

FINDING THE RIGHT BASEBALL PROGRAM

Recruiting is really a job search, and as such, should be treated that way. If you were looking for a job, you wouldn't wait for companies to come knocking on your door...and you should not wait for college baseball coaches to come to you. Unlike football & basketball, baseball does not have the resources or funds to recruit the same way. This mandates that high school baseball players must "recruit" the coaches at the schools of interest. The key is to make yourself known among the thousands of good high school players in the U.S.

The key to the recruiting process in baseball is to target the appropriate colleges that are an academic and an athletic match for you. Targeting schools can be based on several criteria, none of which has anything to do with baseball. Whether you play baseball or not, it is vital to select a school that meets your non-athletic needs first. Remember, you are one pitch or one at-bat away from never playing baseball again. Your priority is your education! **YOU ARE A STUDENT-ATHLETE** and it is worded that way for a reason.

The criteria for selecting a school is based upon your personal preferences, some you may already be aware of and others that you may become aware of as you move forward with the college search process. Factors such as location, cost, setting, number of students, academic reputation, areas of study, faculty, computer systems available to students, social life, and the quality of the physical plant should help you narrow down the choices from the more than 1,400 possible colleges in the nation with a baseball program.

For example, if you don't want to be more than three hours away from home, you have narrowed down your search considerably.

If you are determined to play in a warm climate, again you have more narrowly targeted your search.

Your goal should be to reduce the number of schools your son is interested in to a more manageable number of 50 or so.

I always suggest the "brainstorming" process in which you grab a piece of paper and write down every school that you could ever think of that interested you – for whatever reason. On another piece of paper, write down those factors of a school that are important to you (good or bad). Then, go to the internet and start researching school websites. As you research the schools on your list, you can circle those that meet your criteria and cross off those that don't. For example, crossing off those schools that don't offer the field of study you wish to pursue. Or, crossing off schools that don't offer a baseball program – they are actually out there & not just the smaller schools (Syracuse, Wisconsin, Boston University are a few)

FINDING THE RIGHT BASEBALL PROGRAM

After you have completed your research and narrowed down the choices, then you need to start determining whether or not these “targeted” schools are a match for your baseball talent. Not everyone can play Division I baseball and compete in Omaha on ESPN. Nor, do I believe that those programs are ideal for all of the top players. College is a huge decision and should not be taken lightly. There are plenty of kids that are determined to play Division I baseball, but never make it and then suffer in the classroom because they are unhappy. In addition, I don’t believe in the theory that Division I is better than Division II or III. I can give you several “smaller” programs that field better teams and offer a better overall experience than some of the “bigger” schools. Again, it is where you feel comfortable and the coaches feel you fit in. There are 2 big questions to ask yourself as you review your options...

1. “Can I see myself not playing baseball?” This is vital because you may face the decision of trying to “Walk On” at a larger school and risk being cut as opposed to accepting an offer from a smaller school where you are being counted on to contribute immediately. Again, if baseball is extremely important to you and then you don’t have it – will you be happy and able to succeed in the classroom?
2. “Do I have the personality to sit and wait my turn?” Often times, one of the consequences of accepting an offer from a larger school is that they “project” you to play down the road and do not look at you to contribute immediately. Therefore, you need to assess your personality to determine if you are the type of individual that can bust your hump day in and day out without ever seeing any playing time, as well as potentially not joining the team on road trips, for a year or two. Or, are you the type of player that needs to feel he is being given the opportunity to compete right away...No guarantee of playing, but just given the shot to do so. This is just as, or more important, than question #1.

You may or may not be able to answer these questions right away, but they should be in your mind throughout your college search process. They are key to your decision making process. This will also help to narrow your list of schools.

