



Swimming in College

Freshman/Sophomore Year

What you should be thinking/doing:

- Start searching universities on the www.ncaa.org webpage and find schools that have a major you want (your diploma will be more important than your swimming times after graduation!)
 - Find out about the academic reputation of the school
 - Investigate small, medium & large colleges
 - Check out conference championship meet, times are an indication of coaches interest
 - Check out the team records, coach's history
 - www.ncaa.org links
 - Clearing House – How to register
 - How to get recruited → Parent link / student link
 - NCAA Eligibility Center → NCAA college bound student athletes
 - Division III
 - Division II
 - ...
- Search the free website www.lookforit.com & www.lookfoit/swimming.com which is designed specifically to assist high school swimmers with their college analysis and selection process.
 - LookForIt compares a swimmer's best times against the top times of virtually all of the Division I, II, III, NAIA and NJCAA colleges in the US with a swim team. You can read about the features if you go to the website and click on "I'm an Athlete", but one of the most attractive features is a personalized dashboard that reports each college where the athlete might be the #1 (blue), #2 (red), #3 (silver), or close to the #3 swimmer (yellow) in an event at a college based on the comparison of the athlete's time to each specific college's times.
- Academics
 - Are you eligible for AP or IB programs? Where do most graduates go?
 - Get to know your counselor, and let them know your goals (don't worry they can change)
 - Consider SAT/ACT Prep classes (rule of thumb it is worth 100 points on the SAT)
- Let your coaches know your goals/map out strategy. Start thinking about colleges, and programs of interest
- Whenever possible, take an unofficial visit. Particularly easy if we attend meets at/near institutions of interest to you, or accompany a parent on a business trip and make a visit.
- **IF AT A NATIONAL/SECTIONAL MEET, YOU CAN APPROACH A COLLEGE COACH AS LONG AS THESE TWO ITEMS ARE TRUE:**
 - **YOU HAVE COMPLETED YOUR LAST EVENT FOR THE MEET**
 - **YOUR COACH HAS RELEASED YOU TO GO TALK TO THAT COLLEGE COACH.**

What Colleges Coaches can do:

- Send you a questionnaire or profile in the mail through school or club. Fill them out, and return them. The school will add you to their mailing list and you will get information about that School and Team. You can always let a school know you are no longer interested later.
- Keep track of swimmers of interest to them, both locally and nationally.
- Can talk to swimmer or parent if **you initiate**, either by phone or in-person.
- Cannot return a phone message left, you must successfully initiate contact.

Junior Year

What you should be thinking/doing:

- Have a list of schools that you have whittled down a little bit. No magic number, but something you have been working on.
- Create a **swimming resume** documenting your *improvement* in events and any academic statistics/scores. This document will be easy to forward to coaches all necessary recruiting information. Include training background, such as practices per week, yardage, all dry-land activities.
- **As part of the process, you have researched the conference results for each school of interest, and are comfortable you can compete at that level and above for that school. Swimming Results are easy to find through websites. Coaches want athletes who can score at the conference level. If not scoring the first year, then potential to maintain current improvement level then score in the second year. You may have to sell yourself a little if that is not the case.**
- Make sure academics are set and match up with schools you are looking at. It is okay to reach for a school you really want to attend! Compete.
- Register with the NCAA Clearinghouse through your High School Guidance Office. This establishing your academic eligibility for College Athletics.
- You have, to the best of your ability, tried to make an unofficial visit to your Top Choices. Communicate to the coaches when you are planning to be on campus, they may be able to meet with you and tour the facilities, and maybe set you up with an academic advisor/admissions person for more information.
- Check out the applications for your Top Choices a year out. Are there essays? What are they like?
- Take ACT/SAT. Take early in the year, so you can consider retaking without going into your senior year.

