

Getting Organized:

Develop a Personal Information Filing System:

It is highly recommended that during your high school years, you keep track of your achievements and activities both in and out of the pool. It is amazing how many details we forget over time and yet come fall of your senior year, you will need this information for all of your college applications. Armed with this “log”, you will be prepared to paint a complete picture of yourself as a college applicant and as a team member. In one consolidated folder or in a tabbed binder maintain, at a minimum, the most recent copy of:

- an unofficial transcript/report card
- most recent USA Swimming top times report
- a copy of all College Board/standardized test results
- major achievements/awards (both academic and athletic) and their description
- club memberships
- activities/community service: include dates, hours and descriptions
- leadership positions and their description
- employment/internships: include dates, hours and descriptions
- travels, etc.

Clean up your “Facebook”/Social Networking pages/establish your Email Address:

Before initiating contact with coaches, establish a dedicated email address for communication with college admissions/coaches. This address may actually be a school's/coach's first impression of you and needs to make the correct impression. This address needs to be a positive and “professional” reflection of you. Additionally, make sure your “Facebook Page” or other social networking sites are “in order” and private. These have become useful tools for college admissions officers, coaches and employers to research their potential students/employees. This may also be a coach's or potential new teammates' first impression of you. It is highly likely that as soon as your “host” swimmer learns your name, they will try to familiarize themselves with you via these sites. It is a small swimming world and even though your page is private, swimmers know other swimmers who may be able to get access to your information. Please make your best effort to ensure that there isn't anything on your page that you wouldn't want your potential new coach or teammates to see.

Organize a College Filing system: Keep records as you research

As you research colleges and their swim teams, we recommend that you begin a filing/folder system for each individual school as navigating the various college and athletic websites is extremely cumbersome. It is often very hard to find the information you are seeking and then to find it again at a later date. To save yourself time and duplication of effort during the application process, as you research schools, take note of or print out for each school:

Admissions:

- Website address
- Address
- Phone Number and Fax Number
- Deadlines for Applications: Early Decision, Rolling Decision, Regular Decision, etc
- Are decisions binding or non-binding?
- Testing Requirements: Standardized tests and score requirements, number of Subject Tests required, AP Tests

- Copy of the Application: Common Application, Supplemental Applications, Specific College Applications, Honors Colleges (print out copies if available)
- Letter of Recommendation Requirements and forms (on-line or mailed?)
- Essay questions and personal statement requirements (Usually not available until the summer before you apply)
- High School Course requirements
- Other

Swim Team:

- Coaches' Names and titles, address, email address, phone number and Fax number
- Coaches' Background and number of years on the team
- Athletic questionnaire
- Athletic Conference
- Historical Conference Results (list other teams in the Conference)
- Recruiting information available on their website. Some coaches spell out exactly what is required of what is required of a new PSA's, some college may make it clear that they will NOT contact you, it is up to the swimmer to prove to the coach how much they want to swim for them, while others will contact you only if you are a National Level Swimmer, etc. Be familiar with each school's procedure
- School colors and school mascot (good for cover letters and conversations with coaches!)