The next step is to maximize your exposure. The key is to get your name in the “mouths & files” of as many coaches you can on your list. It requires some effort, but it is well worth your time & energy. You may be the best player in Pennsylvania, but schools in Massachusetts, South Carolina, or Michigan may not know your name. Thus, you have to get your name to them. The easiest way to do this is to write letters of introduction to the coaches at the schools of interest. A sample letter is included for guidance. In this day and age, it is even easier to send emails to college coaches. You can typically find email addresses on coaches on the college website. The simplest method is to type up an email letter to a coach expressing your interest in his school and baseball program, and requesting information about them. Include your “Player Profile” (example attached) and then save it. You can then go back and re-send it to any school in the country, as long as you make sure to go in and revise any specific references to coach’s names, schools, or conferences. REMEMBER – Not all coaches utilize email, so you may still need to mail a more traditional letter to certain schools.

You can also call college coaches on the phone to express your interest in playing for their program. High School Players can call colleges at any time, without restrictions. However, be aware that the NCAA regulates when and how often a coach may talk to high school players. Therefore, if a coach is not able to answer your call, he may not be able to return a message. You may have to just keep trying. Again, school websites are a great source of coach’s phone numbers.

FINDING THE RIGHT BASEBALL PROGRAM

The typical result of your letters, emails, and/or phone calls is for the college to send you a questionnaire to complete for their files. Even though the majority of this information was on your "Player Profile," schools have their own methods of record-keeping and prefer you to complete their form(s). Therefore, complete them. They do not take much time and usually include a self-addressed return envelope. **YOU SHOULD ALWAYS COMPLETE & RETURN EVERY QUESTIONNAIRE YOU RECEIVE.** Regardless of who it is from, complete & return it. Coaches can be peculiar this way and you never want to get a bad reputation from a coach. Coaching is a small "fraternity" of men that talk often and you don't want a sour relationship with one to rub off on others. Therefore, take the time to do all of them as soon as possible.

Another method of maximizing exposure is to create a videotape of your baseball skills. The video should be 15 minutes or less and showcase all of your skills – throwing, hitting, fielding, etc. Try to shoot it from several angles to give coaches a better view of your complete game. There is no need to add music or documentary to the video, just make sure that each copy is adequately labeled with your name, high school, and phone number. You will need to make several copies, since they are not typically returned. I have attached another document that details the videotaping process.

As you continue to narrow down your list of potential schools & programs, you want to try to visit the campus and meet the coaches, if possible. Visiting campuses can be helpful in determining if an individual feels comfortable in that environment – how the campus is set up, the size of the campus, the buildings, dormitory situations, and the type of students enrolled there. Meeting coaches is also a good idea because it allows the player to assess whether or not his personality meshes with that of the coaching staff. Never be afraid to be proactive and ask questions. Refer to the attached section that discusses campus visits and questions to ask.

Of course, visiting every campus is not feasible. It is time consuming and can become very costly. Therefore, you want to make sure that any campus you visit is high on your priority list.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

There are several things high school baseball players should think about as they contemplate and pursue their dreams of playing collegiate baseball. Because of the extraordinary number of high school baseball players that are vying for recognition from college coaches, little things can make a difference with certain coaches.

Sense of Urgency – too many players believe that “there is plenty of time” to do things to attract college coaches. However, the reality is that you should start at the same time you are starting your high school career. Whether you realize it or not, everything you do could be a determining factor for a college coach.

- Work ethic is vital to your appeal to college coaches - on the field, in the weightroom, and in the classroom. By showing commitment and resolve to being the best you can be in all aspects of your life is extremely appealing to college coaches. Start early and you will be amazed at what you can accomplish.
- Too many players believe that poor work habits will improve when they get to college and play for “better” coaches. Sad to say, but the old cliché is correct – Old Habits are Hard to Break. Start solid work habits early and build on the - this will translate into more college appeal & an easier transition to college.
- “Turn it up a notch when I need to” is the oldest and biggest mistake by high school athletes trying to impress colleges. Although you believe you can “turn things up” when you want to, good college coaches will easily recognize what is habit and what is show. Play hard all the time and good things will happen.

Coachability – a player's ability or inability to listen to his coaches (and teachers) and incorporate what they are teaching is vital to how “attractive” a player is to a college.

