

# Portland City United Soccer Club

## College Information

Updated May 17, 2020

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Portland City United Soccer Club is committed to providing our student athletes with the resources, information, and support needed to find the right school to continue their soccer experience beyond the club and high school levels.

Our College Information packet is designed to help players and families navigate the college search and recruitment process, answering questions such as: When should I start looking at schools? What factors should I consider in the college search process? How and when should I connect with coaches and schools? What are the rules for NCAA and college athletics?

As you begin your college search process, be sure to involve your coaches, counselors, academic advisors, teachers, parents, and the Portland City United staff. If you have any questions or need assistance, please reach out to our club director, Shaun Figueiredo, at [shaun@pcusc.org](mailto:shaun@pcusc.org).



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## College Search Process

### Putting It Into Perspective

Keep in mind that only a small percentage of players move on from high school and club athletics to play at the collegiate level. Additionally, athletic scholarships are typically only available and offered to a handful of student athletes at each school, with full-rides (tuition, room & board, and books) being extremely rare. Merit & need based financial aid and academic scholarships are far more prevalent for student athletes looking to play at the next level, so maintaining good grades and focusing on academics is key to playing soccer beyond high school.

Only a small percentage of players are actively recruited and sought out by coaches without initiating the contact themselves. In reality, the vast majority of high school athletes need to recruit themselves and connect with coaches by creating a list of schools and a resume, writing letters and emails to coaches, attending ID camps and participating in showcases, editing game film into highlight videos, and maintaining high academic and personal standards.

Players should prioritize academics, cost, and a career after collegiate athletics over being solely determined to play NCAA Division I soccer on an athletic scholarship. By starting the college search process early, being thoughtful about their goals, and staying persistent in communication with admissions officers, coaches, and school counselors, players can find the right program to continue their soccer journey and prepare for life after college.

### Common Falsehoods

- If you're good enough, coaches will come to you without any effort on your part to initiate contact.
- Good players always get athletic scholarships, and if you're talented grades don't matter.
- NCAA Division I is the only competitive level of play, and it is far superior to other levels.
- Playing club soccer guarantees that I will play at the next level, get recruited, and get a scholarship.
- If a coach doesn't immediately reply to my letter, email, or phone call, then they are not interested.
- If I haven't committed to a program early, it is too late to find a school and play college soccer.



## College Search Process

### School Factors to Consider

- Academics
  - Undergraduate Programs
  - Job Placement
  - Internship Programs
  - Networking
  - Graduate School Placement
  - Alumni Networks
- Cost
  - In-State or Out-Of-State?
  - Financial Aid Availability
  - Academic Scholarships
  - Athletic Scholarships
  - Room & Board, Books, Additional Costs
- Location
  - Close to Home or Far Away?
  - Proximity to Family, Friends, & Support Networks
- Size & Environment
  - Large Student Population or Small?
  - Public School or Private?
  - Campus Culture



## College Search Process

### Soccer Program Factors to Consider

- Collegiate Level
  - NCAA Division I, Division II, Division III
  - NAIA
  - Junior College, Community College
  - Club Soccer & Intramurals
- Program Level
  - Conference Strength, Conference Rankings
  - National Rankings, Program History, NCAA Tournament Appearances
- Coaching Staff
  - Consistent or High Turnover?
  - How Many Years at the School?
  - Coach Background & Resume
  - How Many Coaches / Size of Staff
- Current Roster
  - Roster Size, Number in Each Class
  - Number of Incoming Freshman
  - Playing Time, Level of Competition
  - Impact Freshman or Develop and Compete?
  - Player Backgrounds? Local, In-State, National, International?
  - Reserve or JV Team?
- Style of Play
  - Possession or Counter-Attack?
  - High Pressure or Deep Defending?
  - How Will You Fit In?
- Facilities & Level of Support/Funding
  - Overall Athletic Facilities & Funding
  - Soccer Specific Facilities & Level of Funding



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## College Search Process

### Making a List

Players should begin making a list of potential schools during their Freshman year. The initial list should include a large number of schools from a variety of levels. The list should include some schools that would be a reach, some schools that would be realistic, and some schools that would be safe as a fall-back option. Over time, the list can be adjusted and narrowed down as players begin to decide on their major, communicate with coaches, and visit schools.

