

Row in College

A Recruiting Guide For Female Student-Athletes

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Introduction

About this eBook

This eBook is intended for any female student-athlete who is thinking of rowing in college or university. It will walk you and your parents through the recruiting process and it will show you how to increase your chances of being recruited by the college that is right for you academically, athletically and personally.

How to Use this eBook

There are many ways to read this eBook which is organized into four main parts supplemented by several appendices. The simplest is to start at the beginning and read it like you would a regular book. You can also read any topic by clicking on its link from the Table of Contents or from the Bookmarks on the left. Several of the sections also include clickable links that take you to more information.

About the Author

Rocoach (Ian Simpson) has coached rowers for over 20 years; the last 10 years coaching junior women. His athletes have represented the United States at junior, under-23 and senior levels. Several of his former athletes are currently rowing, coxing and coaching at colleges and universities across the country. He is currently coaching elite-level athletes and runs the Center Of Rowing Excellence (CORE) a high-performance land training center that is geared towards helping high school athletes get recruited to row at college. Contact Coach Simpson directly via [email](#).

Feedback

We have done our best to make this eBook as useful as possible. We welcome your feedback, so please feel free to direct any comments or suggestions about this eBook to <http://athletesbooks.com/>

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Getting Started

Selecting a college may be the biggest decision that you've faced so far in your life. Adding the complication of picking a rowing team makes the task even more daunting. In order to focus your search and avoid becoming overwhelmed by the choices available, it helps to first define what you want to get out of your college experience, make an honest assessment of your academic and athletic abilities, then market your abilities to the colleges that match your criteria and finally pick the one college that is best for you.

Continue reading or click on the following links to proceed:

- [Part I: What do You Want From Your College Experience?](#)
- [Part II: Match Colleges to Your Criteria](#)
- [Part III: Market Yourself - Make Them Want You](#)
- [Part IV: Close the Deal](#)

- [Appendix A: The Rules](#)
- [Appendix B: Recommended Timeline](#)
- [Appendix C: Questions, Questions, Questions](#)
- [Appendix D: Quick Parent Notes](#)
- [Appendix E: The 10 Things You Must Do](#)
- [Appendix F: The 10 Things You Must Not Do](#)
- [Appendix G: Useful Links](#)
- [Copyright Notes, Terms & Conditions](#)

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Part I: What do You Want From College?

Our objective is to help you think about what you're looking for in a college and what kind of rowing experience you want to have. We've identified a number of things for you to consider when defining what you want to get out of college.

Continue reading, or click on a link to go directly to a topic:

- [Academics First - Rowing Second](#)
- [Campus Size](#)
- [School Location](#)
- [Tuition Costs](#)
- [Who Rows in College?](#)
- [Choosing Between Division I, II, and III Schools](#)
- [Lightweight Rowers](#)
- [Coxswains](#)
- [Walk-Ons and Non-Rowers](#)

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Academics First - Rowing Second

It is vitally important that you choose a school based on academics first and rowing second. The university you choose will be your home for the next four years; the people you meet there will influence the rest of your life.

- Will you be happy at your chosen school even if you were not rowing there?
- Will you be intellectually stimulated?
- Could you fit in socially?
- Very few people make a career out of rowing – you need to prepare yourself for life in the “real” world, so make sure that your university has courses you are interested in studying.

First find a college or university that best matches your academic abilities and goals. For instance, if you are interested in hotel management you'll need to seek colleges that have reputable hotel management programs.

Be aware that certain courses of study may not be compatible with the time demands of being a varsity athlete, especially at the Division I level.

Campus Size

A school's character is very much a function of its size.

- State universities tend to be quite large.
- Liberal arts colleges are relatively quite small.
- Smaller colleges often offer more intimate classroom settings and a lower teacher-to-student ratio.
- Classes at larger universities are often taught in lecture halls.

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School Location

A school's location is as important as its size. Decide where you are most comfortable geographically.

- Would you prefer to attend an in-state college, or would you like to experience living in a different part of the country?
- Think about whether you'd prefer to live in an urban, suburban, or rural setting.
- How well-integrated with its surrounding environment would you like your college to be?
- Do you want the option to live off-campus or would you prefer to stay in dorms?

Tuition Costs

As you do your research you need to keep in mind what you, or your family, can afford. Tuition costs range from a few thousand to tens of thousands of dollars.

- Generally it costs far less to stay in-state than it does to attend an out-of-state college. Research the residency rules for each state – perhaps your family owns property in another state that with some planning could make you eligible for in-state tuition at a school in that state.
- Explore academic as well as privately-sponsored scholarships.
- Many schools offer financial aid through both grants and loans.
- Research the possibility of student employment – many colleges offer work-study positions.
- Some programs may pay you a small stipend to drive the team van to and from practice.

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Who Rows in College?

If you love rowing and want to row in college, the chances are good that you will find a place where you can be happy and fulfilled academically, athletically and personally. You have a lot of choices including NCAA Division I, II and III rowing schools, in addition to many club programs. If you are a talented athlete you can be recruited to row at college, even if you have never rowed at high school.

There are opportunities for [lightweight rowers](#) and [coxswains](#) too, although your choices are more limited.

Choosing Between Division I, II, and III Schools

There are many collegiate rowing programs of varying ability. You may desire top-level competition with a shot at competing for a National Championship or racing at England's Henley Women's Regatta, or you may be content to train less often and compete at a lower level; whatever your ability, size or shape, there is a program for you.

There are approximately 140 women's rowing programs that are supported by the intercollegiate athletics departments at National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) member institutions. These are further divided into NCAA Division I, Division II, and Division III programs.

- If you want to compete at the higher level you should begin by looking at Division I schools. The competition in Division I is higher than in Division II and III, and so are the demands on the athletes.
- Division II and III schools are typically smaller, have a different environment and offer a different collegiate experience than do many Division I universities.
- Training time at Division II and III schools is much less than in Division I.
- Only Division I and II schools offer rowing scholarships.

Each school has individual strengths and weaknesses so you need to look closely at everything that a prospective school has to offer you.

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Lightweight Rowers

Much collegiate lightweight rowing is performed at the club level only, but there are a few varsity lightweight programs that are supported by their respective athletic departments. Talented lightweight rowers can be recruited to row at the openweight level at colleges that may not have a supported lightweight team.

- Currently the main supported programs are:
 - Wisconsin
 - Princeton
 - Stanford
 - Harvard (Radcliffe)
 - Georgetown
 - Bucknell has had good success at lightweight level recently, but unlike the others does not specialize in lightweight rowing, but recruits athletes who may also happen to be lightweight.
- Women's lightweight rowing is not an NCAA sponsored sport, and its annual national championships are held in conjunction with the men's Inter Collegiate Rowing Association championships (IRAs), rather than with the women's NCAA championships.

You can see which teams race lightweight by clicking on the Lwt tab from this link: [Women's Eight](#)

Lightweight rowers should have a 2k erg score that is sub-7:40 to be recruited by one of the top lightweight programs, but you still have a very good chance if you are 7:50 with good racing experience and great academics.

You must make sure your weight is consistently at, or below 132 pounds, otherwise the top lightweight programs will not be interested in recruiting you.

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Coxes

Opportunities exist for good coxes to be recruited. Obviously coaches recruit more rowers than coxes to their teams, but they are always looking for coxes with the potential to make a positive impact on their team.

- You need to proactively market your abilities, and demonstrate your assertiveness and leadership qualities as you pursue a spot at your chosen college.
- Send college coaches your audio tapes, which should demonstrate how you run a practice and how you call both head races and sprint races.
- You should include information from your team's formal coxswain evaluations to help show what you can offer a prospective college coach.
- Ask your high school coach to recommend you to the coaches of colleges that you're interested in.
- Make sure your weight is consistently under 115 pounds.

Walk-Ons and Non-Rowers

You do not need to have rowed at high school in order to row at college. There are many opportunities for tall athletic women to walk-on to most collegiate rowing programs. Good high school athletes can be recruited to row despite having no prior rowing experience. ([email](#) us for information about “college prep” coaching services for non-rowers)

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Part II: Match Colleges to Your Criteria

The objective for this section is to help you formulate, by the end of your junior year, a list of five to eight schools that perfectly meet all of your academic, athletic and social criteria.

We've identified a number of steps to help you narrow down your search.

Continue reading, or click on the link to go directly to a topic:

- [When to Begin Researching Colleges](#)
- [Which Colleges Offer Rowing?](#)
- [Start to Develop Your List](#)
- [Reaches and Safeties](#)
- [Research Rowing Programs](#)
- [The Coaches](#)
- [Email Coaches](#)
- [Visit Colleges](#)

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When to Begin Researching Colleges

Finding the right university requires work. Do not wait – get started as soon as possible.

- Your goal is to be prepared to select your top school by October 1st of your [senior year](#) – especially if you need your chosen school's athletic department to support (“flag” or “tag”) your application.
- Many Division I coaches expect potential recruits to make commitments very early in the fall of their [senior year](#) as this is when the coaches have most influence on their schools' admissions departments. Plan to apply early ([“early application”](#) or [“early decision”](#)).
- Use your [sophomore year](#) to do all of your background research so that when you get to your [junior year](#) you'll know which colleges and coaches to focus your efforts on.
- Begin as early as you can to think about what kind of overall experience you would like to have and what kind of college or university will best provide it.
- Contact as many coaches as you can during high school. Take control of the process. Be proactive, don't wait for coaches to contact you first.
- Don't worry if you've decided relatively late that you want to row in college. You'll just have to get a lot done in a shorter amount of time.