- Most high school players have a small perspective on the baseball abilities of other players across the country. This leads too many players, and parents, to overestimate their own ability and their appeal to colleges. They fall into the common mistake of believing that college coaches will come to them because they are so good. Nothing is further from the truth. If you believe you are “too good” for certain college programs, then you are sadly missing out on potential golden opportunities.
- Common Courtesy goes a long way...coaches are attracted to players that show respect for the game, their teammates & coaches. Rude & obnoxious behavior can be a detriment to a coach's evaluation of your performance.

Attitude – Believe it or not, your attitude on and off the field could be the deciding factor when a college coach compares you to another “prospect.”

- Perception is Everything...Coaches watch how you perform at all times. Make sure you give the right impression and don't appear lethargic, lazy, or uninterested at any time. Stay focused, remain committed, & continually hustle and college coaches will notice.
- Sportsmanship is important. Again, there are so many players out there that a coach will give “tiebreakers” to players that display sportsmanship & respect.

Realize that the decisions you make today could affect the rest of your life. Don't fall into the trap that you made mistakes because you were young. Coaches don't care when you made them, they only know you made them and they wonder if the mistakes will repeat themselves. Also understand the influence of your peer groups and try to avoid “guilt by association.” In other words, even if you are not doing anything wrong, you could be construed as guilty if those around you are.

HIGH SCHOOL TIMELINE

Freshman Year (9th Grade)

- Concentrate on your academics. One of the biggest mistakes is to slack off on your grades in your first year of high school and then your GPA/Class Rank never recover.
- Commit yourself to becoming the best baseball player you can be, with the intention of playing collegiate baseball down the road.
- Realize that being the best player you can be requires commitment before, during, and after the season. This does not mean you cannot participate in other sports. It just means that you need to continue to work at baseball whenever possible to ensure that you are progressing.
- Start as soon as you can by looking into what programs your school offers in the Fall, Winter, and Spring. Some schools may offer a Fall program that allows you to continue playing baseball for a few more months. If so, take advantage of it while also working out to gain strength and speed.
- Inquire as to whether your school offers an off-season conditioning program. If not, sign up to work out on your own. Strength, speed, & stamina are great attributes for baseball players. If you're unsure about a program to follow, ask the coaches or a personal trainer.
- Learn Time Management so that you can excel in the classroom & on the field.
- Play as much as possible in the summer...No substitute for game experience.

Sophomore Year (10th Grade)

- Continue to work hard in the classroom - you cannot play ball if you don't make the grade.
- Continue to follow an off-season training regimen.
- Work hard...continue to listen to your coaches and improve day in and day out.
- Play as much as possible, in the Spring and Summer.
- Start thinking about college and what schools might interest you. Make an initial list and begin researching schools and baseball programs on the internet.

Junior Year (11th Grade)

- Continue to work hard in the classroom - you cannot play ball if you don't make the grade. Talk to your counselor to make sure you are on track to meeting all graduation requirements.
- Start to narrow down your search for colleges of interest & send out your 1st contact letters
- Ask your coach about pursuing your dream of playing college baseball & if he can help.
- Register to take the SAT or ACT tests.
- Continue to follow an off-season training regimen.
- Play as many games as possible in the Spring & Summer.
- Look into preparing a videotape of yourself...refer to accompanying document
- Identify which camps/showcases you might like to attend in the summer.
- Determine if you have the opportunity to "unofficially" visit some college campuses.
- College coaches are permitted to call you after July 1 following your Junior year.
- **Register with the NCAA Clearinghouse. After Junior Grades are on your transcript**

Senior Year (12th Grade)

- **DO NOT LET UP ACADEMICALLY**
- Review the core academic requirements to make sure you are "on track" to graduate.
- Continue to follow your off-season training regimen.
- If you don't think you'll sign an early National Letter of Intent (November), you may want to look into if you want to attend some Fall/Winter Camps & Showcases.
- Don't worry about it if you don't sign early...50% or more players do not sign in Nov.
- Continue to contact college coaches (phone/email/letter) to express your interest in their programs in hopes of stimulating reciprocal interest.
- Continue to visit college campuses if the opportunity arises.
- Apply to those schools of interest to meet the college deadlines.