For a complete list of every college in the United States sponsoring a varsity soccer team, see the following link: <http://scholarshipstats.com/soccer.html>. The website is sorted by each state, and it also lists the following information for each program: level of play (NCAA DI, DII, DIII, NAIA, NJCAA), roster size, average athletic scholarship per player between all sports the school offers, annual tuition and fees for in-state and out-of-state, room and board costs, average amount of financial aid assistance, average SAT Math scores for admittance, and the percentage rate of admittance out of all that apply.

We highly recommend that players engage their club and high school coaches early in the process of selecting a school and making a list of potential schools, so they can get feedback on which schools would be a reach, which would be realistic, and which would be safe fall-back options.



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## College Preparation Timeline

### Freshman Year

- Start planning by researching schools and athletic programs.
- Create a student athlete resume and an initial list of 20-30 potential schools.
- Coordinate with your high school counselors & academic advisors to take courses that match your school's list of approved core classes.
- Research Advanced Placement (AP) and college prep courses for your Sophomore year.
- Focus on maintaining a high GPA and developing good time management skills & study habits.
- Look for clubs, volunteer opportunities, and other extra-curricular activities to participate in.

### Sophomore Year

- Update your student athlete resume and list of schools.
- Continue to focus on maintaining a high GPA, time management skills, and good study habits.
- Register and complete the PSAT and/or PACT in preparation for the SAT and ACT tests.
- Use game film to edit highlights and short clips together into a 5-10 minute video.
- Visit college campuses, take tours, and talk to students. Research school and athletic websites.
- Sign-up as an interested / potential student athlete on the school's website to join their mailing list and receive additional information.
- Coordinate with your high school counselors & academic advisors to discuss next steps, potential majors to study, and ensure you're taking the appropriate classes.
- Research financial aid, scholarships, and educational requirements.
- Begin writing cover letters and/or emails to college coaches. Ask club and high school coaches for letters of recommendation.
- Research and look for multi-school or school-specific ID Camps for spring break or summer.



## College Preparation Timeline

### Junior Year

- Update your student athlete resume, list of schools, & highlight videos. Narrow the list of schools.
- Continue to focus on maintaining a high GPA, time management skills, and good study habits.
- Register with the NCAA Eligibility Center & NAIA Eligibility Center.
- Register for the SAT and/or the ACT. Take AP Exams (if you're taking AP classes). Research opportunities for high school / college joint enrollment credit. Take TOEFEL exams (for students with English as a second language).
- Follow-up with your high school counselors & academic advisors to discuss next steps, potential majors to study, and ensure you're still taking the appropriate classes. Review your admission applications and inquire about your questions and concerns
- Continue writing cover letters and/or emails to college coaches. Be persistent and follow-up with coaches through emails, mailings and phone calls. Ask club and high school coaches for letters of recommendation.
- Visit college campuses, take tours, and talk to students. Research school and athletic websites. Attend college information programs, such as College Fairs or On-Campus Events.
- Sign-up as an interested / potential student athlete on the school's website to join their mailing list and get additional information.
- Research financial aid, scholarships, and educational requirements.
- You can begin to receive calls from college coaches on July 1 of the Summer before your Senior Year.

### Senior Year (Fall)

- Update your student athlete resume, list of schools, & highlight videos. Narrow the list of schools.
- Continue to focus on maintaining a high GPA, time management skills, and good study habits.
- Register for the SAT and/or the ACT (or re-take the exams if needed). Take AP Exams (if you're taking AP classes). Research opportunities for high school / college joint enrollment credit. Take TOEFEL exams (for students with English as a second language).
- Stay in contact with any and all potential coaches and update them with any new information.
- Visit college campuses, take tours, and talk to students. Attend college information programs, such as College Fairs or On-Campus Events. Setup official or unofficial visits to your likely schools.
- Follow-up with your high school counselors & academic advisors to discuss next steps, potential majors to study, and ensure you're still taking the appropriate classes. Review your admission applications and inquire about your questions and concerns.
- Begin application process in September / October. Request referrals from coaches and teachers.
- Research financial aid, scholarships, and educational requirements.

### Senior Year (Winter & Spring)

- Continue to communicate with the coaches of your top schools.
- Evaluate and review your top schools and options. Setup final visits.
- Complete and file the FAFSA & apply for financial aid.
- Finalize your college decision and notify the coaches of the schools that you did not select.
- Sign National Letter of Intent (for scholarship athletes).





