

IMPORTANT RECRUITING TERMS

Celebratory standardized signing form (a form used by Division III institutions): This form is a standard NCAA-provided, nonbinding athletics celebratory signing form after a college-bound student-athlete has been accepted for enrollment at a Division III school.

Contact: A contact happens any time a college coach says more than "hello" during a face-to-face meeting with you or your parents off the college's campus.

Contact period: During a contact period, a college coach may have face-to-face contact with you or your parents, watch you compete, visit your high school and call or write to you or your parents.

Dead period: A college coach may not have any face-to-face contact with you or your parents on or off the college campus at any time during a dead period. The coach may call or write you or your parents during this time.

Evaluation: An evaluation happens when a college coach observes you practicing or competing.

Evaluation period: During an evaluation period, a college coach may watch you compete, visit your high school and call or write to you or your parents. However, a college coach may not have face-to-face contact with you or your parents off the college's campus during an evaluation period.

Financial aid (scholarship): Any money you receive from a college or another source, such as outside loans or grants. Financial aid may be based on athletics ability, financial need, scholarships or academic achievement.

Five-year clock: If you play at a Division I school, you have five calendar years in which to play four seasons of competition. Your five-year clock starts when you enroll as a full-time student at any college. Thereafter, your clock continues, even if you spend an academic year in residence as a result of transferring, decide to redshirt, do not attend school or attend school part time during your college career.

Full-time student: Each school determines what full-time status means. Typically, you are a full-time student if you are enrolled for at least 12 credit hours in a term, but some schools define a full-time student as someone who takes fewer than 12 credit hours in a term.

Institutional request list: An institutional request list (IRL) is a list of college-bound student-athletes who an NCAA Division I and/or II school is interested in recruiting. The action of adding a college-bound student-athlete to the IRL informs the NCAA Eligibility Center of the school's interest in having an academic and amateurism certification decision for the student-athlete.

International student: An international student is any student who is enrolled in a secondary school outside the United States, U.S. territories or Canada (except Quebec).

Official commitment: When you officially commit to attend a Division I or II college, you sign a National Letter of Intent, agreeing to attend that school for one academic year.

Official visit: During an official visit, the college can pay for transportation to and from the college for you (end up to two family members in Division I Basketball and FHS Football), lodging and meals (Division I allows for up to three meals per day) for you and up to four family members, as well as reasonable entertainment expenses, including five tickets to a Division I or Division II home sports event. Before a Division I or II college may invite you on an official visit, you will have to provide the college with a copy of your high school transcript and register for a Certification account with the NCAA Eligibility Center. In Division I, it is not permissible to make an official visit during a recruiting shutdown period or a dead period.

Quiet period: During this time, a college coach may not have any in-person contact with you or your parents off the college's campus. A coach may not watch you play or visit your high school during this period. You and your parents may visit a college campus during this time. A coach may call or write to you or your parents during this time.

Recruited: If a college coach contacts you off campus, pays your expenses to visit the campus, or (in Divisions I and II) issues you a National Letter of Intent or a written offer of financial aid, you are considered recruited.

Recruiting calendar: NCAA member schools limit recruiting to certain periods during the year. Recruiting calendars promote the well-being of college-bound student-athletes and ensure fairness among schools by defining certain periods during the year in which recruiting may or may not occur in a particular sport.

Recruiting shutdown: A recruiting shutdown is a period of time when no forms of recruiting (e.g., contacts, evaluations, official or Division I unofficial visits, correspondence, or making or receiving telephone calls) are permissible.

Season of competition: Generally, NCAA rules say any competition in a season — regardless of the amount of time — counts as having played one season in that sport. If you play any time during a season, regardless of how long you played, it counts as having played for an entire season in that sport. A season starts when you spend one second in competition on the field, court, gym or track. In Division III, you also use a season if you practice at any time after the first contact.

Ten-semester/15-quarter clock: If you play at a Division II or III school, you have the first 10 semesters or 15 quarters in which you are enrolled as a full-time student to complete your four seasons of competition. You use a semester or quarter any time you attend class as a full-time student or are enrolled part time and compete for the school. You do not use a term if you only attend part time with no competition or are not enrolled for a term.

Two-year college: Any school from which students can earn an Associate of Arts, Associate of Science or Associate of Applied Science within two years. Some people call these schools community or junior colleges.

Unofficial visit: Any visit by you and your parents to a college campus paid for by you or your parents. The only expense you may receive from the college is three complimentary admissions to a Division I home athletics contest or five complimentary admissions to a Division II home athletics contest. You may make as many unofficial visits as you like after the first permissible date in each sport. The only time you cannot talk with a coach during an unofficial visit is during a dead period. In Division I, it is not permissible to make an official visit during a recruiting shutdown period or a dead period. In Division II, you may receive one on-campus meal as well as admission to a home athletics event for you and those accompanying you.

