

In-Season Evaluation Checklist

Give players feedback that helps them grow, and give your organization the data to build better teams.



Before the Season

- ☐ **Decide your purpose:** Meet with your tryout director or team formation staff. Decide whether coach evaluations will give players feedback, give your staff data for forming next year's teams, or both. Your purpose shapes every decision below.
- ☐ **Decide how scores will be used in team formation:** If coach evaluations will inform next year's teams, decide whether they'll be a reference or weighted into tryout scores. If weighting, keep it a small share of the total. Adjust for team level so a strong C-team player doesn't outscore an A-team player. Decide whether this applies to every age group.
- ☐ **Choose your evaluation criteria:** Meet with player development staff to choose what coaches will evaluate. Most organizations mix intangibles like attitude, leadership, coachability and attendance with a few skills specific to their players. Keep it to 2–5 criteria so it's quick for coaches and useful for athletes. Older age groups may have a few more, but keep the core criteria consistent across ages.
- ☐ **Separate staff-only and shared criteria:** If you're doing both purposes, decide which criteria are for staff only and which will be shared with players and parents. Coaches give more honest input on rostering criteria when they know families won't see it.
- ☐ **Choose your scoring scale:** Most organizations use named ratings instead of numbers, such as Needs Improvement to Excellent, an A–F scale, or Strength / Opportunity Area. You can also use comment-only criteria like "Strengths" and "Opportunity Areas." Write a one-line description of each rating so every coach uses the scale the same way. If scores will factor into tryouts, decide how each rating converts to a number.
- ☐ **Decide what players and parents will see:** Meet with your main point of contact and decide what will be shared, if anything. Options include scores for each criterion, comments, which coach wrote each comment, team rank on each criterion, and team averages.
- ☐ **Set the tone for feedback:** Decide how direct coaches should be. Honest and specific feedback helps players grow; harsh feedback with no direction does not. Share a sample comment that shows the tone you want.
- ☐ **Set dates and deadlines:** Set a start date and deadline for each evaluation. Give coaches at least two weeks. A longer window lets them build notes over time instead of rushing at the end.



Early Season

- ☐ **Train coaches:** Before sending invites, email coaches the criteria, the scoring scale with descriptions, the dates, what players will see, and the tone you expect. If using evaluation software, make sure coaches know how to log in and have a chance to practice.
- ☐ **Tell families what to expect:** Let parents and athletes know evaluations are coming, when they'll get feedback, and what it will include. If scores will factor into team formation, say so now, not after teams are announced.



Evaluation Window

- ☐ **Send evaluation invites:** Send each coach an invite with the deadline, a quick reminder of the criteria and tone, and a contact for questions. Make it as easy as possible, since coach time is limited. Evaluations that can be done on a phone get finished faster.
- ☐ **Consider a coach incentive:** Many organizations offer a small reward, like a gift card, to coaches who finish on time.
- ☐ **Send reminders:** Check progress halfway through and again a few days before the deadline. Remind coaches who haven't started.



At the Deadline

- ☐ **Follow up with remaining coaches:** Check who hasn't finished and reach out to them directly.
- ☐ **Review scores and comments:** Before anything is shared, have a director read through the evaluations. Look for missing comments, scores that don't match comments, and anything that could hurt or be misread by a parent.
- ☐ **Tell families when feedback is coming:** Let parents know when to expect feedback, for example by the end of the week, and who to contact if they don't receive it.



Sharing Feedback

- ☐ **Send feedback reports:** Send all reports at the same time so no family hears about it secondhand. Include who to contact with questions, either the coach or a director. If using evaluation software, reports can often be sent in bulk and kept in one place so players can track their progress over time.
- ☐ **Share data with team formation staff:** If coach evaluations will inform next year's teams, get the staff-only scores to your tryout director. Store them where they'll be easy to find next season.
- ☐ **Respond to questions:** Some parents will want to talk through their child's feedback. Keep the evaluation and comments on hand so those conversations stay focused on the player's growth.



1-2 Weeks After Feedback

- ☐ **Ask for feedback:** Survey coaches, directors, admins and parents on what worked and what didn't.
- ☐ **Adjust and repeat:** Update your criteria, scale, timing or instructions before the next evaluation. Then repeat the process.