## Connecting with Schools & Coaches

There are several options for players to connect with schools and coaches. Players should utilize a variety of methods depending on the proximity of the school, preferences of the coaching staff, timing of communication in the annual calendar, etc. Be persistent and remember that coaches are receiving and evaluating a high number of potential player emails, letters, phone calls, and videos. They may not reply immediately, so it is important to follow-up with schools and coaches that you are seriously considering. Below are some of the common methods to connect with coaches, along with samples and tips for each approach.

### Sample Cover Letter / Email

Name:

Address: City, State Zip

Home Phone Number:

Cell Phone Number:

Email Address:

Date:

Coach:

Name of College:

Address:

Dear (Coach's Name):

My name is [Name] from [insert club / team name], and I am writing to express my interest in attending [College Name] as a student athlete. I am completing my [Class] year and have a cumulative GPA of [X.X] on a 4.0 scale. I will graduate in [20XX], and I have been taking primarily college preparatory classes and AP classes.

In the course of researching potential schools, I have concluded that [College Name] has the type of academic and athletic programs that I intend to pursue after graduation from high school. Accordingly, [College Name] is on my final list of potential colleges.

Your soccer program and style of play is very appealing to me, and I believe my leadership, attitude, and skills would allow me to contribute to the ongoing success of the [College Program Name].

I have included the following documents and information: my resume, copy of transcripts, test scores, references, and a highlight video.

My team, [team name], will be playing in the [Tournament / Showcase Name] on [Dates], and I will follow up with a link to our game schedule once it has been finalized. I'm also planning on attending your upcoming ID camp on [Camp Dates]. I hope you can make it to the [Tournament / Showcase Name], and I also look forward to seeing the campus and meeting the coaching staff at the ID Camp.

Please send me additional information about your program, as well as any suggestions you have on how to best prepare for attendance at (Name of School) in the fall of (Grad Year), at your convenience. Best of luck in your upcoming match vs [Opponent Name] and thanks for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Name

Contact Information



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## Connecting with Schools & Coaches

### Tips for Cover Letters & Emails

- Proofread and review your letters and emails prior to sending to ensure proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
- Do not bcc a single mass email to multiple coaches. Send an individual and customized email to the coaches/schools you're interested in.
- Do some research on the school and soccer program in advance.
- Include a note in the email such as "good luck in your upcoming spring match against xxxx" or "congratulations on your second place finish in the conference this past season" to show you're familiar with the program.
- Notify the coach of any upcoming league games, tournaments, or showcases you'll be participating in and send them the schedule. Include your jersey number in the email or in your resume.
- Look for upcoming ID camps and express interest in attending or notify them of your attendance.
- Indicate what specific area of study / undergraduate program you're interested in at the school.
- Don't repeat every aspect of your resume, but highlight the skills, accomplishments, attributes you have that make you a good fit for the school and men's soccer program.
- Ask your club or high school coaches to send letters of recommendation along with your correspondence, or get their permission to list them as references.



### Connecting with Schools & Coaches

#### Sample Student Athlete Resume

**Shaun Figueiredo**  
Class of 2020



**Contact Information**  
**Address**  
12345 Avenue Ave.  
Portland, OR, 97232  
**Email**  
shaun@emailaddress.com  
**Phone**  
503 - 555 - 5555

**Team Information**  
**Portland City United Soccer Club**  
Jersey #3  
**Portland High School**  
Jersey #6

**Position Information**  
**Primary Positions**  
Right Back  
Center Back  
Defensive Midfielder

**Soccer**  
**Portland City United (2012-Present)**  
2017-2018 Season  
Winter League Record 7W - 2T - 1L  
Second Place Finish in Winter League  
Goals Allowed Average: 0.85 per game  
State Cup Quarter-Finalist  
Four Assists - Two Goals  
2018-2019 Season  
Winter League Record 6W - 1T - 3L  
Fourth Place Finish in Winter League  
Five shutouts in Winter League  
State Cup Semi-Finalist  
Three Goals - Three Assists  
**Portland High School (2016-Present)**  
2018-2019 Season  
Varsity Starter in All League & Cup Games  
League Record 10W - 2T - 4L  
2nd Place Finish in PIL  
State Championship Semi-Finalist  
Two Goals - One Assist  
PIL Second Team All-League

**Academics**  
GPA: 3.5  
SAT: 1330  
AP Biology, United States Government and Politics, Human Geography  
College Interests: Finance & Economics