Verbal commitment: A verbal commitment happens when you verbally agree to play sports for a college before you sign or are eligible to sign a National Letter of Intent. The commitment is not binding on you or the school.

Walk-on: Someone who is not typically recruited by a school to participate in sports and does not receive a scholarship from the school, but who becomes a member of one of the school's athletics teams.

RECRUITING CALENDARS

NCAA member schools limit recruiting to certain periods during the year. Recruiting calendars promote the well-being of college-bound student-athletes and ensure fairness among schools by defining certain periods during the year in which recruiting may or may not occur in a particular sport. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, recruiting calendars may be adjusted. For the most up-to-date information, visit ncaa.org/student-athletes/resources/recruiting-calendars.

Men's Basketball, Division I

Recruiting Method	You may receive brochures for camps, questionnaires, NCAA materials and nonathletics recruiting publications at any time.
Recruiting Materials and Electronic Correspondence (e.g., recruiting letters, social media messages, text messages)	A coach may begin sending you recruiting materials and electronic correspondence June 15 between your sophomore and junior year in high school.
Phone Calls to a Coach	You or your family may call a coach at any time.
Phone Calls from a Coach	A coach may call you or your family beginning June 15 between your sophomore and junior year in high school.
Off-campus Contact	A college coach may have contact with you or your family off the college's campus beginning the first day of your junior year in high school. Contacts made in your junior year may occur at your educational institution except for during the April recruiting periods, when off-campus recruiting contacts may be made at your educational institution or residence.
Unofficial Visit	You and your family may visit a college at your own expense beginning Aug. 1 of your sophomore year in high school.
Official Visit	A college may pay for you and two family members to visit the college beginning Aug. 1 of your junior year in high school. Up to five official visits can be taken between Aug. 1 of your junior year and the completion of your junior year. An additional five official visits may be taken between the day following completion of your junior year and Oct. 15 following completion of high school.

Women's Basketball, Division I

Recruiting Method	You may receive brochures for camps, questionnaires, NCAA materials and nonathletics recruiting publications at any time.
Recruiting Materials and Electronic Correspondence (e.g., recruiting letters, social media messages, text messages)	A coach may begin sending you recruiting materials and electronic correspondence Sept. 1 of your junior year in high school.
Phone Calls to a Coach	You or your family may call a coach at any time.
Phone Calls from a Coach	A coach may call you or your family beginning Sept. 1 of your junior year in high school.
Off-campus Contact	A college coach may have contact with you or your family off the college's campus beginning March 1 of your junior year in high school. Contacts made during your junior year may occur at your educational institution or residence.
Unofficial Visit	You and your family may visit a college at your own expense at any time.
Official Visit	A college may pay for you and two family members to visit the college beginning the Thursday following the final game of the Women's Final Four during your junior year in high school.

Football, Division I

Recruiting Method	
Recruiting Materials and Electronic Correspondence (e.g., recruiting letters, social media messages, text messages)	You may receive brochures for camps, questionnaires, NCAA materials and nonathletics recruiting publications at any time. A coach may begin sending you recruiting materials and electronic correspondence Sept. 1 of your junior year in high school.
Phone Calls to a Coach	You or your family may call a coach at any time.
Phone Calls from a Coach	A coach may call you or your family beginning July 1 between your sophomore and junior years in high school.
Off-campus Contact	A college coach may have contact with you or your family off the college's campus beginning July 1 following the completion of your junior year of high school or opening day of classes of your senior year (whichever comes first).
Unofficial Visit	You and your family may visit a college at your own expense at any time.
Official Visit	A college may pay for you and two family members to visit campus beginning April 1 of your junior year through the Sunday before the last Wednesday in June. After this date, a college may provide you the expense-paid visit after Sept. 1 of your senior year.

Men's Ice Hockey, Division I

Recruiting Method	
Recruiting Materials and Electronic Correspondence (e.g., recruiting letters, social media messages, text messages)	You may receive brochures for camps, questionnaires, NCAA materials and nonathletics recruiting publications at any time. A coach may begin sending you recruiting materials and electronic correspondence Jan. 1 of your sophomore year in high school.
Phone Calls to a Coach	You or your family may call a coach beginning Jan. 1 of your sophomore year in high school.
Phone Calls from a Coach	A coach may call you or your family beginning Jan. 1 of your sophomore year in high school.
Off-campus Contact	A college coach may have contact with you or your family off the college's campus beginning Aug. 1 of your junior year in high school.
Unofficial Visit	You and your family may visit a college at your own expense beginning Jan. 1 of your sophomore year in high school.
Official Visit	A college may pay for you to visit the college beginning Aug. 1 of your junior year in high school.

