



- Don't be intimidated by getting involved in sports, or even other activities! I was so scared to try out that I almost didn't do it! When I got to the tryout there were so many other girls that I immediately told myself I was the worst one there, when in reality we were all at the same level. Definitely be open and confident about getting involved in things that require trying out, applying or auditioning!
- If you thought your four years of high school went by fast, just wait for college. In a blink of an eye the years go by. I can remember my drive to school for my first preseason like it was yesterday. What I would tell any incoming freshman athlete is to come in fit and ready to compete. Keep an open mind with your skill compared to the older teammates. A freshman compared to a senior in high school is a lot different than comparing a freshman and senior in college. Keep working hard and you will get an opportunity to play and when that comes make sure you are ready to perform.
- College is hard, so be smart when choosing classes. Coming in, I picked my classes based on how interesting I thought they'd be. It didn't take me long to realize that I made my schedule way too hard. Soccer is already time consuming (especially in the fall) but on top of that I had more than an average amount of schoolwork. My first fall, I wasn't able to meet or get to know as many people as I would've liked - which is really what college is all about. You have 7 semesters left of college after the first one, so it's much more important to create a balanced schedule work-wise than it is to take all the interesting classes that you see.
- Just remember when you were a freshman in high school and how hard it was to gain playing time then. You were probably intimidated by older players who knew the program inside out. It's practically the same thing now, but you've already gone through it before. This time, approach it with confidence and act like a sponge and try to gain as much information and knowledge from older players about the program. If things aren't going your way then focus on the relationships you can make with your teammates and coaches. Always try to be a positive influence on the team and people will respect you for that.

- Be accountable and lean on your friends and teammates for help. One of the best things I learned over the course of my year was that if you're not accountable for the things you need to do and can't organize your schedule to get all the things you need to get done on a weekly basis, then it's going to be very hard to manage your life and lead to so much excess stress. Leaning on friends and teammates was one of the things that really got me through my first year. I was trying so hard to manage everything on my own but I learned quickly that everyone is there for you and you shouldn't be afraid to ask them questions - especially the upperclassmen who have been in the program for years, they will almost always be able to help you out.
- It's important to find someone that you're comfortable with going to and let them help if anything comes up. It's really easy to get stressed out and now know how to manage something but everyone's always there and every teammate wants the best for each other so make sure to utilize them.
- Embrace the challenge you are about to embark on. You're going to prioritize your time efficiently and you're going to learn what hard work is really like. Those are invaluable skills which will make a huge difference and determine your success down the road.
- I'll never forget how nervous I was when I arrived at training camp the summer going into my freshman year. I literally couldn't eat or sleep the day before. But when I look back on it, there was really nothing to be nervous about. Be nervous. It's good to be nervous to a certain extent. But over all else, be excited! Because you are about to meet your new best friends and hopefully friends you will have for the rest of your life.
- Leaving home and going to college was probably one of the most stressful things I have ever gone through, but it ended up being 1000 times better than I'd expected. Don't be afraid to approach anyone, especially when you get to school. I met some of my best friends from randomly going up to them and saying hi on the first day of classes. I would also recommend to just put yourself out there, and take advantage of the opportunities the school gives you. Not only can you meet other people that way, but they also expose you to so many different opportunities that we've never had in our lives and you could end up doing something and falling in love with it!
- You'll never know if you want to play D1 sports until you are on campus. It's not for everyone.
- Stay focused. There are going to be a lot of bumps in the road, but don't give up. Sometimes the harder challenges are the better ones, and most worth it.
- The most important thing to remember is that your sport should be contributing to your overall happiness. By nature, practices and competitions can be really stressful and exhausting. But if you find that your sport is making your overall happiness lower, you should consider the reasons for why you chose to do it. See how you can turn your attitude towards your sport more positively, and if you find that you can't, it might not be

worth it. Athletes are conditioned to have a strict no-quitter attitude, and sometimes the hardest thing to do is making the choice that's more healthy for yourself.

- Spread your work out, finish everything you need to do on time and do not fall into peer pressure from other athletes.
- Definitely take a break if you need to. We're all athletes lifting and practicing together so we understand and respect each other when someone says they're hurt.
- Just get wrapped up in everything. Don't miss out on a fun opportunity just because it may affect your next practice. College is college and you don't want to look back and wish you didn't miss out on all those parties or whatever social events you like. That being said, work hard on your sport, but don't lose the fun aspect. College is intense and you want to improve but my best advice is the way to improve is immersing yourself into the good energy your team provides and having an absolute BLAST.