

WHAT IT MEANS WHEN A COLLEGE COACH CONTACTS YOU



Anyone who has followed college sports for a while has likely seen that [recruiting tactics can get weird](#). From sending a letter to the family pet, to rides in the “swag-copter,” it seems like some coaches out there who want a recruit bad enough – and have the budget to get extravagant – will stop at almost nothing (within NCAA regulations) to sway a recruit.

Compared to some of the crazy stories you might have heard, [this heartwarming letter campaign](#) for men’s basketball powerhouse [Kansas University](#) might not be the most extravagant. But it’s still amazing to me, especially when you realize that world-famous coach and recruiter John Calipari had nothing to do with it.

Attention-grabbing, occasionally over-the-top recruiting tactics aside, it can be tough to understand just what a coach communication (or lack thereof) really means. The majority of us are not getting a weekly call from Urban Meyer or Carol Huchins, but are getting mail, email, and some contact from various programs.

So what does [that coach contact](#) mean? Let’s go from low to high in regards to level of interest.

When a college coach contacts you with camp invites and recruiting questionnaires

A pamphlet in the mail or inbox with information regarding a college sports camp is really not at all an indicator of recruitment. Student-athletes, whether they realize it or not, have information in countless databases from tournaments attended or leagues played in.

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Colleges make mega-money from camps – they’re expensive! – and therefore mass-invite student-athletes of all ages and abilities to fill their camps up each year. Do not take receiving information on a camp as a sign the program putting that camp on is hoping you will come.

The same goes for recruiting questionnaires. If you received a recruiting questionnaire in the mail, as exciting as it can seem, it’s really no indication of a program’s interest.

While “something” may be better than “nothing,” a program sending a recruiting questionnaire is only at [the very first tier of expressing interest](#).

When a college coach contacts you with college brochures and form letters

These fall into almost the exact same boat as generic camp invites and questionnaires. Like it or not, there are many ways to find information on student-athletes, and colleges are in the business of enrollment.

A brochure or form email from a college or sports program is pretty much just that — a form letter.

Now, if you like what you see, by all means explore the school and see if it would be a good fit for you. Be proactive in reaching out to coaches or sending tape, and take the experience in to your own hands. Just don’t assume that because a school is sending you mail, they are interested in you for their program.

When you receive personal emails from coaches or programs

When things get personal, it generally means there is a level of interest there.

Now, where that level of interest stands is still up in the air. If a coach is taking the time to personally email you, it means they want you to know you are on their radar. They’ve noticed you.

It may also mean you are a second- or third-tier recruit they are keeping on the back burner until they see where the guys or gals above you on the list shake out. And that’s okay!

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If it's a school you're interested in, stay persistent. By no means should you take a personal email as more than what I've just outlined, but keep communication going and be prompt in responding and getting a coach your updated highlight film and stats.

When a college coach contacts you with handwritten letters, phone calls and personal information

These are very much the sweet spot of gauging interest from a college coach.

And what do all three of these have in common? They take time from a college coach's day. If a college coach took the time to write you a letter by hand, mentioning specifics about you or how you could enhance their program, this is a great sign.

Additionally, a personal phone call, within NCAA approved dates and times, is very meaningful.

If a college coach gives you their personal contact information, not only should you feel confident in the fact that they want to stay in touch and hear from you, but you should use it ASAP and often.

Want to learn more about communicating with college coaches? [Download a free sample chapter of *Athletes Wanted*.](#)

Remember: No matter how you feel about the school, be prompt and courteous in responding to college coach contacts.