

How to Be on Your Middle School's Sports Team

Explore this Article ■ [Practicing Your Sport](#) ■ [Showing up for Tryouts](#) ■ [Giving It Your All](#)
■ [Tips and Warnings](#) ■ [References](#)

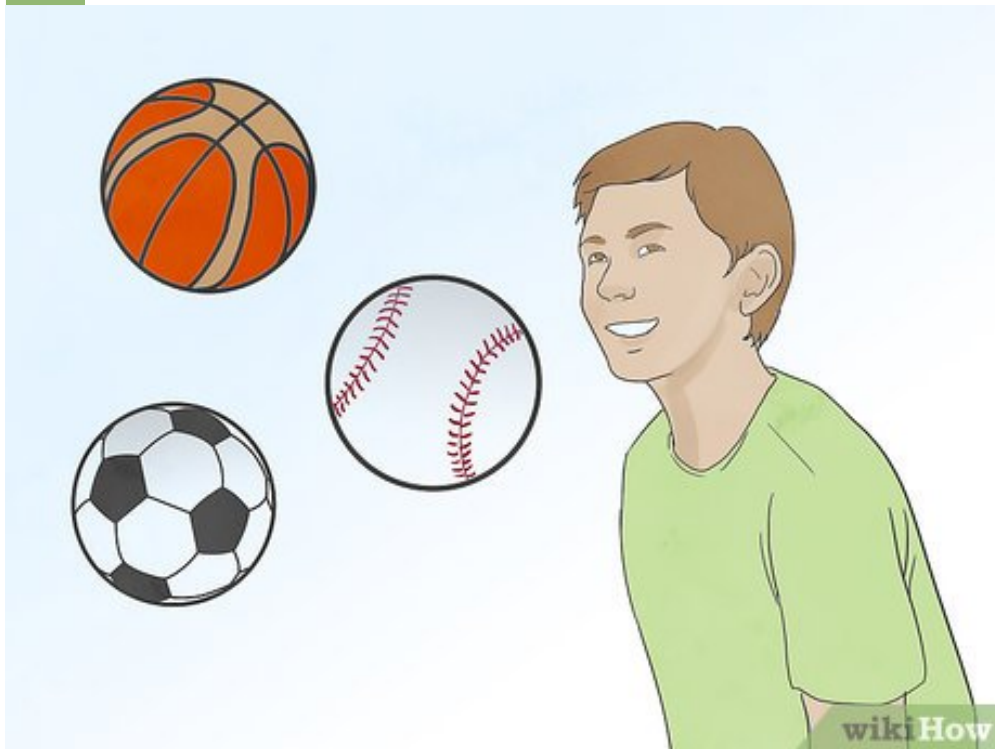
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Trying out for a middle school sports team can seem intimidating at first, but don't worry – you can do it! All it takes is determination. Work on getting in enough practice and improving your diet before you go to tryouts. Before going out for the team, make sure it's a sport that you are really interested in. Once you make the team, you'll be spending a lot of time playing it.

Part
1

Part 1 of 3: Practicing Your Sport



1 Find the sport you like best. If you aren't sure what sport you want to play, try a few! PE class is usually a great opportunity to try new sports. You can also sign up for recreational leagues at local community centers, youth gyms, or parks.

- If you don't have access to these organizations, you can also find other kids in the neighborhood who like to play most sports, such as basketball, soccer, baseball, or roller hockey. Don't be shy to ask if you can play. Almost every sport is better with more players!



2 Get the right equipment. Start saving money, or ask your parents if they will help you get the right equipment for your sport. You can try bargaining with your parents. If you receive an allowance, suggest giving it up for a year in return for football equipment. Or offer a deal: "If you buy me soccer cleats I will do twice the chores I already do for two months."

- Instead of buying new equipment, you can look into renting, or you can ask your school if you can borrow their equipment.
- Do a little research about what you'll need. If you want to play soccer, you'll need shin guards. If you want to play roller hockey, you'll need roller blades. If you want to play football, be sure to get the right protective equipment.



3 Practice, practice, practice. You'll want to practice your sport as much as you can. No one gets good overnight. Set aside time a few days a week to play your sport with others, and if you can't find anyone to play with, you can always practice alone.

