

College Golf Preparation - Do What...When

Freshman Year:

The time to start preparing for college golf is your freshman and sophomore years in High School. College coaches want to see an active participation in your school and junior golf tournaments. Build a tournament record and establish a handicap. When you begin your freshman year in High School you should also be participating in local, regional and state golf tournaments and a junior tour if one is organized in your area. You should also be concerned with making good grades and establishing a good academic foundation for the next three years.

Sophomore Year:

Continue to play in tournaments and begin to keep records of your participation to build a golf resume. Begin to do some research on colleges and their golf programs. A lot of information may be gathered from visiting their websites. Many will have an online questionnaire for you to fill out if you are interested in their program. You can see how many players will be graduating the year you will be entering college and thus get some idea of scholarships that may be available. Many programs will list their facilities for practice and tournament results. You can compare yourself to the current players to see if you would fit into the lineup. Go to www.ncaa.org to print a copy of the "Guide for the College-Bound Student-Athlete". This guide will answer many questions you may have.

Begin to define your "Ideal Golf Program" i.e. coaching philosophies, NCAA Division I, II or III, NAIA, Junior College or USCAA, conference, playing time, teammates, facilities, academic expectation/support, etc.

At the end of this year is when you should begin to send the college golf coach your resume. A typed letter should be your initial contact with the coach and should include a detailed resume.

Fall

- Meet with your counselor to discuss your college plans. Review your schedule with him or her to make sure you're enrolled in challenging classes that will help you prepare for college. Go to the NCAA Eligibility Center (www.eligibilitycenter.org) or the NAIA website (www.playnaia.org) to find the academic requirements for freshman eligibility.
- Start a calendar with important dates and deadlines.
- Get more involved with your extracurricular activities.
- Find out the required courses and tests of colleges that you might be interested in attending.
- Go to college fairs/ college preview days in your area.
- Consider Taking the PSAT/NMSQT®
- Sign up for the PSAT/NMSQT, which is given in October. Ask your counselor which date is offered at your school. Get free online PSAT/NMSQT practice.

Winter

- Use your PSAT/NMSQT Score Report and www.collegeboard.com/psatextra to prepare for the SAT®.
- Talk to your counselor and teachers about taking SAT Subject Tests™ in your strong subjects this spring. Take Subject Tests such as World History, Biology E/M, and Chemistry while the material is still fresh in your mind.
- Learn about college costs and how financial aid works.
- Use the College Savings Calculator to see how much money you'll need for college, whether you're on track to save enough, and what you need to do to reach your goal. Talk to your parents about financing college.
- Visit colleges while they are in session.
- Find out about college firsthand from college friends who are home for the holidays.

Spring

- Sign up for college preparatory courses. Consider AP® courses.
- Study for May AP Exams. Get free AP preparation on www.collegeboard.com
- Look for a great summer opportunity — job, internship, or volunteer position.
- Check with your counselor and search online for summer school programs for high school students at colleges.

Summer

- Start a summer reading list. Ask your teachers to recommend books.
- Plan to visit college campuses to get a feel for your options. Start with those near you.
- Finalize your summer plans.

Junior Year

Develop a list of potential colleges and information on their golf programs. Continue contacting coaches with your results and upcoming events. Most coaches will file your letter and resume for future reference. Coaches can begin to contact you through written correspondence after September 1 at the beginning of your junior year. Do not be afraid to follow up your letter. Coaches are very busy and may put your file on the back burner. Register for the NCAA or NAIA Eligibility Center when your junior year grades appear on your transcripts.

Fall

- At school, sign up early to take the PSAT/NMSQT® in October. Get tips and a free practice test on www.collegeboard.com
- Start Your College Search
- Start with you: Make lists of your abilities, preferences, and personal qualities. List things you may want to study and do in college.
- Jumpstart your college planning by reading about majors and careers.

- Use College Search on www.collegeboard.com to find colleges with the right characteristics.
- Start thinking about financial aid. Talk to your counselor about your college plans and attend college night and financial aid night at your school. Use financial aid calculators to estimate your aid eligibility and college costs.

Winter

- Plan Your Spring Testing Schedule
- You can take either the SAT Reasoning Test™ -or- up to three SAT Subject Tests™ on one test day. Plan your testing schedule carefully if you want to take both types of SAT®. See the SAT schedule of test dates and register online for the SAT.
- Your PSAT/NMSQT Score Report arrives in December. Use it to improve your skills and prepare for the SAT. Practice at collegeboard.com/psatextra.

Spring

- Visit the SAT Preparation Center™ on www.collegeboard.com to take a free full-length official practice test and get a score and skills report. Be sure to sign up for the SAT Question of the Day™ for daily practice.
- Start visiting local colleges: large, small, public, and private. Get a feel for what works for you. Develop a list of 15-20 colleges that interest you. Search for colleges and use My College List on www.collegeboard.com.
- Prepare for AP® Exams. Do well on AP Exams and receive credit or placement at most colleges.
- Review your senior year class schedule with your counselor. Challenge yourself with honors and AP classes and stick with sequences you've begun, in the languages, for example.
- Plan summer activities early. Enrich yourself by volunteering, getting an interesting job or internship, or signing up for special summer learning programs.