SAMPLE INTRODUCTORY LETTER

Coach's Full Name
College Name
College Address

Dear Coach (*Name*),

My name is _____ and I am a Junior at _____ High School. I am scheduled to graduate in June, 200__ and have recently started my search for a college to further my education. One of my priorities is to identify a college or university that has a good academic environment and a baseball program that might provide an opportunity for me to pursue my dream of playing collegiate baseball. Your program is high on my list of choices and I wanted to learn more about potential opportunities at *College Name*.

I have enclosed a brief "resume" that outlines my personal, academic, and baseball information. I realize there are rules governing when and how often a coach may contact me, but I am hoping that you can send me some more information about your school and baseball program. I am looking forward to learning more about your school and hope to be able to visit your campus and meet with the baseball coaches in the near future. Please feel free to contact me at any time if you have any questions for me. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
(sign the letter)

Player Name
Player Address
Player's Phone Number

PLAYER PROFILE

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____
CITY: _____
STATE: _____ ZIP _____
PHONE: _____
EMAIL: _____
DATE OF BIRTH ____/____/____
GRADUATION DATE (month - year) _____

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

HIGH SCHOOL: _____
ADDRESS: _____
CITY: _____
STATE: _____ ZIP _____
PHONE: _____

CORE GPA: _____
SAT SCORES: _____
(best composite)
ACT SCORES: _____
(best composite)

BASEBALL INFORMATION

HEIGHT: _____ WEIGHT: _____
BAT: _____ THROW: _____
PRIMARY POSITION: _____
OTHER POSITION(S): _____
60 YARD TIME: _____

HIGH SCHOOL COACH: _____
PHONE: _____

NOTE: *You may want to include your most recent high school/ summer team statistics. If you do, make sure you indicate which team they were from. Don't get elaborate, just use a similar format as follows:*

Games Played:

AVG:

AB:

RUNS:

HITS:

2B:

3B:

HR:

RBI:

WINS-LOSSES

IP:

ER:

ERA:

K:

BB:

VIDEOTAPE

If a coach cannot see a player in-person, a quality videotape is the next best thing. Videotapes are very valuable when evaluating high school players. They provide a general idea of the players "tools." Thus, if possible, all players should make a videotape to "showcase" their skills & abilities. Here are a few guidelines for a video...

- Tape should highlight all aspects of a player's game – hitting, running, throwing, fielding, etc. What to shoot and the angle of shots is listed below (Video Components).
- Best videotape is done from a practice/workout, not live game footage. Game footage can be included, but should be brief and at the end of the tape.
- Use a tripod when available – it avoids the camera from bouncing around.
- Tape should be about 5-10 minutes in length, no more.
- Do Not include fancy titles, music, etc. to the video. Coaches only want to see the player displaying his skill, nothing else.
- Label all tapes & cases with the player's name/address/phone number/high school. This avoids confusion with the coaches that may review several tapes during one sitting.

KEY – Make sure all players warm up before filming. You may want to go through a "practice" set of each drill before filming. This ensures that the player is ready to showcase his best efforts.

VIDEO COMPONENTS

Pitching – Recommended to film the pitcher from various angles to allow the coaches to see the pitcher's mechanics, arm slot, movement on the ball, and location. Best scenario is to show 5-7 pitches from each angle. If you can only film one angle, use the first one noted below...

- Behind the catcher (mechanics, movement, & location of pitches)
- Behind the mound (mechanics, movement, arm angle)
- Pitcher's Open Side (mechanics, arm angle, head position)

Hitting – Film the batter from the player's open side. Right-handed batter should be filmed from the 1st base line while left-handed batters should be filmed from the 3rd base line. Film the batter taking about 10-12 swings in batting practice. This allows the coaches to see the player's hip rotation and the path of their hands to the ball. If desired, you could also include a few swings from behind the plate to highlight the flight of the ball.

