

To all returning Varsity / JV, and potential new Wheeler players:

Before putting up the training regimen for the next month, I wanted to share with you an article from Nike Soccer on high school tryouts, the expectations of the coaches, attitude players should bring to the tryout, and the type of training that players should be conducting before they come into the tryout situation. Hopefully, this will help to give all players an overall idea of what the coaching staff expects for the players and will also help to make the tryout easier. Good luck to everyone and we are looking forward to seeing you in January.

How to Get Ready for High School Soccer Tryouts

High school soccer players must be more disciplined and mentally focused than their younger counterparts. Soccer tryout preparation should begin at least three months prior to tryouts themselves -- during the summer if you have fall tryouts. Through dedication, you can prepare yourself for the next level in soccer.

Practice ball work at least three times per week for between 15 and 30 minutes. This will help you hone your technique with the ball and get a better grasp on some of the skills needed to succeed in high school soccer. Your session should include the following skills: dribbling with alternating feet, ball striking by hitting a ball against the wall, juggling the ball with alternating feet and kicking the ball as high as you can with control. Having superior first touch is a critical aspect of every player.

Perform conditioning activities three times per week. You not only need a grasp of balls skills related to playing high school soccer, you also need stamina and strength as well.

Sprint train one to two times per week. Sprinting is a vital skill for high school soccer. Start with intervals of eight sets of whatever your coach assigns and then increase your sprintwork to 10 to 12 repetitions. As you improve in stamina, you can incorporate dribbling the ball into your sprinting practice.

A positive attitude is an important component of playing high school soccer. Without it, a coach may be less willing to work with you. Show your positive attitude and teamwork with other players, and you will be more likely to make the team.

Soccer tryouts give you a chance to shine and show that you've got game. Preparation can take the pressure off and allow you to go in with the right mindset. Coaches look for a mix of energy, skills and attitude at the high school level, and you can take steps to give yourself the best chance to make the team.

Fitness

Tryout dates vary, but typically they commence at the beginning or middle of August for most players around the country. You will want to arrive as fit as possible. Be prepared to take the Cooper Test, which measures how far you can run in 12 minutes, and to sprint distances as directed by the coach, either the 40-yard dash or shuttles from the goal line to the 10-yard line and back, the 20-yard line and back, the 30-yard line and back all the way to the 100-yard line and back. Work backward on your calendar from August and train to increase your running speed and endurance, beginning in June or earlier. On your own or with a personal trainer, work on interval training, combining alternating jog and sprints, to prepare.

Skills

You'll be set up with a group of other players hoping to make the team in games that may be one versus one, four versus four or nine versus nine to see how you handle the ball. Prepare by playing small-sided games with your friends or at a pickup venue; you may be able to find an impromptu weekend or weeknight game on a university or city park athletic field, for example. Anticipate drills testing your ability to receive the ball aerially and head it, so take a ball and a friend or two to a park with a soccer net to work on heading the ball into score, ideally against a defender. When your friends aren't available, juggle the ball on your own to improve your foot skills.

Mental Outlook

Arrive well-rested, with a good night's sleep the night before. Talk to the coach ahead of time about what to expect. Give 100 percent on each drill and show your work ethic. Coaches can teach skills but they can't coach effort; a display of good effort will catch their eyes. Work well with your teammates. Coaches tend to look for a positive attitude and teamwork as much or more than skills or athleticism. Bring your most cheerful, cooperative, team-oriented self to the tryout.

At the Tryout

Play in a position at which you are comfortable and try not to be nervous. Just go out and do the best you can. Try to play the position you know best. Go play and enjoy it. Work hard to score, to provide assists and to defend; the coach at your tryout will be putting a check-mark by your name indicating success at these tasks. Share the ball.