**Volunteer Activities & Clubs**  
Portland HS Constitution Team (2018-2019)  
PCU Soccer Camp Coach (2016-Present)  
Portland Food Bank (2014-2018)

**References**  
**John Doe - Portland City United**  
john@emailaddress.com - 503-555-1234  
**Bryan Smith - Portland High School**  
bsmith@emailaddress.com - 971-555-5555

#### Tips for Student Athlete Resumes

- Highlight your academic & athletic experiences, awards, accomplishments, and accolades.
- Emphasize both team and individual successes, include statistics and overall records when available.
- Keep it professional, concise, and relevant to the coach and school that you're contacting.
- Select your references carefully and ask for permission in advance to include them on your resume.
- Connect your resume to your cover letters and emails. What makes you unique? Why would you be a good fit for the soccer program and school?



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## Connecting with Schools & Coaches

### ID Camps & Showcases

- ID Camps
  - Some ID Camps bring together multiple schools & coaches in a single event. These multi-school ID Camps can be beneficial early in the college search process to cast a wide net and be seen by a number of coaches in a short period of time.
  - Other ID Camps are school-specific, and they offer a smaller player pool and help players connect directly with that school's coaching staff. These are good when a player has narrowed their list down and wants to be seen by the coaches of their top choice schools.
  - For either format, players should write to the coaches 3-4 weeks in advance and notify them of their intent to participate and attend the upcoming ID camp. Players should then send a follow up email on the week of the event.
  - When looking for ID Camps, check in with your club coach, club director, and high school coach for feedback and suggestions on possible camps.
- Showcases
  - College showcases are tournaments in which college coaches are invited to watch games and scout players.
  - It is critical that players contact coaches in advance to notify them of their team's participation in the upcoming event.
  - Players should send an initial letter or email 2-4 months ahead of the event, then send a follow-up email with the team's schedule just prior to the tournament. Include your team name, team jersey colors, and your jersey number in the correspondence.
  - Be aware that some showcases draw coaches regionally, while others bring in coaches from across the nation. Most showcase websites post a list of the coaches who will be in attendance.



## Connecting with Schools & Coaches

### Game Film & Highlight Videos

- Many college coaches expect players to have game film and highlight videos included with their correspondence.
- Coaches rarely have time to watch an entire game, so players should edit their game film into short segments and highlights that illustrate the player's strengths and performance in games.
- Limit videos / highlights to 5-10 minutes total.
- When sending game film, be sure to indicate the team's jersey colors and your jersey number, or be sure to add illustrations that indicate which player you are in the video / highlight.
- If you include music in your highlights, choose wisely. Do not include inappropriate or explicit music.
- Goalkeepers can also film training circuits to showcase their technical skills, including shot stopping, distributions, footwork, etc. Field players should typically stick to game film for their videos & highlights.
- Include both attacking and defending highlights.
- For defending highlights, look for 1v1 defending moments, tackles, interceptions, and sequences that show proper positioning and anticipation. Whenever possible, show the distribution (i.e. completed pass) or decision (i.e. dribble into space to draw defenders) after the tackle/interception as well.
- For attacking highlights, look for combination plays, 1v1 attacking moments, free kicks, sequences in which you utilized your skills to maintain possession under pressure, moments when you created and/or finished goal scoring opportunities, and sequences that show proper spacing and movement without the ball.
- Look for highlights illustrating your ability to challenge for and receive flighted balls, including aerial duels and headers.
- Goalkeepers should look for highlights that show their ability to use their feet to maintain possession, positioning, footwork, shot-stopping / ball handling, diving, collecting/punching high balls, communication, and distributions (throws, goal-kicks, punts, etc).



## Recruiting Rules

### NCAA Division I Soccer Recruiting Rules

As a High School Sophomore Your child may:

- Receive brochures for camps, such as a sleep away soccer camp, as well as receive questionnaires from college coaches
- Call coaches but may not receive calls from coaches
- NOT have off-campus contact or take official visits
- Take unlimited unofficial visits as long as they are scheduled without the assistance of coaching staff and are not coordinated as a meeting with coaching staff on campus
  - Athletic departments may not participate in a prospective athlete's unofficial visit until September 1st of their junior year.

