Indianapolis, Indiana 46206-6222
Phone: 317/917-6222
Fax: 317/917-6888

<http://www.ncaa.org>

NAIA RULES

National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics Headquarters
23500 W. 105th St.
P.O. Box 1325
Olathe, KS 66051
Phone (913) 791-0044

<http://www.naia.cstv.com/>

NJCAA RULES

National Junior College Athletic Association
1755 Telstar Drive, Suite 103
Colorado Spring, Colorado 80920
Phone: 719-590-9788
Fax: 719-590-7324

<http://www.njcaa.org>