Fielding - Best angle is to film an infielder between 1st Base & Home Plate. This allows coaches to see a player's range, movement (1st step), hands fielding the ball, and throwing mechanics & strength. Be sure to include the throw to 1st Base so the coaches can see how the ball carries. Try 3 ground balls to the infielder moving in each of the following directions – left, right, in.

Outfielders should be shot from behind the pitcher's mound while they are in CF. Key is to show the player moving to the ball, fielding it, and then throwing to base. Best scenario is to hit them 1 ground ball and 1 fly ball to each of 3 directions – left, right, & in. Show the player's movement to the ball, how the field it into their throw, and the flight of the ball to 3B (from CF).

Running – Although not all that common, running can be included in your video at the end. Film a player running the bases, not during a 60-yard dash. Best films typically show a player taking a swing & running to 1st base, as well as a player simulating running from 1st to 3rd. If desired, you could also include a simulated steal from 1st – 2nd.

Catchers - Film the catchers from behind home plate and maybe a few shots filming him from down the first base line to show his open side and mechanics. Best scenario is to film pitches to highlight their ability to "frame" a pitch, receiving the pitch into a throwing position, and then actually throwing down to 2B. I suggest 5 pitches for each of these 3 segments.

LETTER ACCOMPANYING A VIDEO

Letter only to be used if prior contact was made via phone or letter

Coach's Full Name

College Name

College Address

Coach (*Name*),

I previously contacted you and the baseball program of my interest in *School Name* and wanted to follow up with you by forwarding a videotape of a recent workout of mine. I hope this video helps in your assessment of my abilities and potential to join your program. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at any time. I appreciate your time and hope to talk to you in the near future about possible opportunities for me at *School Name*.

Sincerely,

(sign the letter)

Player Name

Player Address

Player's Phone Number

NOTE: You can also include your team's schedule, if you have it, and reference it in the letter. Or, if you are scheduled to attend any camps or showcases, mention it and the dates in the letter as a means for their coaching staff to see you perform in person.

NO EARLY SIGNING – Now What?

You did not sign a Letter of Intent during the early signing period and you are wondering, Now What?? Is your dream of playing college baseball over? ABSOLUTELY NOT. Here are a few things to consider and do after the Early Signing Period has come and gone.

The early signing period has come and gone without any offers. You are about to start pre-season workouts for the high school season. Frustration is at an all-time high and your confidence has taken a beating over the past few weeks/months. What to do? Don't sweat it, you are not alone. The majority of college baseball players did not commit during the Early Signing Period and there is plenty of time left to realize your dream. There are more college scholarships awarded in the late signing period (April on) than in the early period. The larger Division I schools may sign the bulk of their kids in the early periods, but the majority of the lower Division I, and the remainder of the college/junior college programs sign their players in the later periods starting in April.

Your dream is alive, but it may have to be modified and there is work to be done. Several players and parents say the same thing - "We mailed letters to over 50 colleges just like you said to do and heard back (by mail) from almost all of them. Why didn't we receive any offers?" There can be a variety of answers to that question...

- The most common is that the college letters were sent to the top Division I programs in the country and did not include programs at all levels. The fact of the matter is, the Top 25 programs like LSU, Texas, Miami, Stanford receive hundreds/thousands of letters every year from potential prospects. Just because the school responds to your letter and/or mails you a questionnaire doesn't mean that the school is recruiting you or going to make an offer. You may need to "step back" and re-evaluate the level of baseball programs that you contacted. Not everyone can play for a Top 10 team and there is no shame in that.
- It is possible that a college liked you as a prospect, but your position was not a priority for them. Again, resources are limited and baseball coaches must narrow down prospect listings just like players narrow down college listings. Responses/questionnaires are mailed by colleges to keep options open, regardless of how high you may be on their "priority" list.

