

Playing Sports in College
Choose the School, Not the Coach
***** Grades and Coursework Count! *****

Ways to Play Sports in College – Decide What Fits for You

- NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) - <http://www.ncaa.org>
 - Three levels - ask your coach for appropriate level for you; 4 years of eligibility
 - *Division I* - most competitive, scholarships awarded, strict rules on recruiting, contact, commitment; student-athlete perks and support
 - Initial contact may begin in sophomore year (or earlier, according to rules)
 - *Division II* - less competitive, smaller division; otherwise similar to DI
 - *Division III* - emphasis on student-athlete, competitive, no athletic scholarships, fewer rules on recruiting, contact, commitment, student-athlete perks and support
 - Very high athletic caliber, can play multiple DIII sports
 - Initial contact/recruitment often begins in junior year
 - Programs (coaching, facilities, competitiveness) vary among schools at each level
 - Overlap in caliber among divisions
 - NCAA Eligibility Center - register and complete prospective student questionnaire
 - ***NCAA Guidebook for the College-Bound Student Athlete*** at <http://ncaastudent.org/>
 - Online info on member schools, sports, RULES and ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY
- NAIA (National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics) - <http://naia.cstv.com>
 - Similar to but separate from NCAA; 4 years of eligibility
 - Emphasis on fully integrating academics, sport, fitness; similar to NCAA DIII
 - Offers scholarships
- Intercollegiate Club Sports - Compete Against Other Schools
 - Program caliber, competition level, support, and coaching varies
 - No scholarships
- Intramural Sports - Compete Against Teams Within the School
 - Range of availability, level of competition, financial support, coaching
 - Typically open to novice participants; usually no travel

Tips for the Process

- You can advocate for yourself (contacts, youtube videos, berecruitred.com, ncsasports.org, websites for specific sports - *see listing*)
- Contact needs to be from the student (and/or coach), not the parent. Fill out college's online athletic recruiting forms. Keep coach up to date on your performance and showcase events. Know rules for contact.
- Prepare an athletic resume
- Be seen by and get to know coaches - college summer camps, tournaments, college visits (unofficial or by invitation for official visits)
- Be realistic about scholarships
- Ask about time commitment, graduation rate and time, flexibility in choice of major, academics vs sports priority, academic support, scholarship continuation in case of injury