Summer

- Visit colleges. Take campus tours and, at colleges you're serious about, schedule interviews with admissions counselors and coaches. Be sure to bring your campus visit checklist.
- Request applications from colleges to which you'll apply. Check important dates; some universities have early dates or rolling admissions. Consult the College Application Calendar and the Financial Aid Calendar for a basic idea of the applications timeline.

Senior Year

Make sure that you have registered with the NCAA or NAIA Eligibility Center when your junior year grades appear on your transcripts. You will not be eligible for a college athletic scholarship unless you have done so. Prepare and send in any school applications to prospective colleges. Send an updated golf resume to the golf coach and plan a campus visit. You should keep detailed information regarding any correspondence between you, the school and the golf coach. If necessary, take the SAT or ACT again to improve your score. Investigate academic scholarships offered by the schools. Begin to

narrow your college choices and discuss scholarship information with the school and golf coach.

Fall

- Narrow your list of colleges to between 5 and 10 and review it with your counselor. Get an application and financial aid info from each. Visit as many as possible.
- Make a master calendar and note:
 - Test dates, fees, and deadlines
 - College application due dates
 - Required financial aid applications and their deadlines
 - Recommendations, transcripts, and other necessary materials
 - Your high school's deadlines for application requests, such as your transcript
- Ask for recommendations. Give each person your resume, a stamped, addressed envelope, and any required forms.
- Write application essays and ask teachers, parents, and friends to read first drafts.
- November 1: For early admissions, colleges may require test scores and applications in early November. Send your SAT® scores at collegeboard.com.
- Ask if your college offers an early estimate of financial aid eligibility
- Attend financial aid info events in your area.
- Talk to your counselor about CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE® and learn about it with Completing the PROFILE on www.collegeboard.com.
- Use Scholarship Search at collegeboard.com, review scholarship books, and ask your counselor about local and state funding sources.

Winter

- Most regular applications are due between January 1 and February 15. Keep copies of everything you send to colleges.
- Have your high school send your transcript to colleges.
- Contact colleges to make sure they've received all application materials.
- You and your family should save pay stubs to estimate income on aid forms that you'll file.
- Submit your FAFSA as soon after January 1 as possible.
- Many priority financial aid deadlines fall in February. To get the most attractive award package, apply by the priority date. Keep copies of everything you send.

Spring

- You should get acceptance letters and financial aid offers by mid-April.
- Use Compare Your Aid Awards on www.collegeboard.com to compare awards from different colleges. Questions? Talk to financial aid officers. Not enough aid? Ask if other financing plans are available.
- If you haven't already, visit your final college before accepting.

May 1

- You must tell every college of your acceptance or rejection of offers of admission or financial aid by May 1. Send a deposit to the college you choose.

- Wait-listed? If you will enroll if accepted, tell the admissions director your intent and ask how to strengthen your application. Need financial aid? Ask if funds will be available if you're accepted.

Summer

- Ask your high school to send a final transcript to your college and the NCAA or NAIA Eligibility Center.
- Start preparing for the year ahead.

Things to consider when choosing a college:

Academics - Would you still attend the college if you were not going to play golf, does the school provide the type of major you are interested in pursuing.

Golf - Do you get along with the golf coach and agree with his coaching principles and like the school's golf program and schedule? Does the school have the type of practice facilities you are looking for to help you develop your game? Will you be receiving any scholarship money?

Location and College Life - Is the school located in a type of area where you want to spend the next four or five years? What type of housing is available on and off campus? What type of extracurricular programs are available at the college?

Recruiting - After September 1 of your junior year, coaches can begin to send you recruiting material. (You may receive a letter and questionnaire your freshman or sophomore year). They can not speak with you off campus or contact you by telephone until July 1 after your junior year. Before you begin your freshman year of a Division I or II school you must register with the NCAA or NAIA Eligibility Center.

Golf Resume? - Compiling a golf resume is very important for those players who want to take their game to higher levels. Many of the national junior tours and individual tournaments require you to submit a resume for membership or acceptance to their tournament. Players with a desire to play in college will also need a complete resume to submit to coaches. It is very crucial to keep very accurate records from any tournaments in which you have participated. Keep track of your tournament finishes, division, field size and score. Females should also note the yardage played on their resumes.

Academic performance in the classroom is equally important to performance on the golf course. Always include your Grade Point Average, Class Rank, and SAT or ACT scores. Extracurricular activities, awards or achievements or any other personal information that makes you shine above the rest is suggested to list on your resume. Resumes should be neat and typed or computer generated.

The TN Junior Golf Office will critique your resume upon your request.

Another good source for information on resume writing is the PING American College Golf Guide. To obtain information go to www.collegegolf.com. Anyone interested in playing college golf should be familiar with this website - it is an excellent reference guide.

College Day - In addition, the TN Golf Foundation hosts a College Day every year. This is an opportunity to gather a lot of information and hear directly from college coaches and This activity is free.