- If you don't have anyone to play with, there are a lot of sports you can play alone. For basketball, you can practice dribbling and shooting. For soccer, you can practice dribbling between cones, kicking the ball against a wall, or juggling.^[1] For hockey, you can practice skating with a hockey stick and a tennis ball. Even if it's just you, it's fun to pretend like you're in a real game scenario, so use your imagination!



4 Exercise a lot. Stay active when you aren't practicing your sport, even if this means running around the block a few times. Not only will it help you play your sport, but the coach will see you are in shape and are serious about the sport.



5 Eat healthy. It's important to eat well if you're trying to get into shape. Cut back on the potato chips and load your plate with fresh fruit and vegetables. Cut out empty calories like cookies and replace them with nutrient-rich snacks like carrots or orange slices.^[2]

- Drink lots and lots of water. Water is like fuel for your body when you're active. If you don't have enough, you'll feel tired and weak.^[3]



6 Watch older and better players. Watch games that your high school team has to see how they play. The more games you watch, the more you will know about the game. Feel free to talk to the players and ask them how they learned the sport. They will love to brag about themselves to you, and you might just learn some tricks along the way.

Part 2 of 3: Showing up for Tryouts



1 Prepare yourself the day before. Be sure to get enough sleep the night before so that you have the energy to perform your best. If you have homework that needs to be done, try to catch up so that you aren't worrying about it while you're trying to get ready for tryouts.



2 Eat well and hydrate the day of. You'll want to eat a lean meal rich in carbohydrates so that you'll have the energy to stay active. You'll also want to drink plenty of water throughout the day. Think of it like you're storing up water to be all used when you're running around.

- Don't eat right before your tryouts. Eat a couple of hours before you need to tryout, so that you have time to digest your food. Avoid dairy products like milk or any fatty or fried foods before you are active.^[4]



3 Show up on time. Make sure you don't get there late, or the coach will think you don't really care about the team. If you get there early enough you can also have a chance to meet the coach, which will make them more likely to remember you and like you.



4 Introduce yourself to the coach. It's important to make a good first impression, and the best way to do this is to introduce yourself so they know who you are: "Hi, I'm Elizabeth. Nice to meet you. I play forward. I'm excited to be on the team!"

- Not only will the coach decide who gets on the team, but once you're on the team it will be important to maintain a good relationship with them.



5 Wear the right equipment or clothing. Wear the right clothing so that you can perform well and also so that you don't stick out. If the coach asked you to bring a white shirt and you wear a red one, you'll look out of place!



6 Bring plenty of water. Remember, tryouts will be a workout. You'll need a lot of water to stay hydrated. Bring a big water bottle.

Part 3 of 3: Giving It Your All



1 Be a team player. If your sport is a team sport, be sure to do what's best for the team, not yourself. Sometimes this means passing the ball instead of keeping it, or shooting. While you want to show your skills, being a ball-hog will only show the coach that you aren't good at being on a team!



2 Be respectful. If you accidentally knock someone down, help them back up. Remember, they will hopefully be on your team in the near future. And even if you both don't make the team, you might be able to make some friends who share an interest with you.



3 Have fun. Remember, sports are just games, and games are supposed to be fun. The more fun you have at a sport, the better you will perform, and the better impression you will give the coach. If you make a mistake, that's OK -- just keep playing!



4 Hope for the best. After you try out, you just have to wait and hope that you make the team. If you make it, great! Celebrate! If you don't make the team, don't worry -- you aren't the only one. Sometimes tryouts can be really competitive, and what matters is that you tried, even if it didn't work out.

- Keep in mind that everyone has different skill levels. The sport you picked might not be the best fit for you, or it might not be the best fit for you at the time. You can always try again next year, or in high school.



5 Keep playing the sport if you like it. Just because you didn't make the school team doesn't mean you can't keep playing the sport. Find a community league or a group of friends who like playing, and you can keep having fun without the pressure of being on a more competitive team.



Tips

- Do your school work. If you do make the team and you don't do your school work then you could get kicked off the team.
- Be passionate about it. Sports can be fun and a great way to meet new people.
- Drink plenty of water. If it's hot, drink even more than you think you need!



Warnings

- Don't skip practice. Practice is the only way to get better.
- If you don't make it, keep your head up. There is always the next year or high school. Don't let the coach think that you will complain or moan when you can't play.

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