**How Do I Get Recruited as a College Athlete?**

Many high school athletes dream of being recruited as a college athlete and work hard throughout their years in high school to train and develop their skills. However, the college athlete recruitment process is a very challenging one. With individuals from around the country fighting for limited places, it’s a long-winded and competitive process for everyone involved. If it’s your dream to be recruited as a college athlete, read our guide below to learn more about the application process and everything you can do to increase your chances of success in this area.

**Begin Thinking About the Process Early**

The sooner you begin to think about the application process to become a college athlete, the better your chances of success. A freshman or sophomore student in high school has a good chance of beginning the process. Especially if you are already playing at All-State or varsity level, you will want to begin assessing your options early on. However, many students develop later on in their high school career, so it’s normal for students to begin the process in their junior year. You’ll find you won’t be judged for starting later on, and recruiters are very open to the fact that some people come to their sport much later than others.

**Make Connections**

While some high school athletes are sort out by recruiters, you’ll find this is less common nowadays. Most students need to take the initiative to reach out to teams or college coaches, and you can do this by email. You’ll need to share your academic achievements and your personal qualifications and statistics. If you don’t know where to start with this procedure, there are also recruitment services that can assist you with the process. These can be either free or paid, and they can also advise you on scholarships and the best places to apply.

**The College Athlete Recruitment Funnel**

Thousands of athletes take part in the college athlete recruitment process each year, and this funnels down to just a few successful individuals. Many applicants are considered at the start of the process, and they’ll be filtered out depending on their height, weight, position, and other basic requirements. During each stage, more assessments are taken to try and narrow it down to the final few successful candidates. Near the end of the process, coaches begin visiting potential recruits, and following a successful visit, this can result in an offer being shared to join a college team.

**How to Stand Out from the Crowd**

With so many applicants each year fighting for just a few positions, you may be wondering how you can stand out and improve your recruitment chances. You’ll want to show initiative throughout your contact with college coaches, and your introductory email should work to share your aspirations and achievements. If you are lucky enough to meet potential coaches, they’ll look at how easy you take directions, your potential leadership skills, your teamwork and energy levels, and your drive. These all come together to create a well-rounded athlete that a coach will find easy to train during their college years.

**Division Levels**

If you have a good idea of what you are aiming towards in your athletic career, you’ll want to decide which division level you are aspiring to compete within. The highest level of college sports is NCAA Division I, and just underneath this, you’ll find NCAA Division II. The highest level expects athletes to train intensively, and you’ll be required to travel throughout your time. However, you’ll also benefit from great facilities and larger budgets on campus. At NCAA Division II, you’ll see that scholarships are also available, but you may find your work-life balance to be a little better.

Dropping down to NCAA Division III, you’ll find no scholarships are available now, although there may be other opportunities for assistance. Academics are of higher importance at this level, and your season will be shorter. Finally, NAIA is a smaller group of schools, and NJCAA is available as a junior college option for anyone testing out college athletics or looking to save money.

**Are Academics Important for College Athletes?**

If your dream is to play as a college or professional athlete, you may think that you don’t need to worry about your academics any longer if you are a talented athlete. Our advice to anyone applying as a college athlete is to still put a lot of time and effort into your academic results. This is one of the first things that’s looked at during the application process, and you’ll want to check out the requirements for any colleges you are applying to. Even if you are the most talented player on the field, this won’t guarantee entrance to your top college choice if your grades are poor. Hard work and dedication are reflected in your academic results, and this is something that any coach will be looking for from their players. If you are worried about finding scholarships for college, good academics and test scores will often increase the options available to you.

**Expect Rejection**

When it comes to getting recruited as a college athlete, you need to understand that rejection is just part of the process. If you’ve been playing for many years, you are probably used to this feeling, but you’ll need a lot of patience to succeed in the college athlete recruitment season. Expect this process to be very tiring and for it to push you to your limits, both physically and mentally. However, the excitement of being accepted in the end will be well worth the struggle, so keep going even on the toughest days of the process.

Being recruited as a college athlete is a dream for many high school athletes. By following these tips above and reaching out to colleges across the country, you’ll increase your chances of success in the recruitment process this year. Remember, it’s going to be a long and challenging ride, but one that will all pay off when you are representing your team in college and doing something you love every day.