

TIPS ON COLLEGE RECRUITING

The Thoughts of an Experienced DIII Softball Coach

1. **Do your homework!** Research schools that interest you (sports, academics, location, size, class size, resources for students and student-athletes). If you don't know what interests you, google all different types of schools to and see what sparks your interest!
2. **Take Action!** Don't just play your season wait to be seen and offered a scholarship or spot. Statistically, there are not enough scholarships and DI roster spots available for everyone. Make sure your team is attending showcases, but don't underestimate camps. You can also reach out to coaches via email (see tip #4).
3. **Take advantage of camps, clinics and showcases.** Colleges host off season camps and clinics for recruits all the time. And sometimes these camps are more useful than showcases, because you get to interact with coaches and be sure to get on their radar and show off your skills. I can watch you play in 5 travel games at a showcase and you can get walked every time and don't get a single ball hit to you in the field.
4. **Reach Out!** That doesn't mean just sending interest emails and "come see me play at _____ showcase" emails. Have a great subject line, and do your research about the school and coach. Don't send out a mass email. We can recognize mass emails, and they often get deleted. Why would we invest in someone who can't take the time to look into our school, spell our name right, etc?
5. **Be Honest with Yourself.** Have an honest conversation with yourself, your coaches, and peers to see where people think you may fit talent-wise. Keep in mind that some DIII schools can compete with DI schools and vice versa.
6. **Have a Plan.** Don't blindly follow a college or a travel ball coach. Once you figure out what YOU want in your softball an academic career, create a plan for yourself so that you have a great college experience. This is your process and will ultimately be your decision.
7. **This is YOUR process!** Take control of it. Be willing to ask coaches tough questions that you may be nervous to hear the answer: "Where do I fit in for your recruiting class?" or "Am I a viable candidate athletically and academically?"
8. **YOUR PARENTS CAN MAKE OR BREAK YOU.** It's unfortunate, but it is true. Especially in the landscape of college athletics. Coaches are getting fired left and right from parent complaints. We want to welcome great talent and people into our programs, as well as great families. In the recruiting process, we understand that there will be some parent involvement, but like I said in tip #7, this is YOUR process, not your parents' process.
9. **Remember STUDENT-athlete.** How much do academics mean to you? If your education is a priority, understand the time commitments needed for each level of play. Ie: DI will sometimes change class schedule to fit around practice, and miss classes for games.
10. **Once you've gotten some responses, do your homework, again!** If you ask a coach "can I major in (fill in the blank) and they say yes, you should go research the current and past team rosters. Are there previous players with the major you are interested in? While you are there, check the rosters for player retention. Lots of quitting and transfers can be a red flag.
11. **Remember, it's just a game.** As much as you love it now, at the end of the day softball is a game. Your college decision is important for reasons outside of softball. What is important to you and why? Do you want a certain type of career path? Is being close to your family important to you? Are you willing to sacrifice class time for softball?