Therefore, it is "back to the drawing board" so to speak. It is time to re-visit your list of colleges and contact other schools that may interest you or have shown interest in you. Take a look at the following suggestions....

- Telephone any coach that contacted you before the early signing period and ask the coach if there is continued interest. If not, then ask the coach for any schools that he might recommend. Coach's talk - he may know of a school that would be a good fit for your abilities
- Start a new list of schools and send letters of introduction to those schools. Make sure that you include a copy of your high school baseball schedule with the letter.
- A week or so after mailing the letter, CALL the coach. This is very important in that it shows initiative and lets the coaches know that you are interested in their program. Players should call, not parents. There are no restrictions on high school players calling a college coach. If the coach is not in ask to leave a message or voice mail and ask for a return call. Tell them you are following up on a letter that you sent. You can use email for this too -- but telephone calls work better at this stage and are more time-responsive.
- Ask your high school or summer team coach to make a few calls to college coaches that he may know. You can also talk to professional scouts in the area, if you know of any that are familiar with you and your abilities. These scouts may be able to "recommend" a few programs to you.

It's not too late but it is time to be PRO-ACTIVE and make contact with schools. As the baseball season starts you will have even less time to make follow-up phone calls, etc.

You have been playing baseball most of your life. You don't want to quit on your dream now do you?

GOOD LUCK!

CAMPS & SHOWCASES

REMEMBER – The number one priority for all camps and showcases is to make money. Regardless of what they tell you, money is a bigger factor than getting you recognition. There are numerous camps & showcases offered throughout the year and all over the country. They can be expensive and you can't attend them all. Keeping that in mind, Camps & Showcases can be a great method for gaining exposure...Just Be Selective! Here are some things to think about when considering whether you should participate:

College Camps – Best to attend in the summer between JR/SR year or in the Winter.

Only attend camps at schools that you are extremely interested in. Be selective and act smart. If the coaches have already seen you play and have started recruiting you, then camps really won't enhance your chances. However, they do offer the easiest way for you to perform in front of a coach that may not otherwise see you play.

Other factors to consider when deciding if you should attend...

- When is it? Will I be missing anything at school that is important?
- Cost of camp? Is it affordable for me and my family?
- Does the cost include housing and meals – do you need a hotel room?
- Distance from home and cost to get there (drive vs. fly)
- Can you “buddy up” with a teammate/friend to cut costs (driving/hotel)?
- Is the camp instructional or is it a workout/showcase format?

Showcases – Showcases can be a great way to display your skills in front of numerous coaches at one time. Best time to participate is the summer prior to your Senior year.

Showcases can tend to be “overcrowded” at times and focus on specific aspects of a player (speed & velocity). Therefore, no matter which one you are considering, think about the same questions above, as well as the following...

- Who will be attending the showcase? Try to pinpoint schools of interest that plan to be there & confirm their participation before registering to attend.
- Can I perform after sitting for an extended period of time? Many showcases result in a player sitting for a few hours before they are called upon to workout. This is a result of the number of players in attendance. If you don't feel comfortable in doing so, consider showcases that limit participation.
- What is the format of the showcase? Too often the “workout” segment is on Saturday and then games are played on Sunday. Most college coaches that are not actually involved with the running of the showcase will leave after Saturday's workout. So, again, if you feel your strengths lie in playing a game as opposed to the workouts (running, throwing, hitting), then it may not be in your best interest to participate.
- Does my game include strengths in running speed and throwing velocity? In other words, players that may want to reconsider showcases are Outfielders that do run all that well or Pitchers that do not throw real hard. This doesn't mean that you are not a quality baseball player. But you have to think like the attending coaches who will be seeing 100 or more players at one time. They will set parameters and concentrate on the kids that meet these initial requirements. The easiest parameters to set are running speed and pitching velocity. Just think about it.