What Colleges Coaches can do:

- Send you a media guide/questionnaire.
- Correspond by US Mail and Email (personal and bulk letters), not limited at all.
- Some colleges will arrange a 'junior' day unofficial visit that you may want to attend.
- This one is new, tricky and only applies to the top 1-2% of recruits: College coach can make one phone call to an athlete in March of their Junior year, in order to set up:
 - One visit in April of the recruits' junior year that must be at the recruits High School. College coaches can meet with Athletes and Parents, as well as school personnel and coaches.
- A lot of college coaches will take advantage of the call in March, but the visit in April has not become a widespread practice as of yet.

Senior Year

Most of the work should be done by now! What you should be thinking/doing:

- Have your list whittled down to 5+/-.
- Work with your parents, counselors, our coaches and your Top Choices to determine if you are interested in **Fall Decision or Spring Decision**.
- Most schools will have to offer you Fall Decision for it to be an option.
- Applications should have been acquired through the summer, completed and submitted in a timely manner. Most will require your high school to fill out a section, as well as teachers. Give them plenty of time to complete, and monitor their progress in relation to due dates.
- Schools may offer you an 'Official Visit'. Set up a schedule of visits in the fall. Most visits happen then, regardless of Fall/Spring Decision, and you are limited to 5 official visits to 5 separate Universities. Set up any Unofficial Visits.

What Colleges Coaches can do:

- As of July 1, after junior year, college coaches are allowed to contact a recruit by phone, one call per week. Not all schools will call once each week.
- Set up their Official Visits.
- Walk the athletes through their Applications, and keep apprised of its progress.
- Set up In-Home visits with some of their recruits.
- Let the coach's work as your advocate during the process!

College Visits

Unofficial Visit: Visit to campus that is not financed at all by the institution. You can still see coaches and administrators, and athletes. You may make an unlimited number of Unofficial Visits, though college coaches are limited to a certain number of contacts (face to face) with each recruit.

Official Visit: Trip to campus financed by the host school, including transportation, meals and housing. The trip is limited to 48 consecutive hours. Parents may accompany at their own expense. Limit of 5 visits to 5 different Universities

Things to remember on a campus visit (unofficial and official)

You are a guest and are representing yourself, your family and the TJCC Stingrays. Be respectful of all coaches, administrators, and athletes. **Remember that they are trying you out** just as much as you are trying them out. Have fun but be careful not to misrepresent yourself. If mid-way through the trip, you decide that the university is not for you, still be polite and finish the trip. Swimming is a small community and you don't want to gain a bad reputation with any coach or program.

Also, on the trip home, write down what you liked and didn't like about your experience. After a few visits, details get confused and a written list can help you when it comes down to decision time!

Turning down a school

If you decide you're really not interested in a particular school and the coach continues to call you, please tell him/her you're not interested. It's a difficult thing to do, but it will save both of you time in the long run. If the coach gets mad or says mean things to you for not wanting to join his/her program, then it probably confirms that you didn't want to swim for this person anyway!

If you have taken a trip and received a scholarship offer from the school and realize that the school is not "the one", call the "no" coaches before you call the school you want to say yes to. That way the coach doesn't have to hear it from anyone but you and you can leave the exciting "yes" coach for last. And don't leave this to the last minute, if you tell a program "no" in a reasonable time, they may be able to redirect funds to another recruit and the coach will appreciate you being up-front.

Scholarships

There are two "signing" periods for scholarships if you are offered one (early November and late April). There are pros and cons to both. If you take your visits early and are sure of your decision, then by all means, sign early! It takes a load of pressure off your shoulders in the spring semester! Some coaches may say to wait.... they may have more scholarship money available in the spring semester to offer. This is a gamble, maybe they will, and maybe they won't. It's not always a guarantee. Some coaches may offer a full scholarship (room/board/tuition/fees/books)...others may offer a partial scholarship, which can include any of those segments. Division II schools and I offer athletic scholarships; Division III only has academic scholarships. If you are not sure, then do wait 'til the

spring. Give yourself more time to think over the decision, and make the one that's right for you.