Click on the following links for more information about topics discussed in this section:

- [Recommended Timeline](#)
- [Applications and Early Decision](#)
- [What do You Want From College?](#)

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Which Colleges Offer Rowing?

A listing of schools that sponsor women's rowing, separated by division, with links to their websites, is available at www.ncaa.org. Note that a "club" team is not supported by its athletic department, does not have varsity status, does not have to follow NCAA rules, and cannot support your application to the university.

Use the rankings provided by the row2k.com polls to see which colleges have rowing teams, and how competitive they are. I recommend using this version of the final 2010 rankings: [Women's Eight](#)

There is wide variety in all three divisions, and there are some fast Division II and III schools that would be very competitive at the Division I level. The "Combined" sheet of the 2010 rankings (click here: [Women's Eight](#)) will give you an idea of the overall competitiveness of crews from each division.

Start to Develop Your List

Start with the listing of schools that have women's rowing programs and begin to develop your own list of schools that meet your basic criteria of academics, size, location, cost, type of rowing program, etc.

There are online resources like www.Petersons.com or www.collegeboard.com that you can use to find out more about the colleges on your list. Compare your GPA and SAT scores with the statistical profiles of current students and admissions criteria provided by the colleges to assess your compatibility with their current students.

Visit the websites of the universities that look interesting and continue your research on the schools generally and on their athletic programs specifically.

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Reaches and Safeties

The goal is to narrow down your preliminary list and come up with a final list of five to eight colleges divided into reaches and safeties.

- Reaches are your “dream” schools that generally have higher academic and athletic standards and may be harder for you to get into.
- Safeties are schools that you know you can get into based upon your academics and athletic abilities.
- Safeties are schools that you would be happy to attend if none of your reaches work out for you, or if you suffer an injury that curtails your recruitment or if you've over-estimated the level of your rowing ability.
- Your list should include three or four reaches and two or three safeties.

Even though each school on your list might be quite different, you need to feel content attending and rowing for each one. Developing the list is difficult, can take a lot of time and can be a stressful process, but it is well worth spending the time and making the effort.

Eligibility

In essence, you have five years from the date of matriculation to complete four years of eligibility. There are a few exceptions but that is the general rule.

If you completed your undergraduate degree in four years, you may still have a year of eligibility left. That assumes, of course, a program wants to take on a grad student as a "one and done" athlete.

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Research Rowing Programs

Research each program's coaching staff, history, size, and funding. Research each team's roster and assess how you think you would fit in with the rowers and what you can expect to contribute to the team.

- You can go here: www.ncaa.org to access an individual school's website.
- You can go directly to its athletics homepage by typing “school name” and “athletics” into your browser. For example “cal athletics” will take you to: [Golden Bears official website](#) where you would select “Women Crew” from the “Sports” tab.
- Once inside the rowing website you can find information about the program, its coaches and athletes.

All collegiate rowing programs are different. Research each program in a clinical, dispassionate manner before starting to assess whether you'd like to be a member of the team. Contact someone you know who attends or recently attended the college and ask them what it's like there. Similarly, contact current or recent rowers and research the team by asking relevant questions. What are the practices like? When does the team practice? Do freshmen practice with the varsity? What do you think about the coaching? How fast is the team? Are there many injured athletes? How are coxes treated? Are smaller or lighter athletes given opportunities to succeed? See if the school and the rowing are exactly what you are looking for. Some schools' boathouses are right on campus, while others may require a 45-minute drive to practice. The school's geographic location will determine how much time you can expect to spend on the water, and how much time you'll be indoors training on land and on the ergs. Pay careful attention to a school's facilities. Are the boathouse, erg room and training room adequate? Is there ample “good” water to train on?

Your research will include an assessment of the coaches, you'll make college visits to look at campuses and boathouses, and you'll meet the team.

This section covers the following topics. Continue reading, or click on the link to go directly to a topic:

- [The Coaches](#)
- [Questions to Ask Team Members](#)
- [Visit Colleges](#)

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The Coaches

Because a rowing team's personnel changes every year, much of a team's character and success is defined by its coaching staff. Before joining a new team you need to be sure that a) the coaches' philosophies are compatible with yours, and b) you are comfortable with each coach, for they are going to play an important part in your life for at least the next four years.

Email Coaches

It is important that you contact the rowing coaches of the schools that appear to meet your criteria.

- Write a simple letter or email that introduces yourself, summarizes your rowing experience, asks for information about their program and what it takes to be recruited there, and provides your contact information.
- You can attach your athletic resume and academic profiles if you have them, although if you use this [Sample Initial Contact Email](#) you'll have most of the important points covered.
- Don't wait for coaches to find you and don't rely on someone else to initiate contact for you.
- Coaches prefer to hear from you directly – it shows that you are proactive, can take initiative and that you are truly interested in rowing for their program.

(Continued on next page)

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Email Coaches, cont'd...

Your email is your first opportunity to identify yourself to the coaching staff as a potential recruit:

- Create a good first impression.
- Keep the body of your message concise.
- Double check everything, especially the spelling of the coach's name and that of the school.
- Write proper sentences and use good grammar.
- Have your parents check it over, but they should not write it for you.
- Many coaches will disregard your letter or email if it is poorly written or contains errors.
- Coaches will not be impressed if you did not take the time to find out their name, so always address correspondence to a coach by using his or her name.
- Coaches do change jobs, so before sending a letter or email double-check to verify that he or she is still coaching at that school!

The basic information in our sample email is needed by every coach, so make sure it's there. Write a (short) note to explain why any information is missing. Do not include anything that you would not be prepared to discuss at an interview with the coach. If you have them, you can attach a picture of yourself, and a short video clip.

If you don't get a response within a week or two, send a follow-up email, or better yet, give the coach a phone call.

Click on the following links for more information about topics discussed in this section:

- [Sample Initial Contact Email](#)
- [Give the Coach a Phone Call](#)

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Sample Initial Contact Email

Here is an example of an email that contains all the essential information that a college coach needs to begin the recruiting process:

Dear Coach Doe,

My name is Kelly Strokeseat. I am a varsity rower with [insert your high school or junior program]. I am interested in attending [name of college/university] and I'd like to find out more about your program and what it takes to be recruited to row at your school. Can you please send me any information you have? Here's my contact information and a little more about me:

- Address
- Phone #
- Email address
- Year in school
- Height
- Weight
- Number of years rowed
- Best 2k, 4k or 10k erg score if available, and/or 2k target for this year
- Notable rowing performances (major national or international events only)
- GPA
- SAT/ACT score
- Contact information for current coach

Sincerely,

Kelly Strokeseat

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Visit Colleges

Ideally you'll make campus visits in your sophomore and junior years. Use the visits to develop a feel for the universities.

- Try to visit during the school year rather than during vacations when few students are on campus.
- If you're from the west coast you should try to visit mid-west and east coast schools during the winter to get a sense of how you'd cope with the weather.
- It can be useful to make at least two separate visits, first an informal “[unofficial](#)” look at the school and its environment, and later a formal “[official](#)” recruiting trip to spend more time with the rowing coaches and the team.
- Some schools host unofficial “[Junior Days](#)”.
- Sometimes it helps to take another, deciding unofficial visit, to help you make your final decision.

Each campus and each program has a distinct, unique feel. Find the one that is right for you.

This section covers the following topics. Continue reading, or click on the link to go directly to a topic:

- [Unofficial Campus Visits](#)
- [Official Recruiting Visits](#)
- [Junior Days](#)

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Unofficial Campus Visits

Take an unofficial visit to the school and set up a meeting with a coach while you're there. Don't worry about disturbing the coaches. They enjoy these informal meetings and they like to see that you are not shy about expressing interest in their program.

In order to be in position to make a commitment early in your senior year, you'll need to have made your visits early enough to help you make a decision.

Take advantage of any family vacations or weekend breaks and try to pre-plan unofficial visits to colleges in your destination area or along the way, if you are traveling by road.

Key facts about unofficial campus visits:

- You (and your relatives) can go on as many unofficial visits as you want.
- You can go whenever you want, during your high school career.
- Unofficial visits are at your own expense.
- To arrange a visit, call the women's crew coach at the school you desire to visit.
- Ask the coach if they can arrange for you to meet with the coaching staff, an academic advisor and a professor from the major you intend to pursue in college.
- Ask if you can attend a practice, and meet with the team afterwards.
- A school is allowed to provide you with three complimentary admissions to a campus athletics event, so the coaches may encourage you to come in conjunction with home football or basketball games.
- During an unofficial visit a school can provide transportation between the campus and the boathouse.
- The school cannot pay for your meals, lodging, entertainment, or parking.

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Unofficial Visits, cont'd...

- You are permitted to stay in student housing with a student-athlete by paying the regular institutional rate (often free for short-term visits).
- Division II schools may provide you and your parents one meal at an on-campus dining facility.
- You may not try out in any manner or be observed by any member of the school's coaching staff engaging in any athletic activities.
- You are permitted to workout during your visit, but it cannot be organized or observed by a member of the coaching staff.