CAMPS & SHOWCASES

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT WHEN PARTICIPATING IN A SHOWCASE

- Arrive early – anticipate delays due to traffic, etc.
- Make sure you are fully dressed for the workout before walking onto the field. The only thing you should have to do upon arriving at the field is “lace up your cleats” and run onto the field.
- If possible, wear a shirt with your name on it so you are easily identifiable. If you do not have one, then consider wearing your team jersey so you can stand out among all participants.
- Appear relaxed and comfortable. Even if you are not, try to give that appearance.
- Enjoy yourself – players who are smiling and having fun are more apt to catch the eye of a coach
- Listen attentively to all directors and coordinators. Be alert and refrain from “small talk” with the other players.
- Do not ask for your results (times, etc.) until the event has finished.
- Understand it is one event, so even if you have a bad day, it is not the end of the world. Plus, coaches don’t always just look for results, they look at how you handle yourself and how well you handle adversity.

CAMPUS VISITS

The best way to learn about a college is to visit the campus and meet with school administrators, coaches, and current student-athletes. This will allow you to get a better feeling about whether you are comfortable at that school and with the fellow students. Of course, no one can visit every school they are interested in, so be discretionary and visit those that are high on your list. Try to diversify your visits, scheduling visits to large & small schools, as well as those in rural & urban areas. This will allow you to better compare what you are looking at. The following details some things to think about & ask during campus visits...

Things to See –

- Classroom Buildings
- Dormitories / Fraternities
- Athletic Field(s)
- Training Facilities
- Surrounding areas of the campus – what else is there?

Questions to Ask...

Coaches –

- Housing for Athletes?
- Pre-Season Conditioning Program/Schedule?
- Opportunities for Freshman / Do you have a JV Team?
- Availability of Academic Assistance / Tutors?
- Red-Shirting possibilities / likelihood?
- What position do you see me playing? Depth chart at my projected position?
- Opportunities / Likelihood of changing positions?
- Financial assistance available through athletic scholarships or academic grants?

Players –

- Coach's Style – fear & intimidation or positive reinforcement
- Typical practice routines
- Off-season workouts
- Academic environment – coaches stress classroom attendance & grades?
- Living arrangements – do all players live in same area or are you on your own??
- Balancing traveling with academics

Ask Yourself After the Visit –

- Did I feel comfortable about the college campus?
- Did I feel like I fit in with the students and baseball players that I met?
- Can I see myself here even if I didn't play baseball?
- Do I like the dorms / housing options available to student-athletes?
- Is the coach someone that I can see myself playing for – comfortable with him?

NCAA CLEARINGHOUSE

If you aspire to play collegiate baseball at the Division I or II level, you must register with the NCAA Initial – Eligibility Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse evaluates your academic record to determine if you are eligible to participate as a Freshman student-athlete. The Clearinghouse is not part of the NCAA, but rather an organization that services the NCAA.

Initial registration begins by completing/signing the Student Release Form (SRF) and returning it to the Clearinghouse with your registration fee. This provides authorization to the high school to release your transcripts and other information to the Clearinghouse, as well as providing approval to the Clearinghouse to share this information with NCAA member institutions. Most high schools offer the forms and assistance in completing them through the Athletic or Guidance Office.

You can also go online at www.ncaaclearinghouse.net to register. Click on “Prospective Student Athletes” and then go to “Registration Form for US Students” along the left-hand column. This will take you to the release & registration form – Please note that you will need a valid credit card to pay for the fee.

The best time to do this is after you complete your Junior Year of high school and your transcript reflects 3 years of high school grades. However, the final “certification” of your eligibility cannot be completed until a final Graduation Transcript is on file with the Clearinghouse.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO CONFIRM/VERIFY YOUR ELIGIBILITY STATUS WITH THE CLEARINGHOUSE AFTER GRADUATION. YOU DON'T WANT TO GET TO COLLEGE AND LEARN THAT YOU HAVE NOT BEEN “CLEARED” TO PLAY.

