



VIDEO GUIDELINES

College coaches are eager to see you in action. Although your list of athletic accomplishments may be stellar, a videotape with footage of you playing soccer is a first-rate way to show coaches what you're all about on the field. Videotapes are not always necessary, but if a coach requests one, you should try to provide it. It does not need to be an elaborate, state-of-the-art video, so you can have a family member videotape you in action and avoid the added costs of hiring a professional. If you and your family do not want to take the responsibility of creating homemade videotapes, ask other members of your team if they are interested in creating recruitment tapes and would like to split the costs of hiring a professional. This is a thrifty idea that will yield quality videotapes.

Guidelines for creating your own videotape:

- The entire tape should be no longer than 15 minutes. College coaches can tell if they like what they see after 10 or 12 minutes so don't discourage them by providing too much footage. In addition, coaches receive loads of videotapes, and they will be thankful if you keep your video short.
- College coaches want to see everything you are capable of doing on the field. Although you may be an excellent goal scorer, do not only show footage of you scoring goals. Coaches want to see footage of different skills to get a sense of your versatility on the field dribbling, defensive positioning, free kicks, throw-ins, sprinting - show it all. Coaches even like to see how you react to mistakes on the field. The best way to give coaches a comprehensive look at you on the field is to choose footage of an actual game. This way coaches can see your skills, athleticism and speed during a real game. Videotape several games so that you will have a variety of segments from which to choose.
- If you choose to make your own videotape, it may be helpful to use a tripod when filming to prevent jostling and shaking of the camera that will give anyone watching a headache. A tripod will keep the camera stationary and will allow the videotape recorder to focus on the game.
- If you are a goalie, you may want to include footage of you participating in various goalie drills. Since goalies do not normally see a great amount of action during games, these drills will allow you to continuously demonstrate your skills in goal. Make sure you diversify the drills you include in your video to demonstrate your goalie skills on the ground, in the air, and punting and throwing techniques. In addition, you should include some footage of you in goal during a real game. This footage allows college coaches to note your temperament and leadership during actual games.
- Rio Vista has copies of good videos you may want to use along with the following advice.

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You're ready to try your hand at making a video. So, where do you start? Just listen to the advice of some of the nation's top coaches to help you avoid wasted time and money.

"A video gives a coach an idea of the type of player and the level they are playing at," Brown coach Mike Noonan says. "For one, it's very difficult to gauge speed on tape. Plus, if anybody offers a scholarship from a video, kids should question right off as far as how serious the program is."

From a video, the recruiters are expecting to see your best performances, so you have to make sure it is your best. If you mail a poor video, you are hurting your chances even more than if you didn't send one at all.

"The more time they put into preparing the video, the more likely I'm going to look at it," ex-Ohio State head coach Lori Henry says. "If it is just thrown together and is not a good video, I don't have time to look at it."

You need to understand coaches are busy people during the entire calendar year, so don't waste time sending game tapes. "The types of tapes we don't like to receive are just regular two-hour tapes of a game," Henry says. "We don't have the time to sit and watch a tape where someone's daughter might only touch the ball a half-a-dozen times in a game. The tapes we generally like are videos of games they have edited," says Henry. "Showing their daughters with the ball, defending or making a great save puts them in a game environment for us and cuts out all the dead play they are not involved in - maybe a 10 or 15 minute tape tops."

As you get caught up in creating the video, don't forget the basics. "First, and probably the most important, is the color of the uniform you are wearing, what number you are wearing and what position you are playing," University of Syracuse women's coach April Kater says. "You don't know how many videos we will get where the player will give their name, address and phone number, but they will not tell us who they are on the video, how to find them from 22 kids or whether they are a goalkeeper or striker.

"Basically, what we like to see is a tape broken down into different parts," Kater adds. "Maybe add a little segment of themselves or a few highlights where they take 10 or 15 minutes from one game where they might of touched the ball a lot and you can see them clearly in a game setting. Then maybe even some individual stuff. It's not bad. Kids think it's kind of corny, but for us to see a person touch the ball 150 times within a three-minute span can really give us a good idea of what that kid is like."

Bob Bradley, the former Princeton coach who is now head coach of the MLS Chicago Fire adds, "Sometimes you might see some clear game action. You can see who is who and still see the whole field, and it's against another good team so the game is competitive. Now that gives us a chance to see how a person handles themselves in that situation."

It wouldn't hurt to take the time to find out what a coach would like to see. Perhaps you could talk to someone who is connected with the program. Maybe your high school or club team coach has been called for a reference in the past or you know one of the players at a university or someone who does.

While coaches have already established their opinions about videos in one form or another, one thing is certain, it can't hurt ... if done well.

Bradley explained why it can be so difficult to evaluate someone from a video let alone recruit them. "Some players have gotten very sophisticated and spent a lot of money in terms of creating videotapes that are flashy, have music and stop action but that doesn't mean very much. You just need some game action.

"Most coaches are looking beyond just a good play or two to see how a player handles himself on the field. You might get some wonderful highlight clips that were spliced together and have some catchy music, but you can see through the whole thing. Obviously, something like that just doesn't mean much."

Five Steps to a Better Video

1. Be sure to identify the subject player with color of jersey and number.
2. Edit it. Don't show the entire game.
3. Add a personal "interview" with the subject player.
4. Include a schedule of games so the coach can come and watch in person.
5. Film from an elevated spot.