



VIDEO GUIDELINES

Video footage of you playing is not always necessary, but you should consider having some available should a coach request it. With the right equipment and background, a family member could film the action and use commonly available software to create a clip of video highlights. However, if you and your family do not want this added responsibility, several affordable professional services are available to do the filming where costs could be shared across a number of players on the team.

Guidelines for creating your highlight video:

- ❖ If you choose to make your own video, it may be helpful to use a tripod to prevent jostling and shaking of the camera. A tripod will keep the camera stationary and allow the person recording to focus on the game.
- ❖ Film the game from an elevated location. An elevated view of the game provides much more insight into the action. Ground angle video is of little value to college coaches.
- ❖ Focus the camera on following the ball. Have a wide enough zoom so that player movement within 20-30 yards of the ball is visible, but not so wide that individual players and numbers cannot be recognized. On corner and free kicks in the attacking end of the field, make sure that the action in front of the goal is visible.
- ❖ Try to video several games against appropriate competition. The more games recorded the more valuable highlight footage available to create the video you will submit to the college coach.
- ❖ Using some form of video software, create a highlight video no longer than 10 or 15 minutes. College coaches can tell if they like what they see in this amount of time so don't discourage them by providing too much footage.
- ❖ Each college coach has their own preferences regarding video footage. You should contact coaches to inquire about their specific needs. In general, college coaches want to get as comprehensive a picture of your abilities as a player that they can. Coaches want to see footage of different skills and your movement off the ball to get a sense of your overall abilities as a player. Coaches might even like to see how you react to mistakes on the field.
- ❖ If you are a goalkeeper, you may want to include footage of you participating in goalkeeper warm-up or training activities in addition to footage of you in a game. Goalkeepers do not normally see a large amount of action during games, and this footage would demonstrate your athleticism and technical abilities in goal. Make sure you include a variety of training activities that show your abilities to stop shots (including diving and recovering backwards to your goal), deal with crosses and high balls, foot work and agility as well as distribution (goal kicks, punting and throwing).
- ❖ Posting your highlight video on YouTube and sending the college coach a link via email is the most convenient and cost effective method to distribute it.



How to Make a Recruiting Video

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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." 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."

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.

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.