Colleges cannot arrange for, facilitate, or be involved in unofficial visits during an NCAA recruiting dead period. The dead periods for rowing are the four day periods at the beginning of the fall and spring [National Letter of Intent](#) Signing Period.

Click on the following links for more information about topics discussed in this section:

- [Questions to Ask Coaches on Visits](#)
- [Questions to Ask Team Members on Visits](#)
- [Questions to Ask Admissions](#)
- [Additional Information About Unofficial Visits](#)

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“Junior Day” Visits

Some college teams invite students to attend their “Junior Day”. This can include prospects they are interested in, rowers who have expressed an interest in the program and any juniors who would like to learn more about the college and its rowing program. Check to see if the colleges you're interested in host Junior Days. Junior Days usually occur early in the spring, before the racing season starts and may be tied in with an on campus sporting event. Junior Day visits are unofficial visits and the school cannot pay, provide or compensate you for travel, lodging or meal expenses.

Junior Day is often the first chance for the coaches to meet you (and your parents) and to perform an initial assessment of your physical potential (the “look test”). If your parents accompany you the coach will probably size them up too as an indicator as to how you may develop.

Junior Day events give you and your family an opportunity to learn more about the school and the coaching staff in a relaxed and informal setting. Ideally you will get to meet and talk with current rowers.

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Official Recruiting Visits

If you can't afford the trip to the school, ask the coach if he or she could bring you in on an official visit, where, **for seniors only**, the school pays for your flight and houses you on campus with an athlete. Officials cost money, so the coach is going to want to be sure that you fit their profile and are seriously interested in joining their program before they agree to fly you in. If you are offered an official visit, only go on it if you are seriously considering attending that college. If you're not, please let them know asap so they can cancel your ticket and make it available to someone else. I recently had a girl who missed her flight and, as a result, her visit to an Ivy school. Not the best way to show a possible future coach the strength of your desire to row for them!

An official recruiting visit provides you with the opportunity to experience school in session, meet the rowers and coaches and watch a practice. Take your official visits as early as you can in your senior year, and use them to help you to decide how to rank the schools on your final list.

Key facts about official recruiting visits:

- Can be taken only in your senior year in high school.
- You are permitted up to five officials.
- No more than one official visit per school (there is no limit to the number of officials you may take to a Division III school).
- You can take as many visits as you wish where you pay for your own travel, so that can be an option if you want to visit several in-state schools and reserve your five paid visits for schools that cost more to travel to.
- Paid for by the recruiting college or university.
- The college can pay for your transportation to and from the college campus, your room and board during the visit, and reasonable entertainment.
- Your parents or legal guardians can accompany you and the college can pay for their room, board, and entertainment expenses too.

(Continued on next page)

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Official Visits, Cont'd...

- The college can only pay for your parents' transportation if you all drive together in the same car.
- You'll probably be hosted by a current member of the rowing team, but you may find yourself in on-campus housing or at a nearby hotel.
- Official visits are restricted to a maximum duration of forty-eight hours.
- Plan your visits with your high school coach to cause minimal disruption to your team's practices and races.
- Notify your teachers regarding missed school days and conflicts with exams, etc.
- Most schools offer visits September through December, and again in February and March.
- You are not permitted to take advantage of one official visit to visit another nearby college on the same trip.
- Prior to any official visit, you must provide the coach with a copy of your high school transcripts and either SAT I, ACT, PSAT, or PACT scores.
- You may not try out in any manner or be observed by any member of the school's coaching staff engaging in any athletic activities (except at Division II schools where try outs are permitted during official visits that take place in the fall term).
- You are permitted to workout during your visit, but it cannot be organized or observed by a member of the coaching staff.

(Continued on next page)

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Official Visits, Cont'd...

You may decide that you need another visit to determine whether you want to go to that college. In that case, the college pays for nothing. You are responsible for your own transportation, lodging, meals and entertainment. However, you may meet with coaches and rowers, and you may dine with other recruits who are on their official visits. But you'll have to pay for yourself.

Click on the following links for more information about topics discussed in this section:

- [Questions to Ask Coaches on Visits](#)
- [Questions to Ask Team Members on Visits](#)
- [Questions to Ask Admissions](#)
- [Additional Information About Official Visits](#)

What to Look For During Visits

You only have 48 hours to visit the campus, so make the most of every minute. Knowing what you want to gain from your university experience will help you make the most of your visits. You want to be sure that this institution will provide you the opportunity to have the complete collegiate experience academically, athletically and socially. Do your homework before going on your visits and go armed with many questions.

- Try to plan your trip so that your official starts on a Friday morning. This allows you to go to some classes, attend one or more practices and see what a typical weekend is like.
- Plan your visit in advance and let the coach know which classes you'd like to sit in on.
 - While attending classes, notice the size of the class.
 - Notice the ability of the professor.
 - Would you feel comfortable learning in this environment?

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What to Look for During Visits, Cont'd...

- Make sure you see the boathouse and try to meet as many people on the team as you can.
- Talk to your fellow recruits.
- Find out which coach you'd be working with during your first one or two years and try to see if the coach's style is compatible with your personality and with your goals. Observe how all the coaches behave and interact with the athletes, with each other, and with students.
- Get a sense for the team environment. How well do the athletes get along with each other? Are there team goals? Is there a team mission? How are the mission and goals determined? Who are the leaders on the team, and how are they determined? Are freshmen kept separate or are they integrated with the varsity? Every team is different, you have to be sure that you support the team's mission and that you will feel comfortable with the team's dynamic.
- Don't be afraid to ask lots of questions of several people on the team and as many coaches as you can. Ask about which classes are interesting or fun. Ask about how difficult it is to balance academics, rowing, and social life. Ask the rowers about the practices and about erging and other land workouts. Ask them if they have improved while at this school and whether or not they have enjoyed themselves. Ask what other schools they applied to and why they ended up at that particular school. Keep your ears open... you may learn something important.

You need to feel like you're interviewing the program, and they have to impress you just as much as you have to impress them. Make sure you keep everything you see or are told in perspective. Be polite and respectful, and remain focused on your primary objective, which is to gather information about the program so that you can make the best decision after you've completed all your visits.

Most importantly make sure that you can see yourself living happily at the college for the next four years. Look around you and see if people are enjoying themselves.

Click on the following links for more information about topics discussed in this section:

- [Questions to Ask Coaches on Visits](#)
- [Questions to Ask Team Members on Visits](#)
- [Questions to Ask Admissions](#)

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Part III: Make Them Want You

The objective of this section is to help you to market your skills and impress the coaches so you will be recruited by the colleges that you have chosen.

If you've emailed the coaches and visited campuses then you have already begun the process of marketing yourself. We've identified a number of additional steps that can help you increase your chances of being recruited by the college that is right for you.

This section covers the following topics. Continue reading, or click on the link to go directly to a topic:

- [Give the Coach a Phone Call](#)
- [Do You Fit the Profile?](#)
- [Meet the Coaches and the Team](#)
- [Do Your Homework](#)
- [Keep the Coaches Updated](#)
- [Give the Coaches More Information](#)
- [Use Recruiting Websites](#)
- [Send Video Clips](#)
- [Attend Summer Camps](#)
- [Coaches' Scouting Visits](#)
- [Coaches' Home Visits](#)
- [How Your High School Coach Can Help](#)
- [Recruiting Consultants](#)
- [Your Academics](#)
- [Your Racing Results](#)
- [Leadership & Awards](#)

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Give the Coach a Phone Call

After you've initiated contact with a coach with your email, what else can you do? Go ahead and give them a phone call! This can be a hard thing to do because most student-athletes are somewhat intimidated by coaches and unsure of what to say. But coaches are generally happy to talk to kids who are interested in their programs as long as they are the right skill level for it. Just tell them you're starting your search, you think their program might be a good fit, you've sent them an email and a resume, and you'd like to make sure they have an opportunity to review your information. Offer to send it again if they don't have it and ask them if they would like more information.

- [More About Phone Calls](#)

Do You Fit the Profile?

You can send a couple of pictures of you rowing, erging, or generally working out, so the coach has an idea of what you look like. Some programs will have you fill out individual information forms which you should submit; the information will be similar to that included in your [initial contact email](#). If you fit the profile for that program, they'll start recruiting you.

- In general the top programs look first for stellar grades and SAT scores and great erg scores.
- If you really want to row but have an average erg score and good but not great grades, you might want to look at a program at the Division II or III, or lower Division I level.
- If you have a great erg score but lousy grades, your options are going to be limited, and you probably won't get into an Ivy League program or Stanford.

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Do You Fit the Profile? Cont'd...

Every program is different, so make sure you ask the coach what it will take for you to be recruited.

Rowing is a sport of leverage and the top 10 programs like taller and bigger athletes. Smaller rowers need to have killer erg scores and great rowing resumes to be recruited to a top program.

- Assuming good academics and a sub-7:20 erg, you pretty much have the pick of any program in the country.
- 7:20-7:30, you'll need to do some work to convince the top programs to recruit you, but most other coaches will be very pleased to hear from you.
- With an erg score of 7:30-7:45 many Division I and II programs will help you gain admission to their schools, although the amount of financial assistance will be limited.
- There are fewer opportunities as your score gets closer to 8:00 and you should look at Division III schools where you can make an impact and have a positive rowing experience.

