

HOW TO USE SOCIAL MEDIA IN YOUR COLLEGE SEARCH

by Kayleigh Burke
Assistant Riding Coach, Hollins University



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The college search process can sometimes feel overwhelming. With so many choices across so many states, it is hard to nail down where your home is going to be.

Especially during Covid, social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube can help you make that decision. Social media helps pull away the perfect marketing lens and show you what the universities and riding programs are really like.



HOW TO USE SOCIAL MEDIA TO FIND THE RIGHT COLLEGE:

Facebook: While Facebook is losing popularity amongst high school students, it is a great resource for learning more about your prospective schools. During COVID, colleges are using the platform in lieu of tours and to help disseminate more in-depth information. Follow your favorite university's Facebook page to join events, watch campus tours, and join groups that can help you understand the vibe at schools. You also can follow FB pages that are not run directly by the University such as club pages, team pages, and class pages. These will help shed light on the true atmosphere.

Instagram: Instagram really helps you get a behind the scene look. It is a great way to know what the campus personality is like, how active the student body is, and what people do in their spare time. Search hashtags and locations on Instagram to see what students are posting about their school.

Zoom: While Zoom is not a social media platform, it is an important part of the college search. Right now with less face-to-face time with prospective universities and the college students attending it is important to get that face-to-face time. It helps student's decide if they feel like they can be a part of the group.

HOW TO USE SOCIAL MEDIA TO BE RECRUITED:

Instagram: Create an Instagram profile dedicated to videos of photos of you riding. Have the username be simple such as your name and equitation in the title. For example Anna Burke could be Anna.Burke.Eq. In your bio include your name, high school, the year you will graduate, and a link to your YouTube channel. Most importantly, make sure your account is not private so that IHSA team's can follow you. This is the best way to help coaches and recruiters find your information. Especially if you do not have a USEF record, videos are helpful in determining if you meet the requirements necessary to be on the team. With new SafeSport rules, don't be offended when coaches or riders on the team do not follow you on social media.

YouTube: Upload as many videos as you can to YouTube and create titles that are easy to find. I.E. Anna Burke riding Figurio 2'6" SWVHJA Derby. Also describe the class or riding video in the description. For example, Anna Burke riding Kayleigh Burke's horse Jack Wabbit in the SWVHJA 2'6" Derby placing 10th out of 25 riders. Compiling a YouTube channel will help recruiters know if they are interested in you as a team rider.

Emailing: While email is not a social media platform, the best way to get recruited is to reach out to every program you are interested in. Find the riding programs website and email one of the coaches to help let them know you are interested. If you are wondering what schools have IHSA check out the website here: <https://www.ihsainc.com/join/ihsa-teams> ★★