As a High School Junior Your child may:

- Receive recruiting materials and information from coaches beginning September 1st
- Call coaches
- Receive calls from coaches beginning September 1st
- Have electronic correspondence beginning September 1st (must be private between the student and the coach)
- Have off-campus contact beginning July 1st
- Take unlimited unofficial visits beginning September 1st
- Take official visits beginning September 1st (prospective athletes are allowed one visit per college, a maximum of five visits to Division I schools, and unlimited visits to Division II, Division III, and NAIA schools)

As a High School Senior When your child enters high school, they can:

- Receive materials and information from coaches
- Call or be called by coaches
- Have any form of electronic correspondence (must be private between the athlete and the coach)
- Have off-campus contact (no more than three times)
- Take unlimited unofficial visits
- Take one visit per college, a maximum of five visits to Division I schools, and unlimited visits to Division II, Division, III, and NAIA schools

Other Important Notes:

College coaches can evaluate and contact your child no more than seven times during their senior year, and a college coach cannot contact your child more than three times total.



## Recruiting Rules

### NCAA Division II Soccer Recruiting Rules

As a High School Sophomore

When your child begins their sophomore year of high school, they may:

- Receive brochures for camps, such as the sleep away soccer camp at IMG Academy, as well as questionnaires from college programs
- Call coaches
- Receive unlimited calls, texts, or emails from coaches after June 15th
- Have unlimited off-campus contact after June 15th
- Take official visits after June 15th
- Take unlimited unofficial visits

As a High School Junior:

Your child may:

- Receive recruiting materials and information from coaches
- Call coaches
- Receive unlimited calls, texts, or emails from coaches
- Have unlimited off-campus contact
- Take unlimited official and unofficial visits

As a High School Senior

When your child enters their senior year, they can:

- Receive materials and information from coaches
- Call coaches,
- Receive unlimited calls, texts, or emails from coaches
- Have off-campus contact
- Take unlimited unofficial visits
- Take a limited number of official visits (one per college, a maximum of five visits to a Division I school, unlimited visits to Division II, Division III, and NAIA schools)

Other Important Notes:

Division II does not have any rules for the number of evaluations permitted per student-athlete. College coaches may not contact your child on competition or practice days until the event or practice is over. During a contact period, college coaches may only make one visit per week to your child's high school.



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## Recruiting Rules

### NCAA Division III Recruiting Rules

Division III schools are the only universities without set recruiting calendars, meaning DIII coaches can contact and recruit high school athletes without set dead periods, contact periods, and quiet periods.

As a High School Freshman and Sophomore:

Your child can:

- Receive brochures for camps and questionnaires
- Receive recruiting information from college coaches
- Call or be called by coaches without limitations
- Take unofficial visits
- Have off-campus contact after their sophomore year as well as take official visits

As a High School Junior:

Your child can:

- Receive recruiting information and materials from coaches
- Call or be called by coaches without limitations
- Have off-campus contact
- Take official visits beginning January 1st
- Take unlimited unofficial visits

As a High School Senior:

As a senior in high school, your child can:

- Receive information and materials from coaches
- Call or be called by coaches without limitations
- Have off-campus contact
- Take official visits beginning the first day of their classes (limited to one visit per college)
- Take unlimited unofficial visits





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## Links to Helpful Websites

### College Athletics

- [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org) (Home site of NCAA)
- [www.ncaaclearinghouse.net](http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.net) (NCAA information on eligibility and online application)
- [www.naia.org](http://www.naia.org) (NAIA Athletics)
- [www.playnaia.org](http://www.playnaia.org) (NAIA Clearinghouse)
- <https://nwacsports.com/landing/index> (Northwest Athletic Conference - Community Colleges)
- <https://www.njcaa.org/eligibility/faq> (NJCAA Recruiting Rules)
- <https://www.naia.org/legislative/2012-13/releases/20130514hghhc> (NAIA Guide for HS Athletes)

### Standardized Testing and Test Prep

- [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) (College Board search tool- SAT)
- [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org) (ACT)
- [www.testprepreview.com](http://www.testprepreview.com) (Free Test Prep)
- <http://number2.com> (Free Test Prep)
- [www.powerprep.com](http://www.powerprep.com) (Free and Fee Based test service)

### College Applications and Information

- [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org) (Common Application for Private Colleges)

### Scholarships and Financial Aid

- [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov) (FAFSA online)
- [www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org) (General Financial Aid Information)
- [www.finaid.org/finaid/calculators/estimate.html](http://www.finaid.org/finaid/calculators/estimate.html) (EFC Calculator)
- [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com) (Scholarship Search)
- [www.scholarships.com](http://www.scholarships.com) (Scholarship Search)