

FRESHMAN YEAR

Build the foundation, for real

ACADEMIC

- Set your GPA target and protect it from day one.
- Register with the NCAA Eligibility Center and use it to confirm you are enrolled in the right core courses.
This is free and required for D1 and D2. Do it early so you are never scrambling to fix your schedule later.
- Build real study habits and time management. It only gets harder.
- Play multiple sports if you can. College coaches respect multi-sport athletes.
It builds athleticism, competitiveness, and coachability, all things coaches look for.

ATHLETIC

- Focus on fundamentals at your position. Master the basics before anything else.
- Develop daily habits in the weight room and on the field. Consistently.
- Be coachable. Be dependable. Your high school coach's opinion of you matters to college coaches.
- Begin tracking your measurables: height, weight, 40 time, position stats.

RECRUITING

- Understand the levels: FBS, FCS, D2, D3, NAIA, JUCO. Know what each one means.
- Only FBS is identifying freshmen, and it is a very small pool. Do not chase it.
Your job right now is not to get recruited. Your job is to build something worth recruiting.
- Start watching college film at your position. Know what coaches look for.
- Do not pay for a recruiting service that promises D1 attention as a freshman.

SOPHOMORE YEAR

Start putting in the work

ACADEMIC

- Maintain a strong GPA. Junior year is not the time to be catching up.
- Stay on track with core courses.
- Take the PSAT. It is your first real benchmark for the SAT.
- Begin SAT/ACT prep early. Do not let testing sneak up on you.

ATHLETIC

- Earn varsity playing time and make the most of every rep.
- Build quality game film. Full games matter, not just highlights.
- Attend camps to compete and get real feedback, not just to be seen.
Go where you can show out. Do not attend a D1 camp just to say you went.
- Update your measurables and compare them to college rosters at different levels.
- Continue playing multiple sports if possible. It works in your favor.

RECRUITING

- D1 coaches can begin contacting you June 15 after sophomore year. Be ready to respond.
- D2 contact opens fully after sophomore year as well.
- D3 and NAIA recruit on a later timeline. Silence from them now is not a bad sign.
That is their process, not a reflection of where you stand.
- You can begin reaching out to lower-level programs, off-field staff, and recruiting coordinators now.
Start building familiarity before the formal contact window opens.
- Do not confuse social media attention with real recruiting interest.

JUNIOR YEAR

The evaluation year. Do not waste it.

ACADEMIC

- Take the SAT or ACT. Retake if your score needs improvement.
- Verify your transcripts and confirm core course completion.
- Stay eligible. Nothing else matters if you are not.
- Research academic programs at your target schools. Fit goes both ways.

ATHLETIC

- Junior film is typically the most impactful film of your recruiting career. Perform.
- Official visits open August 1. Use them strategically.
- Compete at camps that match your realistic level.
- Continue physical development. Coaches want to see progression, not just a snapshot.

RECRUITING

- FBS offers come primarily in the summer before junior year and into the fall.
- FCS offers often come during the season or right after it ends. Stay ready.
Do not misread FCS timing as lack of interest. That is how their process works.
- Communicate with purpose. Show coaches you understand their program and culture.
- Build real relationships. A coach who knows you is more likely to offer you.
- Narrow your list to schools that are a real fit, athletically and academically.
- Do not chase programs that are not actually recruiting you.

SENIOR YEAR

Stay locked in. Real opportunities are in front of you.

ACADEMIC

- Maintain grades and eligibility all the way through graduation.
- Complete admissions and financial aid paperwork fast.
Delays cost players spots. Do not sit on this.
- Confirm core course completion with your guidance counselor.

ATHLETIC

- Update your film early in the season. Do not wait until it ends.
- Keep training and producing. Be the player they recruited.
- Stay mentally locked in through the entire season.
- After signing, keep working. The process does not stop at commitment.
The players who show up ready on day one are the ones who earn playing time early.

RECRUITING

- FCS, D2, D3, NAIA, and JUCO are all actively recruiting seniors.
These are real paths. Players who take them have real careers.
- If FBS has not offered by now, stop waiting on it. Real opportunities exist today.
Holding on to the wrong target while the right one walks out the door is the most common senior mistake.
- Stay responsive with every coach who is recruiting you. Silence kills offers.
- Take official visits to your top schools.
- Commit to a school that fits. Then go be great there.