Check out this College Swimming article on how common full rides are and why the “scholarship game” can be complicated. [How common is a full ride](#)

Parents of the student-athletes

You may or may not believe this, but even in Division One athletics, parents stay engaged with their child's sport, often at the same level they did through their growing up years. Moms will call coaches and advise them on how to encourage their daughter or son. Dads will call coaches and ask why their kid isn't getting more playing time. Parents will call strength and conditioning coaches and inquire what they're doing about their child's torn ligament. Each of these calls is understandable. After all, no one has more at stake than the parent of a performer. They love their child, they've invested in their child and they want to see a “return on their investment.” Some athletes refer to their mom as their P.A. (personal assistant) or their agent. I know a mother who watches her collegiate daughter's gymnastics practice behind the glass, all the while, calling and leaving voicemails for the coach on what should be done for her little girl. I even know sets of parents who moved into a condo across the street from their freshman athlete's university. They didn't want to miss a thing, and they certainly didn't want to neglect to provide direction. I understand this. I am a father of two kids myself.

What we parents may not recognize is the pressure and angst this kind of involvement applies. May I tell you what student-athletes are telling me?

1. I love my mom, but when she does this, I get the feeling she doesn't trust me.
2. My parents are great, but I feel like I have multiple coaches telling me what to do and I get stressed out over it.
3. My teammates are blackballing me because my mother keeps texting both me and my coach, to give suggestions. I wish she would chill.
4. I feel like I'm never quite good enough; I can never fully please my parents.

According to years of research on athletes, I believe parents have a more productive impact on their kids by making a change in their style. When our kids were younger, we played the role of *supervisor*. We were right there on top of the issues. And we should be—they were young and needed our support. As they age, parents must move to the role of *consultant*. We're still involved, still supportive, but we allow our kids to grow up and self-regulate. When we fail to do this—we can actually stunt their growth. It's a bit like teaching our kids to ride a bike. Remember this process? First, we gave them a tricycle. The three wheels made it almost impossible for them to fall off, and they got used to peddling a vehicle. Then, they moved to a bicycle. It was bigger and had only two wheels. A little more scary. So we initiated them on that bike with training wheels. That prevented bad accidents. Eventually, however, we took the training wheels off, and our involvement became a tender balance of two ingredients: support and letting go. Did you catch that? Support and letting go.

The most liberating words parents can speak to their student-athletes are quite simple. Based on psychological research, the three healthiest statements moms and dads can make as they perform are:

Before the Competition:

1. Have fun.
2. Play hard
3. I love you

After the competition:

1. Did you have fun?
2. I'm proud of you
3. I love you

For years, I wondered what the student-athlete would say about this issue. After decades of work with athletes, Bruce E. Brown and Rob Miller found out. They suggest six simple words parents can express that produce the most positive results in their performing children. After interacting with students, they report:

College athletes were asked what their parents said that made them feel great, that amplified their joy during and after a ballgame. Their overwhelming response:

“I love to watch you play.”

That's it. Those six words. How interesting. How liberating to the parent. How empowering to the student-athlete. No pressure. No correction. No judgment. (That's the coach's job). Just pure love of their child using their gift in competition.

*What Parents Should Say as Their Kids Perform - August 16, 2013 – **Tim Elmore***

*In my work at **Growing Leaders**, we enjoy the privilege of serving numerous NCAA and professional sports teams each year. After meeting with hundreds of coaches and athletes, I noticed an issue kept surfacing in our conversations. Both the student-athlete and the coach were trying to solve the same problem. What was that problem?*