Lightweight rowers should be sub-7:40 to be recruited by one of the top lightweight programs, but you still have a very good chance if you are 7:50 with good racing experience and great academics. You must make sure your weight is consistently at, or below 130 pounds, otherwise the top lightweight programs will not be interested in recruiting you.

Coxes: go ahead and send college coaches your audio tapes, demonstrating how you run a practice and how you call head races and sprint races. You should include information from your team's formal coxswain evaluations to help demonstrate what you can offer a prospective college coach. Ask your high school coach to recommend you to the coaches of colleges that you're interested in. Make sure your weight is consistently under 115 pounds.

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Meet the Coaches and the Team

As discussed earlier take [official](#) and [unofficial](#) visits to the school and meet the coaches, professors and rowers while you're there.

You may have opportunities to interface with coaches at fall races and erg races where colleges and high schools often participate at the same time. Coaches will want watch you in action, so send an email telling them when you're racing and which boat and seat you're in. Conscious of NCAA regulations, they will keep their distance from you, but they may talk to your high school coach at the venue.

Do Your Homework

Impress the coach by doing your homework and show that you know enough about his or her program to speak intelligently about how you would fit in. Some possibilities:

- What is it about the way this coach teaches that appeals to you?
- What accomplishments can you compliment the coach on?
- Mention something that helps the coach understand why you're interested and how you can add value to the program.

Show how motivated you are join their team. Don't be aloof, or try to be too cool, or else they'll think that you're not interested. Similarly, never sell yourself short, don't be shy about your achievements or about your aspirations. Don't ever give them the impression that you actually don't like working out. I had a girl who, during the course of her official visit, informed the coaches how much she hated erging. Needless to say that girl was immediately crossed off that and several other teams' lists (coaches do talk to each other...).

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Keep the Coaches Updated

Keep the coaches updated with how your training, testing and racing are progressing.

- Be proactive, don't wait for the coach to contact you asking for information.
- They'll be interested in anything you have to tell them.
- Show them that you're interested in their school, that you take action, and you've got the maturity and communication skills to be an asset on their program.

Tell the coaches of schools on your short-list where they stand. They will be preparing to assess your potential to row on their teams, set up official visits and support your application through admissions – and you do not want to mislead them or waste their time and resources. If you're still unsure about your preference order, it's acceptable to say they're in your top (X) schools, but be prepared to narrow it down quickly.

Give the Coaches More Information

Emailing, visits and follow ups are all good, but may not be enough. Direct the coach to where he or she can find more information about you. Maybe it's to your high school coach, or to your profile that you've posted on a recruiting website, or you can offer to send a video clip. Make sure you give them options they can pursue. This keeps them interested in you and it demonstrates the strength of your interest in them.

Click on the following links for more information about topics discussed in this section:

- [How Your Coach Can Help](#)
- [Use Recruiting Websites](#)
- [Video Clips](#)

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Use Recruiting Websites

You should keep your athletic resume updated and ready to send out and you should also post your information on recruiting websites like www.beRecruited.com and <http://vespoli.com/recruiting/>. For a small fee, and sometimes for free, these websites let you archive your profile, link to a video clip, and include recommendation letters from high school or club coaches. Don't rely solely on sites like these – if you're really interested you must send your information directly to the coach as well.

Send Video Clips

Common in many other sports, video is starting to be more widely used as a recruiting tool for rowing. If you have the time and resources video can be useful, especially if the college coach is not able to see you rowing in high school, or if you want to show them significant improvements that you've made since the last time they saw you.

- College coaches would like to see more recruits use this tool.
- Coaches will definitely watch any video that's sent to them, especially if they are considering bringing you in on an official visit or trying to make a decision as to whether or not support to support your application.
- Email your clip to the coaches or post online using www.beRecruited.com or <http://vespoli.com/recruiting/> and direct the coaches to them.
- It doesn't have to be fancy, but it should be shot by someone who knows what they are doing and it shouldn't be 5 minutes of pause drill.also, races are hard to watch because usually the person filming is not very close to the action.
- Put together at most two to three minutes that include a close up sequence of you rowing steady state and some shots of your bladework – both in isolation and with the rest of the boat.
- Get straight to the action. The coaches will not like it if you include a long introduction – they want to see you rowing, period.
- Keep it Short!

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Attend Summer Camps

This is one of the best ways to get exposure to coaches and programs you're interested in, but it does cost time and money. Just link to the athletic pages on the websites of schools you're targeting and see if they have a summer camp listed, or check the camps listings on www.row2k.com or at USRowing.

Coaches' Scouting Visits

If your program is large and/or nationally recognized college coaches will have visits to your program on their calendars.

- Coaches attend practice and watch you and your teammates rowing and/or working out.
- Coaches are permitted to talk to seniors only.
- Coaches may be available to speak to all the seniors and/or one on one with students.
- The coaches will maintain a very low profile; perhaps riding the launch with your high school coach.
- Be yourself, behave as you would at any other practice. In my experience, you'll soon get absorbed in your practice and forget all about the coach sitting in the launch.
- It is common for coaches to shoot video as this helps them put faces to names, and it helps them identify potential future candidates.
- You can greet the coach, but do not be offended if NCAA rules prohibit them from acknowledging you.
- Seniors should do some prior research and be prepared to ask questions. Make the most of the opportunity to find out more about their school and rowing program.
- [Click to see the Rules Governing Contact with Coaches.](#)

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Coaches' Home Visits

Later in the process, as you get close to committing, the college coach may come watch a practice and then visit you at home and/or talk to your parents on the phone to make sure that there is a real understanding between the coach, you the prospective student-athlete and your family.

How Your High School Coach Can Help

An experienced high school coach can give you great insight into various college crew programs and their coaches.

- Your coach should be able to direct you to the schools and programs where he or she thinks you would be happy and successful.
- A trusted coach can advise on programs they think you should avoid.
- Ask your coach if he or she would write, email or talk to the coaches of the programs that you're interested in.

Having a well-respected club coach give you a strong recommendation can be invaluable in separating you from the other prospects in the recruiting process.

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Recruiting Consultants

Nowadays parents are very busy with their work and other obligations and can often be overwhelmed by the prospect of helping you through the college admissions and recruiting process. It is common for families in this position to reach out for the assistance of recruiting consultants.

- It is my experience that most recruiting consultants have very little knowledge about the process of recruiting rowers.
- They charge a lot of money for very basic advice.
- With very little effort you can successfully navigate your own way through the process using the resources already at your disposal (your current coach, this book, searching the Internet, etc.) without needing to use the services of paid consultants.

Simply improving your erg score, paying attention to your academics and emailing coaches will open the door to your dream school far more easily than can any recruiting consultant or service.

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Your Academics

College coaches seek recruits that are motivated not only in the boat but also in the classroom. Additionally, coaches need to be sure that each recruit will remain academically eligible throughout her college-career, and many coaches are incentivized accordingly. Thus, it is in coaches interest to find recruits who can succeed both in and out of the boat.

This section covers the following topics. Continue reading, or click on the link to go directly to a topic:

- [NCAA Initial Eligibility Center](#)
- [Grades, SAT, PSAT, Etc.](#)
- [Junior College](#)

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NCAA Initial Eligibility Center

The NCAA Eligibility Center, formerly known as the “Clearinghouse”, is how the NCAA determines if a student-athlete has met a minimum level of academic credits and achieved certain GPA and SAT or ACT scores.

You should inform your counselor that you intend to participate in varsity level athletics in college and that you need to meet NCAA Initial Eligibility requirements.

- Until an incoming college freshmen is certified by the NCAA Initial Eligibility Center, she cannot practice or compete with the rowing team or receive an athletics based scholarship.
- The eligibility determination is based on the GPA in fourteen core courses, the results of the SAT-I or ACT test, and proof of high school graduation.
- Start the NCAA Eligibility Center registration early in your junior year.
- Do not wait to do this, do it early enough so you have time left in your high school years to add any courses that you'll need to meet the specific NCAA course requirements.
- You need to request that your ACT or SAT scores be sent directly to the Eligibility Center, and that your transcripts be sent from your high school both after junior year, and after you graduate.
- You'll sign a form indicating that you have amateur status.

For more information about the Eligibility Center, and to start the process online and apply to be certified as an "initial qualifier", click this link to go to the website: [Eligibility Center](#). The Eligibility Center Forms can be accessed here: [EC Forms](#)

Complete information about this and other NCAA rules for prospective student-athletes is available from your high school guidance counselor and from the [NCAA website](#).

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Grades, SAT, PSAT, Applications, Etc.

Colleges place great importance on grades and standardized test scores. Become familiar with each institution's suggested secondary school curricula and testing requirements. Rowing training takes up a lot of time, but be careful not to neglect your academics.

- Take the SAT-I or ACT tests at times that will fit with the application process.
- Some institutions either prefer or require SAT-II tests as well, and you should be familiar with those requirements.
- Prepare for standardized tests by hiring a tutor or taking a local course.
- You can also buy books and search online for courses geared towards improving SAT scores.
- You have to decide if you're going to take the ACT, SAT, or both.
- Then you have to decide when to take them.
- Plan for at least two sittings prior to when college applications are due in the fall or winter of senior year. Two will give you enough time to get whatever help you need if a re-take is needed.

