

Just like with academics, junior year is the most important year for volleyball athletes who want to compete at the next level. As of June 15 after your sophomore year, you're allowed to communicate with coaches, so the floodgates are open and you will likely be speaking/texting/emailing with multiple coaches.

Also, the NCAA allows you to take both unofficial and official college visits after August 1 of your sophomore year, so this is a big priority for high school juniors.

Watch the video above and review the checklist to see what Dianne DeNecochea, our recruiting expert, says about the steps you should take to find a school that's a good fit for volleyball and academics.

JUNIOR YEAR CHECKLIST

- Have a positive and strong mindset! Work hard in the classroom, on the court and in your recruiting process to find a great fit. This is the most important year of the college volleyball recruiting process.
- Set yourself up for success. You did some preliminary work your freshman and sophomore years creating your target list and emailing coaches. They read your emails, watched your video, and, most likely, watched you play at tournaments...even though they couldn't communicate with you. If you're just starting the recruiting process now, it's ok. Review the Freshman and Sophomore Checklists and jump in.
- Continue working through your target list. Arrange in your order of preference and communication level with the school. Keep track of all communication between you and the coaches. Touch base with them every 2-3 weeks.
- Give yourself another social media checkup. When college coaches are recruiting you, they will check your social media accounts. If they see things that shine a negative light (as stated in the Freshman Checklist), they may stop recruiting you.
- Attend camps the summer before your junior year. You probably already booked camps by June 15th, but you can still contact the coaches of the camps. It's a great excuse to touch base. Ask these questions: Do they need your position in your grad year? Are they interested in you for their program? What is the offer on the table (full scholarship, partial, walk-on, etc)?
- Attend spring and winter college clinics and showcases. Many schools hold clinics to have more opportunities to see players in action. There are also recruiting showcases, which can be good too but can also get expensive. If you're attending a college clinic, make sure it's at a school you're interested in. Email them before the clinic to let coaches know you will be there and are excited.
- Take unofficial (and official) visits beginning August 1 before your junior year. Official visits (where the school pays) are usually later in the recruiting process, but unofficial visits are good to arrange with the coaches when there is interest on both sides. A great time to visit is during their fall college season or during spring practices. See if you can picture yourself there.

- ❑ When talking to a school about a scholarship offer, clarify the different types and what is covered. For example, is it full, partial, walk-on? Does it cover tuition for a fifth year, summer school tuition, medical expenses? Are there need-based and merit-based options available? Know this before you attend summer camps and/or take unofficial visits to be sure it's OK for you and your family. Otherwise, you can gracefully pull out of camps and not visit because it's not a fit in that respect. This process can be expensive, so each visit or camp needs to make sense. Coaches understand.
- ❑ Talk with coaches about where you stand on their list. This can be done in person during campus visits, on the phone, via email or text. This will help you narrow down your list.
- ❑ Understand the timeline for when the schools on your list want to make a decision. Are they in a rush, in no hurry, have an offer out to another player and you're next on the list if she says no? If you have an offer on the table, your timeline speeds up, and they need to know that too.
- ❑ Stay in touch often, and learn as much as you can about the coaching staff, their philosophies and coaching style. Get to know them. Communication and learning is key. Talk to former players, if possible, to learn more about the coach and school. You will spend so much time with the coaches and your teammates, you will be miserable if it's not a good fit in that area!
- ❑ Register with the NCAA Eligibility Center. You'll eventually need to provide transcripts and test scores (after you take the SAT or ACT).
- ❑ Register to take the SAT/ACT. Once you get your scores back, you need to send them to the NCAA Eligibility Center. Coaches who you are talking back and forth to during the recruiting process will probably want these scores too.
- ❑ Stay focused on your classes, and keep your studies a high priority. Academics are very important your junior year. This is true for all college-bound students in general. For a student-athlete, your grades are an important consideration for coaches. If they don't have to worry about your academics, they can focus on

CHECK OUT THE OTHER COLLEGE CHECKLISTS

Freshman Year Checklist - www.theartofcoachingvolleyball.com/freshman-checklist

Sophomore Year Checklist - www.theartofcoachingvolleyball.com/sophomore-checklist

Senior Year Checklist - www.theartofcoachingvolleyball.com/senior-checklist



you as a person and a player. This will open up more college volleyball opportunities for you.