Lacrosse and Softball, Division I

Recruiting Method	
Recruiting Materials and Electronic Correspondence (e.g., recruiting letters, social media messages, text messages)	You may receive brochures for camps, questionnaires, NCAA materials and nonathletics recruiting publications at any time. A coach may begin sending you recruiting materials and electronic correspondence Sept. 1 of your junior year in high school.
Phone Calls to a Coach	You or your family may call a coach beginning Sept. 1 of your junior year in high school.
Phone Calls from a Coach	A coach may call you or your family beginning Sept. 1 of your junior year in high school.
Off-campus Contact	A college coach may have contact with you or your family off the college's campus beginning Sept. 1 of your junior year in high school. Contacts made during your junior year may occur at your educational institution or residence.
Unofficial Visit	You and your family may visit a college at your own expense beginning Sept. 1 of your junior year in high school.
Official Visit	A college may pay for you to visit the college beginning Sept. 1 of your junior year in high school.

Baseball, Division I

Recruiting Method	
Recruiting Materials and Electronic Correspondence (e.g., recruiting letters, social media messages, text messages)	You may receive brochures for camps, questionnaires, NCAA materials and nonathletics recruiting publications at any time. A coach may begin sending you recruiting materials and electronic correspondence Sept. 1 of your junior year in high school.
Phone Calls to a Coach	You or your family may call a coach at any time.
Phone Calls from a Coach	A coach may call you or your family beginning Sept. 1 of your junior year in high school.
Off-campus Contact	A college coach may have contact with you or your family off the college's campus immediately following July 1, following the completion of your junior year of high school or opening day of classes of your senior year (whichever is earlier).
Unofficial Visit	You and your family may visit a college at your own expense beginning Sept. 1 of your junior year in high school.
Official Visit	A college may pay for you to visit the college beginning Sept. 1 of your junior year in high school.

All Other Sports, Division I

Recruiting Method	
Recruiting Materials and Electronic Correspondence (e.g., recruiting letters, social media messages, text messages)	You may receive brochures for camps, questionnaires, NCAA materials and nonathletics recruiting publications at any time. A coach may begin sending you recruiting materials and electronic correspondence June 15 between your sophomore and junior year in high school.
Phone Calls to a Coach	You or your family may call a coach beginning June 15 between your sophomore and junior year in high school.
Phone Calls from a Coach	A coach may call you or your family beginning June 15 between your sophomore and junior year in high school.
Off-campus Contact	A college coach may have contact with you or your family off the college's campus beginning Aug. 1 of your junior year in high school.
Unofficial Visit	You and your family may visit a college at your own expense beginning Aug. 1 of your junior year in high school.
Official Visit	A college may pay for you to visit the college beginning Aug. 1 of your junior year in high school.



Divisions II and III

RECRUITING METHOD	DIVISION II	DIVISION III
Recruiting materials	You may receive brochures for camps, questionnaires, NCAA materials and nonathletics recruiting publications at any time. A coach may begin sending you printed recruiting materials June 15 immediately preceding your junior year in high school.	You may receive printed materials any time.
Telephone calls	No limit on number of calls by college coach beginning June 15 immediately preceding your junior year. You may make calls to the coach at your expense.	No limit on number of calls or when they can be made by the college coach. You may make calls to the coach at your expense.
Off-campus contact	A college coach may have contact with you or your parents/legal guardians off the college's campus beginning June 15 immediately preceding your junior year. No limit on number of contacts off campus.	A college coach may have contact with you or your relatives or guardians off the college's campus after your sophomore year. No limit on number of contacts off campus.
Unofficial visit	You may make an unlimited number of unofficial visits any time, except during a dead period.	You may make an unlimited number of unofficial visits any time.
Official visit	A college may pay for you to visit the college beginning June 15 immediately preceding your junior year. Between June 15 before your junior year and the end of your senior year in high school, you may make only one official visit per college and up to a maximum of five official visits to Division I colleges. There is no limit to official visits to Division II colleges.	A college may pay for you to visit the college beginning Jan. 1 of your junior year in high school. There is no limit to official visits to Division III colleges. However, you may only be provided one visit per college.



QUESTIONS TO ASK

While you are on a campus visit, consider asking questions about these topics to learn more about the school, athletics program and life on campus. You also can get suggestions of questions to ask coaches and administrators at ncaa.org/student-athletes/future/choosing-college.

- Academic resources.
- Scholarship renewals.
- Financial aid and cost of attendance.
- Admissions requirements.
- Study abroad/internships.
- Athletic training and medical expenses.
- Degree programs and graduation rates.
- Team time demands.
- On-campus housing.
- Coaching philosophy and style.
- Injuries and rehabilitation.
- Graduation rates.
- Schedule planning and time management.
- Playing time.
- Mental health resources.

REMEMBER



In addition to receiving your academic and amateurism certification from the NCAA Eligibility Center, you also must apply and be accepted to your DI or DII college before you can compete on campus.

NCAA Eligibility Center



PLAY COLLEGE SPORTS

Want to play college sports?
Learn what it takes to reach the top of your game at
ncaa.org/playcollegesports