There is a charge for the tests. If you miss the registration deadlines you will have to pay late fees. If you register on time but then change test dates or locations, you will have to pay a fee. You are allowed to send your scores out to a few schools for free as long as you indicate at the time of registration which schools you want them sent to. The [NCAA Eligibility Center](#) can be listed as a school at the time of registration and it's free. Do it after the fact and it will cost you \$9.

The SAT tends to overshadow the PSAT. The PSAT, however, is an excellent opportunity for students to market themselves academically. A high score on the PSAT not only generates interest and recognition from colleges and universities, it can also provide scholarship opportunities.

Many students overlook the importance of the college application. Take time and care when preparing applications; fill them out thoroughly. Write essays that admissions officers will find interesting and insightful. Get recommendations from those teachers who know you both personally and academically.

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Junior College

If you haven't done as well academically as you wanted, or if cost is an issue, a junior college may provide an additional opportunity for you to improve your grade point average, then apply to a four-year school.

If you are in this situation, be sure to see your coach and guidance counselor for additional information about attending a junior college to satisfy the NCAA's requirements.

If you have been contacted by coaches from one or more four-year schools but must attend a junior college, be sure to meet the counseling personnel at the junior college to make sure that you meet admissions requirements and to guarantee that the courses you take at the junior college will transfer to the four-year school(s).

Orange Coast Community College in California may be currently the only junior college to offer a competitive rowing program.

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Your Racing Results

College coaches pay close attention to a rower's erg scores and racing results as they are indicative of a recruit's talent and ability to compete and contribute in the NCAA atmosphere.

- Some coaches only recruit rowers who have achieved certain erg scores.
- Other coaches are primarily interested in rowers who have attended a junior national team selection or high performance camp, or those who have competed at Youth Nationals, medaled at Scholastics or Stotes, etc.
- Other coaches are less picky and are attracted more to a rower's potential than to her past achievements.

In addition to looking at your best results, coaches can also look at your physical maturation in an attempt to assess your future development potential. All coaches want to see that in the course of four collegiate years his or her recruits will improve and remain enthusiastic and dedicated rowers.

Leadership & Awards

Coaches like leaders. Leaders are not necessarily the fastest rowers; they are, however, important ingredients to a team's success. Team captains are highly regarded for their leadership, dedication, and ability to motivate. A dedicated rower is not only bound to improve and contribute, she will also motivate others to train and compete with more intensity. As you already know, dedication, hard work and desire are necessary ingredients for rowing success. Make sure that your athletic profile includes your leadership positions and any awards or recognitions you've received (Most Improved, Most Inspirational, etc.). These are the things that can set you apart from the other applicants.

If you are a rising senior and a good student you should apply to be included on the [USRowing Scholastic Honor Roll](#). It's a useful thing to have on your resume.

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Part IV: Close the Deal

This section guides you through the final steps on your journey to become a recruited college rower.

Continue reading, or click on a link to go to a topic:

- [Be Aware of Deadlines](#)
- [Scholarships](#)
- [National Letter of Intent](#)
- [Signing Periods](#)
- [Applications and Early Decision](#)
- [The Ivy League and Likely Letters](#)
- [Congratulations! Two Schools Really Want You...](#)
- [You Still Haven't Been Recruited!](#)

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Be Aware of Deadlines

- Extend your list to include regular decision application deadlines.
- Include early decision application deadlines too, if you think this is an option that you will pursue.
- Your list should also include financial aid deadlines, and deadlines for any scholarships you're going to apply for through the school. These dates can vary so don't assume that every school has the same deadlines. You can find all of the information on each school's website.
- Incorporate key deadline dates into your list so you won't have to keep referring back to each website to remind yourself of them later.

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Scholarships

Only some Division I and II schools offer athletics based scholarships for rowing.

- Some athletic conferences, most notably the Ivy League, do not offer athletic scholarships at all. Ivy schools provide financial aid to their students, on the basis of need only.
- Just because you're being recruited, it does not mean that you're going to get a full scholarship to row. If you are an exceptional rower, and/or lucky, you may get a full ride, but the reality is athletic scholarships are scarce and there is a lot of competition for them.
- The maximum number of scholarships that the NCAA permits in Divisions I and II is an equivalent of twenty for the entire team, and many schools have fewer than this.
- Coaches can divide their scholarship budget so rowing scholarships can be provided on either a full or partial basis, so there may be more than twenty rowers on scholarship at any one time. Partial scholarships can be for any amount greater than zero but less than a full scholarship.
- Some coaches give NO scholarships to incoming student-athletes, preferring to wait until after freshman year to decide who should receive, and how much.
- A school can make a scholarship offer to a recruit at any time, and a recruit can commit to a school at any time. But such "verbal" commitments are not binding on either party.
- Only high school seniors can actually sign a binding scholarship offer.

After you've started communicating with the college coach, ask politely what their scholarship situation is and if you would be eligible for scholarship money. Athletics scholarships are separate from needs based and academic scholarships. If you have great grades, it's possible that you could be eligible for academic dollars.

To get a full ride, you have to be the best of the best, meaning you medaled at nationals, rowed in the US eight at junior worlds, have a great erg score, great grades, and high SAT scores.

(Continued on next page)

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Scholarships, Cont'd...

Often getting you into the college of your choice is the best a coach can do for a recruited athlete. Realistically your family should expect to contribute towards college expenses even if you are being recruited to join a Division I varsity rowing team.

- There is no such thing as a guaranteed four year scholarship.
- An athletic scholarship is a one-year contract between you and a Division I or Division II institution.
- A school can reduce or cancel a scholarship if you become ineligible for competition, fraudulently misrepresent yourself, quit the team or engage in serious misconduct.
- During the contract year, a coach cannot reduce or cancel your scholarship on the basis of your athletic ability, performance, or injury.
- An institution may choose to not renew a scholarship at the end of the academic term but they must notify you in writing and provide you an opportunity for a hearing.
- Scholarships can be renewed, increased, or even decreased throughout a student-athlete's years of eligibility.
- Athletic scholarships can only pay for tuition, required institutional fees, room, board, and required books. So an athletic scholarship does not pay for the full cost of attendance at a college; transportation, school supplies, laundry, and other incidentals cannot be covered.
- Under NCAA rules, student-athletes may be able to combine other sources of financial aid with an athletic scholarship in order to cover the full cost of attendance.

It is important to understand what college expenses your family is responsible for so you can arrange to pay those. Educational expenses can be paid with student loans and government grants, but it takes time to apply for these. Find out early so you can get something lined up.

Sometimes a student-athlete cannot accept a certain type of scholarship because of NCAA limitations. If you will be receiving other scholarships, let the coach and financial aid officer know so they can determine if you may accept additional dollars.

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National Letter of Intent

Most schools that offer rowing scholarships participate in the national Letter of Intent (NLI) program which is administered not by the NCAA, but by the Collegiate Commissioners Association.

- When you sign the NLI you sign a legally binding contract between the recruiting institution and yourself to attend the institution for one academic year in exchange for the institution awarding financial aid, including athletics aid, for one academic year.
- If a recruit who signs an NLI decides to go to another rowing school, there are severe penalties that restrict their ability to compete for or receive a scholarship at the second institution.
- Information on the NLI program is available by clicking www.national-letter.org.
- The NLI you signed with an institution is valid if the coach that recruited you leaves the institution with which you signed. This can be difficult for you as you more than likely have developed a relationship with the coach, and that coach is the face of the university and a big part of the reason you signed. However, please remember that you are going to college to get an education first and row second. If the university is a good fit for you academically and will give you a good education, honor your LOI and see how it plays out.
- A Qualified Release Agreement must be executed by the Director of Athletics (or a designee), your parent or legal guardian and yourself. Your coach does not sign the Qualified Release Agreement. Furthermore, your coach does not have the authority to release you from your National Letter of Intent obligations. You are going to have to get a release from the school you have signed with before you can talk to any other school.

Signing Periods

There are two signing periods for women's rowing.

- The Early Signing Period is typically for a week in the middle of November.
- The Regular Signing Period typically begins in the middle of April and extends through August until the fall semester or quarter begins.

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Applications and Early Decision

Plan to apply early (“early application” or “early decision”) and be prepared to select your top school by October 1 of your senior year if you need athletic department support.

- Many Division I coaches expect potential recruits to make commitments very early in the fall of their senior year which is also when the coaches have most influence on their schools' admissions departments.
- Applications are typically due November 1 or November 15 for early decision candidates.
- Decisions are announced in December.

If you do decide to apply as an early decision candidate, make sure you plan your college visits early enough to get them in before the application deadlines. If you leave it late and go through the application process before your visit only to find during your visit that you're not interested in that school, you've wasted the application fee and more important, your time in dealing with yet another application.

Supported (“flagged”, “tagged”), or Early Athletic Read applications are specific to the recruiting process at each school. For example Stanford's Early Athletic Read is also known as “Pink Envelope” – because the supported application is returned in a pink envelope, which flags Admissions to read it immediately. Other schools have similar application procedures. The coaches will turn in a Pink Envelope, or its equivalent, only when a) the student is highly desired and 100% sure of her decision, or b) when the student is seriously leaning towards the university, but is fearful of not being admitted, so needs to know before the Ivy schools' “likely letters” are issued. When a student does an Early Athletic Read, her application is usually read within two weeks of submission.