Appendix A – Swimming Resume

Freshman Year				
Event	Age	Time	Meet	Date
50 FR	14	28.21	2011 AZ SC Patriot Day Meet	9/17/11
50 FR	14	27.47	2011 AZ Gobble the Bubbles	11/18/11
50 FR	14	27.35	2012 AZ Ford January Meet	1/21/12
100 FR	14	01:01.00	2011 AZ Gobble the Bubbles	11/18/11
100 FR	14	58.56	2012 AZ Lost Dutchman Invitational	2/17/12
100 FR	14	56.87	2012 AZ Age Group State Champs	3/8/12
200 FR	14	02:12.00	2011 AZ SC Patriot Day Meet	9/17/11
200 FR	14	02:12.00	2012 AZ Ford January Meet	1/21/12
500 FR	14	06:02.00	2011 AZ Gobble the Bubbles	11/18/11
100 BK	14	01:15.00	2011 AZ SC Patriot Day Meet	9/17/11
100 BK	14	01:13.00	2011 AZ Gobble the Bubbles	11/18/11
100 BK	14	01:12.00	2012 AZ Ford January Meet	1/21/12
100 BK	14	01:09.00	2012 AZ Lost Dutchman Invitational	2/17/12
200 BK	14	02:31.00	2012 AZ Lost Dutchman Invitational	2/17/12
50 FL	14	30.97	2012 AZ Lost Dutchman Invitational	2/17/12
50 FL	14	30.03	2012 AZ Age Group State Champs	3/8/12

Sophomore Year				
Event	Age	Time	Meet	Date
50 FR	15	26.25	2013 AZ FORD Quad Meet - January	1/12/13
50 FR	15	26.06	2013 AZ SR State SC	2/28/13
50 FR	15	26.05	2013 AZ Lost Dutchman Invitational	2/15/13
50 FR	15	25.92	2013 AZ SR State SC	2/28/13
100 FR	15	57.36	2012 AZ Holiday Festival 2012	11/29/12
100 FR	15	57.11	2013 AZ FORD Quad Meet - January	1/12/13
100 FR	15	56.66	2013 AZ Lost Dutchman Invitational	2/15/13
100 FR	15	56.11	2012 AZ High School Swim & Dive	11/2/12
100 FR	15	55.07	2013 AZ SR State SC	2/28/13
200 FR	15	02:05.00	2013 AZ FORD Quad Meet - January	1/12/13
200 FR	15	02:03.00	2013 AZ SR State SC	2/28/13
200 FR	15	02:02.00	2013 AZ Lost Dutchman Invitational	2/15/13
200 FR	15	02:01.00	2012 AZ High School Swim & Dive	11/2/12
500 FR	15	05:33.00	2013 AZ Lost Dutchman Invitational	2/15/13

500 FR	15	05:23.00	2013 AZ SR State SC	2/28/13
100 BK	15	01:10.00	2013 AZ SR State SC	2/28/13
100 BK	15	01:09.00	2012 AZ Holiday Festival 2012	11/29/12
200 BK	15	02:29.00	2013 AZ SR State SC	2/28/13
50 BR	15	38.58	2013 AZ Lost Dutchman Invitational	2/15/13
50 FL	15	29.93	2013 AZ Lost Dutchman Invitational	2/15/13
50 FL	15	29.78	2012 AZ Holiday Festival 2012	11/29/12
100 FL	15	01:09.00	2013 AZ Lost Dutchman Invitational	2/15/13
100 FL	15	01:08.00	2012 AZ Holiday Festival 2012	11/29/12