Coaches are happy to put their top candidates through the Early Athletic Read, Pink Envelope and likely letter process whenever possible. You just have to be decided on the school and have stellar grades and SATs before October of your senior year. If you really have your act together, you can essentially be admitted as early as the summer before your senior year.

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The Ivy League and Likely Letters

Ivy schools do not offer athletic scholarships, as their financial aid is based on need. This means that Ivy schools do not need to know which athletes are going to matriculate until the regular deadline in May.

However, scholarship schools need to know earlier than that. There are two notification deadlines, one in November and another in February, for student-athletes to inform universities whether they plan on accepting scholarships or not.

As an example, a student who has been offered an athletic scholarship to UCLA must inform UCLA by sometime in February whether she plans on attending. But if she also applied for financial aid at Brown, she needs to know before the regular deadline in May whether she has been granted a good package. So, to accommodate students in these situations, the Ivy schools issue likely letters. A likely letter informs the student-athlete if she is either likely or unlikely to be accepted to the Ivy school. The likely letter is essentially a formal letter of admission provided the candidate continues to do well in high school.

There are also deadlines at scholarship schools for students who have not applied for financial aid and who are not being offered scholarships. In these instances, the Ivy school will issue a likely letter to inform them of their options. Likely letters allow student athletes to make informed decisions about where to go to school, without forcing them to void an athletic scholarship or a chance to attend an Ivy League school.

Likely letters are issued by the Admissions Offices at each Ivy school.

For more information about intercollegiate athletics at, and early and regular admission to, Ivy League schools you should refer to the [Ivy League Admission Statement](#)

The Ivy League website, which is at www.ivyleaguesports.com, is linked to the general admission, financial aid and athletic websites at each Ivy institution.

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Congratulations! Two Schools Really Want You...

You are in the enviable position of being recruited by more than one school. The coaches at both schools really want you; you and your parents have gotten to know the coaches well, you like them, you like their schools and you like their crew programs. You can tell that they are looking forward to having you join their team. But you can pick only one. You've made your decision, but you're concerned about how the “losing” coach will respond when you deliver the bad news. Don't worry! It's part of the recruiting process that every coach goes through every year. They will be disappointed to not get your commitment, but it's part of the job, they'll deal with it and they'll move on to the next prospect on their list. You can help them by letting them know as soon as possible that you intend to accept the other school's offer – that way they have time to shift gears to try to secure their next priority. Be sure to ask the coach if he or she would still be willing to support you in the event that your application to your first choice school does not pan out.

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You Still Haven't Been Recruited?

You did not sign a Letter of Intent in the early signing period. The phone has not been ringing, and the letters have stopped coming. What do you do now? Is the dream of rowing in college over? No. But it is time to get busy.

- First step back and take a hard look at the caliber of college rowing that you are really capable of.
- Then contact some of the smaller schools that you may have missed the first time around.
- It may also be a good idea to focus your search on schools that are closer to home.
- Make a phone call to any coach that contacted you earlier in the process, and ask if there is any interest still. If not then ask the coach for any schools that he or she might recommend.
- Start a new list of schools. Keep it small.
- Email the coaches.
- About one week after emailing, call the coach - this is very important - it will show initiative and let the coach know that you are very motivated. If the coach is not available leave a message or voice mail and ask for a return call. Tell them you are following up on an email that you sent. You could use email – but at this critical stage, a phone call is better.
- If these coaches are not interested ask them if they could recommend any schools, and immediately follow-up with those schools.
- Ask your high school coach to make some calls to college coaches on your behalf.

Keep at it. Be persistent. You will succeed!

Row in College

A Recruiting Guide For Female Student-Athletes

Appendix A: The Rules

You become a “prospect” (prospective student-athlete) when you start classes for the ninth grade and that's when the NCAA rules regarding recruiting apply to you.

Your relatives or legal guardians are treated the same under NCAA recruiting rules as you, the prospect.

If a college coach or prospect violate recruiting rules, the recruit could be ruled ineligible to compete for the college involved.

There is a huge set of NCAA rules and regulations that college coaches have to abide by. If you're really interested, the entire rules manual is online at NCAA.org.

Here are the rules that cover some of the more common recruiting situations that we've discussed in this eBook. Continue reading, or click on the link to go directly to a topic::

- [Phone Calls](#)
- [Letters & Email](#)
- [Evaluations](#)
- [Contacts](#)
- [Official Visits](#)
- [Unofficial Visits](#)

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The Rules - Phone Calls

College coaches calling you:

- College coaches can only call you after July 1st of your junior year in high school (for Division II, the date is June 15th).
- After July 1 (June 15), the institution is allowed to make only one completed phone call per week; the phone call can be of any duration.
- You cannot get one phone call from the head coach and another from an assistant coach in the same week – only one call from the institution.
- Calls may be made by most athletic staff, but not student-athletes.

You calling college coaches:

- You can call a college coach at any point in your high school career.
- You can call as many times as you want.
- You can call whenever you want.
- You must be the one who initiates the phone call, not the coach.
- The college coach cannot return your phone call, unless it is after July of your junior year, and then only if he or she has not already used their allowed one call per week.

Exceptions to the one call per week limit are made:

- a) during the five days prior to your official visit;
- b) the day of an in-person, off-campus contact; and
- c) subsequent to your national letter of intent signing.

Instant messaging and text messaging are considered telephone calls and limited accordingly.

Division III has no such limits.

Row in College

A Recruiting Guide For Female Student-Athletes

The Rules - Letters & Email

- College coaches can send you emails, media guides or recruiting brochures, and general correspondence from September 1st of your junior year in high school.
- Before September 1st of your junior year coaches can send you only athletic questionnaires and summer camp brochures, and they can respond to requests for non-recruiting information.
- You can send letters and emails to college coaches at any point in your high school career as many times as you want, whenever you want.
- Currently Twitter and coaches' blogs are viewed the same as emails. When using facebook, coaches are not permitted to post on walls but can use the email/messenger system.
- After the calendar day on which you sign a National Letter of Intent, there is no limit on the forms of electronically transmitted correspondence sent to you or your parents or legal guardians by the institution with which you have signed.
- For an institution not using the National Letter of Intent, or if you are not eligible to sign a National Letter of Intent, there is no limit on the forms of electronically transmitted correspondence sent to you or you parents or legal guardians by that institution after the calendar day on which you sign the institution's written offer of admission and/or financial aid.

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The Rules - Evaluations

College coaches may observe you during practice or competition in order to evaluate your athletic ability.

- They can conduct evaluations at any point in your high school career.
- During the academic year they are permitted seven recruiting opportunities (contacts and evaluations), of which not more than three may be in-person off-campus contacts with you. (See The Rules – Contacts)
- There is no limit to the number of evaluations during the summer.

In Division II there are no limitations on the number of evaluations.

A college coach may not ask your coach to have the team conduct a specific workout or drill or in any way influence the conduct of your practice session.

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A Recruiting Guide For Female Student-Athletes

The Rules - Contacts

A college coach can only contact you off-campus and in person from July 1st (June 15th for Division II) of your junior year in high school. From that date:

- They can have a maximum of three in-person meetings with you and your relatives that take place off the college campus.
- These contacts can take place in your home, high school (prior permission of your principal is required), at a practice site, or at a competition site.
- Multiple contacts during the same day only count as one contact.
- If a college coach addresses a group of high school seniors following a practice session that would count as a contact for each one of the seniors listening to the coach. Non-seniors may not listen in at all, even on the periphery of the group, as this would constitute an illegal contact.

The rules for contacts at a competition site are very specific:

- A coach may not have contact or speak with you at a competition until the conclusion of your final event.
- If the competition takes place over a number of days, college coaches have to wait until your final day to speak with you.
- A coach may not have contact or speak with you at a competition until and after you've received formal clearance from your high school coach.
- The high school coach is not permitted to waive the rules that prevent contact during competition.
- Any face-to-face meeting between a college coach and you or your parents, during which any of you say more than "hello" is a contact.
- Even a simple comment from the coach like "good race" constitutes a contact.
- The college coach can have contact with your family at any time during competition, but each such contact counts against the allowed limit of three.
- If no contact is made between a coach and you or your parents, this is considered an [evaluation](#).

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The Rules - Official Visits

- You can take a total of five official visits that are paid for by schools during your high school career.
- You may only make one official visit to any given institution.
- The university can pay for everything; the transportation to and from the campus, lodging, three meals per day, and even admission to one athletic event.
- Recruits often stay with students from their specific team, and follow them around campus, getting a feel for what it is like to be a student-athlete.
- The school can also pay for your parent's meals, lodging and their transportation provided you traveled together by automobile.
- Additional event tickets may be reserved and purchased at face value by other family members accompanying you on a visit.
- The college cannot provide you with gifts of any kind including photos, t-shirts, etc.
 - [Click Here for More Information about Official Visits.](#)

The Rules - Unofficial Visits

- There is no limit on the number of unofficial visits allowed by the NCAA.
- You can take them at any time during your high school career.
- The college cannot pay, provide or compensate you for any part of an unofficial visit although you are permitted to stay in student housing with a student-athlete if you pay the regular institutional rate (frequently nothing for short-term guests).
- A school may provide you with three complimentary admissions to a campus athletics event on an unofficial visit.
 - [Click Here for More Information about Unofficial Visits.](#)

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Appendix B: Recommended Timeline

This suggested timeline makes the assumption that you have decided early in your high school career that you wish to eventually become a recruited college athlete. As mentioned before, you can still be recruited late in the process. The steps to be followed remain the same, you'll just have less time in which to do them.

Continue reading, or click on the link to go directly to a topic:

- [Freshman Year \(9th grade\)](#)
- [Sophomore Year – 10th Grade](#)
- [Junior Year – 11th Grade](#)
- [Senior Year - 12th Grade](#)

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Freshman Year (9th grade)

Meet with your guidance counselor early to plan your NCAA required core courses

- If you know that you want to be a student-athlete at a Division I or Division II program, it is never too soon to plan for the core courses required by the NCAA. Let your counselor know that you want to be an NCAA athlete.
- The number of required core course credits is 16. The standards require three years of high school math, Algebra I or higher. Plan your core courses early in your high school career.
- The NCAA Guide for the College Bound Student has a worksheet to plan out your high school courses and contains a wealth of information that you can use throughout your high school career and college search. [Download a copy from the NCAA website](#) and review it with your parents.
- Develop good classroom and study habits. Being a high school student athlete means that you must learn to manage your time well. You must learn to balance schoolwork, sports and social/family activities.

Attend a college summer camp

- You will find out how you compare with rowers from other programs.
- You will get the opportunity to visit a college campus.
- You will get the opportunity to be seen by the college coaches running the camp.

Review your grades from your first year of high school

- Would a college coach be impressed with them?
- Was your attendance good?
- Did you make progress from first semester to second semester?
- Are you on track with your core course requirements?
- If you need to improve your academics, get some tutoring or attend a summer school class.

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Sophomore Year – 10th Grade

August – May

Focus on Academics

This cannot be stressed enough. Continue to develop good classroom and study habits which will be very important at the next level.

- You will need to be a master of time management in order to meet the rigorous demands of a college curriculum, an aggressive athletic practice, racing and travel schedule, and the other obligations that come with being part of a college athletic program.
- Check your progress with your high school counselor. Are you on track to meet the NCAA core course requirements? If not, it's time to make adjustments.
- Consider taking the PSAT as practice in October of your sophomore year in anticipation of the the SAT or ACT your junior year. You have nothing to lose by taking the PSAT as a sophomore because scores are not reported to colleges and it gives you a chance to know what to expect when you take the more important qualifying tests later on. You must make arrangements through your school to take the PSAT. The test is administered each October, most likely at your school, but registration deadlines are in August and September.

Start a strategy NOW for making an informed college choice

- Start to make your list of colleges.
- Get your name out to those college coaches! It is time for you to initiate contact with the women's crew programs you might be interested in. Prepare a personal profile and send it to the head coaches of all the colleges on your list.
- Plan unofficial campus visits! You are allowed to make as many "unofficial" visits as you like before your senior year of high school. During your sophomore year, plan visits to the colleges on your list. These visits will have to be at your expense. [Click Here for More Information about Unofficial Visits.](#)

(Continued on next page)

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Sophomore Year, Cont'd...

- To arrange a visit, call the women's crew coach at the school you desire to visit and ask to meet with the coaching staff, an academic advisor and a professor from the major you intend to pursue in college. Ask if you can attend a practice and meet with the team afterwards. Ask lots of questions when meeting with the coaching staff and academic advisors. [Click Here for Questions, Questions, Questions.](#)
- Attend an early spring USRowing National Team ID camp in your local area – this is a great way to get your name in front of college coaches. It is also a prerequisite to being invited to a USRowing National Team Development or Selection camp in the summer.

June – July

- Race as much as you can. The more you race, the more experience you will get, which will make you a better rower or coxswain.
- Attend a USRowing development camp or join a summer club to experience new styles of coaching and see how you fit in with rowers from other backgrounds. College coaches make a point of visiting these camps and clubs to assess potential recruits.
- [Attend college summer camps.](#) This will give you a feel for the coaching styles of the coaches at each camp and also give you the opportunity to see many campuses. You will begin to find what qualities are important to you in a future school and this will help you narrow down your original list of schools.

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Junior Year – 11th Grade

Junior year is a very important year. This is the year that you must strive to do well academically. This is also the year when you'll want to really impress the coaches with your erg scores and on-water performances.

September

- Send out your first contact letters. [Review the Sample Initial Contact Email.](#)
- Ask your high school coach to write supporting letters to a few preferred colleges.
- Send coaches a copy of your fall racing schedule.
- Written contact by college coaches is allowed from September 1.
- Register with the [NCAA Initial Eligibility Center](#) ([forms online here](#), or your high school guidance counselor should have the forms).
- Register for the fall [ACT / SAT standardized tests](#). Most students take these tests at least twice ... try to avoid the spring dates, as they may conflict with your racing season. Request that your ACT/SAT test scores be sent to the NCAA Eligibility Center (there is a box on the application form that you check for this).
- Familiarize yourself with the NCAA admission / eligibility requirements. Click this link to go to the [NCAA Eligibility Center](#) website.

(Continued on next page)

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A Recruiting Guide For Female Student-Athletes

Junior Year, Cont'd...

January -- April

- Send coaches your spring racing schedule.
- Prepare a [short video clip](#) to be sent out when requested.
- Plan [campus visits](#) to as many schools as possible this spring and summer.
- Some schools have "[Junior Days](#)" during the spring season – be proactive and write a letter to the coach and ask about them. Junior Days are "unofficial" and the college cannot pay for any part of the visit.
- Attend a spring USRowing National Team ID camp in your local area – this is a great way to get your name in front of college coaches.
- Take the SAT or ACT at the end of your junior year.

Summer

- Send out letters or emails to college programs. Tell them about your high school junior year season.
- If possible, attend a USRowing National Team Selection or Development Camp, or attend a competitive nationally-ranked summer club. At these camps and clubs you will be able to gauge yourself against some of the nation's best rowers and coxes. College coaches make a point of visiting to assess potential recruits.
- [Phone contact from college coaches](#) is permissible from July 1st.
- Select which schools you want to visit and apply to.
- Start work on your application essays.
- Ask one of your junior year teachers to write a letter of recommendation for you.
- Start or update your rowing resume and online profile.
- Apply to be included on the [USRowing Scholastic Honor Roll](#).

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Senior Year - 12th Grade

Do Not Let Up Academically

You will be very busy this fall. You have your college visits, applications, and SATs or ACTs together with your regular school work and rowing practices. You must plan ahead. Know your deadlines and make sure you communicate with your teachers, counselors, coaches and, most importantly, your parents!

September

- Review core academic requirements with your guidance counselor. Make sure you are on track
- Send coaches your fall racing schedule.
- Select one or two top priority schools early in the fall. Coaches use whatever influence they have at admissions in direct correlation to your attractiveness as a candidate and to the strength of your commitment to attend if admitted.

October – November

- You probably will need to pick your top school by October 1. [Early applications](#) are due in November; decisions announced in December.
- Communicate your decision to the coach at that college and tell the other coaches that you have selected another program as your early choice. If appropriate you should strongly reiterate your interest in their programs. They understand the limitations of a system that forces you to make a decision so early, and most will do what they can for you in the regular decision process if your early action choice doesn't pan out.
- Take the October or November SAT I and/or II as needed. Arrange for your scores to be reported to all schools on your short list, in case you need to apply regular decision.
- Send your early action application, updated transcripts and test scores in on time (usually by November 1.) If it's the practice at that school, make sure that the coach "flags" or "tags" your application to indicate your recruiting status.

(Continued on next page)

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Senior Year, Cont'd...

- Thank everyone who's helped you, including your junior crew coach, all of the college coaches, your teachers and your parents.
- Be prepared for the possibility of receiving a "thin envelope." Make sure you have the application materials for your other schools, prepare your teachers and counselors for additional references, and don't plan to be away during the winter holidays—you may be busy filing additional applications.

December

- Regular review applications are usually due in December, with decisions announced in April.

April – August

- Regular signing period.

Official Visits

- Go on [official recruiting visits](#) if they are offered to you.
- Prepare for your visits with a comprehensive [list of questions](#).
- Be prepared for any questions the college may have for you.

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Appendix C: Questions, Questions, Questions

Choosing a college is probably the hardest decision you've had to make. There are lots of questions to be asked as you negotiate your way through the process. This section includes several examples that can help you as you prepare to meet college coaches and rowers and to visit campuses.