Junior Year				
Event	Age	Time	Meet	Date
50 FR	16	25.85	2013 AZ FAST Fall Finale	12/5/13
50 FR	16	25.23	2014 AZ Yuma Heat Polar Bear Plun	1/24/14
50 FR	16	25.17	2013 AZ Senior Time Trial - Nov a	11/10/13
50 FR	16	24.69	2014 AZ SC Senior States	2/27/14
50 FR	16	24.42	2014 PN Speedo Champions Series Western Region	3/12/14
100 FR	16	55.49	2013 AZ FAST Fall Finale	12/5/13
100 FR	16	54.45	2013 AZ Arizona High School Swim	11/8/13
100 FR	16	54.22	2013 AZ Senior Time Trial - Nov a	11/10/13
100 FR	16	54.07	2014 AZ Yuma Heat Polar Bear Plun	1/24/14
100 FR	16	53.72	2013 AZ Arizona High School Swim	11/8/13
100 FR	16	52.89	2014 AZ SC Senior States	2/27/14
100 FR	16	52.74	2014 PN Speedo Champions Series Western Region	3/12/14
100 FR	16	52.52	2014 AZ SC Senior States	2/27/14
200 FR	16	02:01.00	2013 AZ FAST Fall Finale	12/5/13
200 FR	16	01:58.00	2013 AZ Arizona High School Swim	11/8/13
200 FR	16	01:57.00	2014 AZ Yuma Heat Polar Bear Plun	1/24/14
200 FR	16	01:57.00	2014 AZ SC Senior States	2/27/14
200 FR	16	01:55.00	2013 AZ Arizona High School Swim	11/8/13
200 FR	16	01:54.00	2014 PN Speedo Champions Series Western Region	3/12/14
500 FR	16	05:27.00	2013 AZ FAST Fall Finale	12/5/13
500 FR	16	05:18.00	2014 AZ SC Senior States	2/27/14
500 FR	16	05:18.00	2014 AZ Yuma Heat Polar Bear Plun	1/24/14
500 FR	16	05:12.00	2014 PN Speedo Champions Series Western Region	3/12/14
200 BK	16	02:23.00	2014 AZ SC Senior States	2/27/14

50 FL	16	28.64	2014 AZ Yuma Heat Polar Bear Plun	1/24/14
50 FL	16	28.59	2013 AZ FAST Fall Finale	12/5/13
100 FL	16	01:03.00	2014 AZ Yuma Heat Polar Bear Plun	1/24/14
100 FL	16	01:02.00	2014 AZ SC Senior States	2/27/14
200 FL	16	02:26.00	2014 AZ Yuma Heat Polar Bear Plun	1/24/14
200 FL	16	02:19.00	2014 AZ SC Senior States	2/27/14
200 IM	16	02:26.00	2013 AZ FAST Fall Finale	12/5/13
200 IM	16	02:25.00	2014 AZ SC Senior States	2/27/14
200 IM	16	02:23.00	2014 AZ Yuma Heat Polar Bear Plun	1/24/14

Best Times Short Course				
Event	Age	Time	Meet	Date
50 FR	16	24.42	2014 PN Speedo Champions Series Western Region	3/12/14
100 FR	16	52.52	2014 AZ SC Senior States	2/27/14
200 FR	16	01:54.00	2014 PN Speedo Champions Series Western Region	3/12/14
500 FR	16	05:12.00	2014 PN Speedo Champions Series Western Region	3/12/14
100 BK	15	01:09.00	2012 AZ Holiday Festival 2012	11/29/12
200 BK	16	02:23.00	2014 AZ SC Senior States	2/27/14
50 FL	16	28.59	2013 AZ FAST Fall Finale	12/5/13
100 FL	16	01:02.00	2014 AZ SC Senior States	2/27/14
200 FL	16	02:19.00	2014 AZ SC Senior States	2/27/14
200 IM	16	02:23.00	2014 AZ Yuma Heat Polar Bear Plun	1/24/14

Best Times Long Course				
Event	Age	Time	Meet	Date
50 FR	16	28.09	2014 AZ Cactus Classic	5/23/14
50 FR	16	27.52	2013 AZ Swimming LC Senior State	7/5/13
100 FR	16	01:02.00	2013 AZ Swimming LC Senior State	7/5/13
100 FR	16	01:01.0	2014 AZ Cactus Classic	5/23/14
100 FR	15	01:01.0	2014 AZ FAST Mayflower Invitational	5/2/14
200 FR	16	02:16.0	2014 AZ FAST Mayflower Invitational	5/2/14
200 FR	16	02:13.0	2014 AZ Cactus Classic	5/23/14
400 FR	15	04:49.0	2014 AZ Cactus Classic	5/23/14
400 FR	16	04:49.0	2013 AZ Swimming LC Senior State	7/5/13
100 FL	16	01:22.0	2011 AZ June Meet	6/25/11
100 FL	16	01:13.0	2014 AZ FAST Mayflower Invitational	5/2/14
100 FL	13	01:12.0	2014 AZ Cactus Classic	5/23/14