Continue reading, or click on the link to go directly to a topic:

- [Questions to Ask Yourself](#)
- [Questions to Ask Coaches](#)
- [Questions to Ask Team Members](#)
- [Questions to Ask Admissions](#)
- [How to Respond to Recruiters](#)

Row in College

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Questions to Ask Yourself

- Is this the right school for me?
- Does it have the academics I need?
- Will I have a legitimate opportunity to contribute to the team?
- How far do I want to be from home?
- Am I really interested in this school? If not, tell the school as soon as possible.
- Do I feel comfortable with the coaches?
- What type of reputation do the coaches and the program have?
- When do I want to decide on a college?
- Have my parents had an opportunity to visit with the coaches or view the college and its facilities?
- Are my grades of the caliber to succeed at this college?
- Have I visited with my high school counselor regarding college entrance requirements?
- Have I taken the ACT or SAT test? If so, have I forwarded the results to the college that I'm interested in?
- Have I forwarded a copy of my high school transcripts to all the colleges that I'm interested in?
- Have I written to the admissions offices to express my interest in their schools, and have I sent them official high school transcripts after both semesters of my junior year and updated SAT or ACT scores? Did I let the coaches know that I've done this?

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Questions to Ask Coaches

These examples of questions to ask coaches have been sorted into the following groups:

- [Academics](#)
- [Team](#)
- [Training Environment](#)
- [Recruiting](#)
- [Other](#)

Academics

- What kind of academic support does the college provide to the rowers?
- What is the team grade point average?
- What is the team graduation rate?
- What percentage of rowers on scholarship graduate?
- What are some of the majors of team members?
- Is my proposed course of study compatible with the time demands of being a varsity athlete on this program?
- Do you have required study sessions?
- Do the rowers receive priority registration, enabling them to register for courses before other undergraduate students? (When student-athletes register early, class and practice conflicts can be eliminated.)

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Team

- What has been the success of your program over the past several years?
- What is the most important thing you look for in an athlete who is considering your team?
- Who are the coaches in your program and what are their previous experiences and responsibilities?
- How would you best describe your coaching style?
- Do you have a lightweight team?
 - If so, are they eligible for financial assistance?
 - If not, can lightweights succeed on your team?
- What is the preferred height for athletes on your team?
- What is the shortest height you would consider for a rower to make a priority boat?
- What is the preferred weight for athletes on your team?
- Do you recruit coxswains?
- What qualities does your team look for in its coxswains?
- What 2k erg score do you require from a recruited athlete?
- Describe the ways in which Freshmen are integrated into your team.
- Describe some of the team building activities provided for your athletes.
- Who are the leaders on the team, and how are they determined?
- What is the role of the captains on your team?
- Describe the role of goal-setting, at the individual and team levels.
- Describe the current team goals.
 - Is there a team mission?
 - How are the mission and goals determined?

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Training Environment

- At what time of the day do you typically practice?
- How long does it take to get to the boathouse from campus?
- Describe the body of water upon which you practice.
- For how many weeks are you off the water from September through May?
- Describe your indoor training facilities.
- Do you take a winter-break trip? If so, where?
- How many rowers will you take on your trip?
- Are erg scores posted for all athletes to see?
- Describe the type and role of strength training in the program.
- Does the coaching staff conduct regular one-on-one meetings with the athletes?
- Does your team train in small boats?
- Are sculling opportunities available to your athletes?
- What is your policy regarding freshman participation?

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Recruiting

- How many incoming rowers (coxes) are you recruiting?
- Where do I stand on your recruiting list?
- What are my scholarship opportunities?
- What is the average size of scholarships in your program?
- If I am offered a scholarship, what percentage of room, board, and tuition and fees will it cover?
- Is my scholarship guaranteed for four years?
- Will the scholarship cover a fifth year if necessary?
- Does the financial aid or scholarship cover summer school?
- A scholarship is guaranteed for one year. How is it renewed?
- Under what circumstances would my scholarship be reduced or canceled?
- What are the academic criteria tied to maintaining the scholarship?
- What scholarship money is available if I suffer an athletics career-ending injury?
- Will my scholarship be maintained if there is a change in coaches?

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Other

- What happens if I'm injured and cannot participate the rest of the year?
- If I am seriously injured while practicing or competing, who is responsible for my medical expenses?
- Is medical insurance required for my participation?
- Is medical insurance provided by the college? (You may be required to provide proof of insurance.)
- What is your policy regarding summer rowing?
- How many of your former rowers have had the opportunity to row on national teams?
- When does your (the head coach's) contract end?
- How long do you intend to stay? (The answer could be helpful. If the coach leaves, does this change your mind about the school/program?)

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Questions to Ask Team Members

- What is the morale of the team?
- How well do the athletes get along with each other?
- Does the team like the staff?
- Is the coach interested in academics?
- Do the athletes really have to go to all classes?
- How long is practice?
- Which other schools did you consider?
- Why did you pick this school?
- Would you go to this school if you had to choose again?
- What is the average class size?
- Are the professors accessible?
- Do the athletic dept. tutors do a good job?
- How are coxes treated?
- Are there many injured athletes on this team?
- What kind of injuries are most prevalent?
- Are smaller or lighter athletes given opportunities to succeed?
- What is a typical day for a student-athlete? (The answer will give you a good idea of how much time is spent in class, practice, study and travel. It also will give you a good indication of what coaches expect.)
- What are the dorms like?
- How many students per room?
- Are the dorms co-ed?
- Do student-athletes live on campus all four years?

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Questions to Ask Admissions

- What is the average class size and ratio per professor?
- Who teaches classes? (Professors, teacher assistants)
- What is the enrollment of the college?
- How good is the department in my major?
- How many students are in the department?
- What credentials do faculty members hold?
- What are graduates of the program doing after school?
- What percent of graduates from my major receive jobs within three months of graduation?
- How many fraternities and sororities are available?
- What are the housing policies?
- May I sit in on a class in my major?
- What academic support programs are available to student-athletes?
- If I have a diagnosed and documented disability, what kind of academic services are available?
- Is summer school available?
- If I need to take summer school, will it be paid for by the college?

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How to Respond to Recruiters

- Always be courteous.
- Don't play hard to get or make false pretensions of interest. Let the college know where you stand.
- Respond to requests for information (questionnaires, academic information, and your summer schedule) as soon as possible.
- If you are interested in a college, don't hesitate to make the first move via a telephone call or an introductory email.
- Keep all appointments. If you have scheduled a time to visit with a recruiter, don't neglect to reschedule a time if you can't attend a meeting or visit.
- Thank all coaches for their interest, even if you have decided not to consider their college.
- Thank-you notes after unofficial and official visits leave recruiters and coaches with a positive image of you as a person.

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Appendix D: Quick Parent Notes

- Rowing will not overcome poor grades. Make sure that your daughter keeps hitting the books.
- Coaches and admissions overwhelmingly prefer that the rower is their primary contact, as this indicates initiative and desire on her part. However it is acceptable for you to represent your rower when situations and questions arise that are best addressed by a parent.
- Become familiar with NCAA recruiting guidelines and make sure that everyone involved complies with them. The last thing you need is for your daughter and/or her current and future teammates to be penalized.
- Do not rely on second-hand information. If you have questions, contact the college coach and speak directly to him or her.
- Make sure you have a clear understanding of the timing of when different activities need to happen so your rower doesn't miss any important deadlines.

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Appendix E: The 10 Things You Must Do

1. Begin as early as you can to think about what kind of academic, athletic and personal experience you want to have in college.
2. Start learning about institutions in which you may be interested as early as you can. Pick the school first, the rowing program second.
3. Visit colleges as early in the process as possible.
4. Contact coaches. Be persistent. Ask lots of questions. Assume nothing.
5. Immediately respond to coaches' requests for information.
6. Show genuine interest in the college program.
7. Keep coaches updated with any progress you have made in the boat, on the erg and in the classroom.
8. Become familiar with application deadlines for early and regular admission and be prepared to file a full admission application in a timely manner.
9. Become familiar with the institutions' suggested secondary school curricula and testing requirements. Take the SAT-1 or ACT tests at times that will fit with the application process.
10. Apply to be certified as an "initial qualifier" through the NCAA Eligibility Center.

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Appendix F: The 10 Things You Must Not Do

1. Do not wait until the last minute to begin the recruiting process. Start now.
2. Do not wait for coaches to make the first move. You must be proactive.
3. Do not address your initial contact letter to a college coach with: Dear Coach. Make sure you address the coach by name (and spell it correctly).
4. Do not stretch the truth about your academic standing, athletic abilities, or accomplishments.
5. Do not have your parents write your emails for you.
6. Do not make disparaging comments about college coaches or crews at a competition. Coaches do talk to each other.
7. Do not make disparaging remarks about your current team or coach. College coaches will not recruit “bad apples.”
8. When asked why you do this sport, do not say: "All my friends do it" or "I've been doing it so long that I don't know how to stop." Don't tell the coach how much you hate erging.
9. Do not allow your judgment to be unduly influenced by the first coach to take an interest in you.
10. Do not allow your judgment to be unduly influenced by your friends. The choice of college has to be YOUR decision.

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Appendix G: Useful Links

- <http://www.ecampustours.com/collegeplanning/default.htm>
- [**NCAA College Bound Student Guide**](#)
- [Ivy League Admission Statement](#)
- www.ivyleaguesports.com
- www.ncaa.org
- www.beRecruited.com
- <http://vespoli.com/recruiting/>
- www.Petersons.com
- www.collegeboard.com
- www.row2k.com
- [USRowing](#)
- <https://web1.ncaa.org/eligibilitycenter/common/>
- [Eligibility Center Forms](#)
- [USRowing Scholastic Honor Roll](#)
- <http://athletesbooks.com>

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