If you have any questions, you can contact the Clearinghouse at -

Clearinghouse Customer Services

NCAA Clearinghouse
301 ACT Drive
Box 4043
Iowa City, IA 52243-4043

Clearinghouse Hours: 8:00am - to 5:00 pm (Central Time) Monday through Friday

Customer Service Line: 877 – 262 - 1492
24-hour voice response: 877- 861-3003

More detail and information can be found at the following websites....

www.ncaa.org
www.ncaaclearinghouse.net

PROBABILITY OF PLAYING BASEBALL BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL

Statistics show the odds of playing baseball beyond high school are low, especially the percentage of high school players that will make it to the professional ranks.

High School Athletes	455,300
High School Senior Athletes	130,100
NCAA Athletes	25,700
NCAA Freshman Athletes	7,300
NCAA Senior Athletes	5,700
NCAA Athletes Drafted	600
High School to NCAA	5.6%
NCAA to Professional	10.5%
High School to Professional	0.5%

As you can see, less than 3 in 50 of high school senior baseball players (about 5.6%) will go on to play in the NCAA. In addition, approximately 1 in 200 (0.5%) will ever make it to the professional ranks. Couple that with the 10.5% of collegiate players that make it to the pros, and you see how difficult & competitive it is to play baseball beyond high school. All the more reason why you have to work hard in the classroom, on the field, and throughout your college search process.

SCHOLARSHIPS

NCAA Division I

- 11.7 full scholarships permitted by the NCAA – not every school offers the full allotment
- Schools offering all 11.7 are considered “fully funded” programs
- Full Scholarships for baseball are very rare and scholarships are typically divided up. Remember, a coach has 11.7 scholarships to accumulate a roster of 25 or more players.
- Fully Funded Schools may not compliment athletic scholarships with academic grants. However, if a program is not fully funded, schools may offer a package of athletic & academic funding. This varies from school to school.

NOTE: Ivy League & Patriot League members are considered Division I, but do not offer athletic scholarships. All aid is based upon “need” and academic qualifications.

NCAA Division II

- 9 full scholarships permitted by the NCAA.
- Full Scholarships for baseball are very rare and scholarships are typically divided up. Remember, a coach has only 9 scholarships to get a roster of 25 or more players.
- Combining athletic & academic scholarship money is permissible for academically qualified student-athletes. This varies from school to school.

NCAA Division III

- Athletic scholarships **are not** available
- The majority of Division III schools finding players academic and other funding aid.

NAIA

- 12 full scholarships
- Full Scholarships for baseball are very rare and scholarships are typically divided up. Remember, a coach has 12 scholarships to accumulate a roster of 25 or more players.
- Combining athletic & academic scholarship money is permissible

NJCAA Division I (JUCO)

- 24 full scholarships that includes Tuition, Room & Board, Books and Fees
- Combining athletic & academic scholarship money is permissible for academically qualified student-athletes. This varies from school to school.

NJCAA Division II (JUCO)

- 24 scholarships that includes Tuition and Books, but **No Room & Board or Fees.**
- Combining athletic & academic scholarship money is permissible for academically qualified student-athletes. This varies from school to school.

NJCAA Division III (JUCO)

- Athletic scholarships **are not** available – Most Junior / Community colleges are very inexpensive.

Scholarships are not 4-year contracts...they are renewable every year. Coaches can cut your scholarship money, increase it, or decide not to renew your scholarship at the end of each season. If you become injured, most coaches will renew your scholarship, but they don't have to.

Recruiting Definitions

Contact period: College coaches are permitted to make in-person, off-campus recruiting contacts and evaluations. Contact is any face-to-face encounter.

Dead period: College coaches are not permitted to make in-person recruiting contacts or evaluations on-campus or off-campus; nor are they permitted to schedule any campus visits...official or unofficial. However, phone calls, emails, and text messaging is permitted during this time.

Evaluation period: College coaches are permitted to be involved in off-campus activities to assess academic and athletic qualifications & abilities. No in-person, off-campus recruiting contacts with a prospective student-athlete are permitted.

Quiet period: College coaches are permitted to make in-person recruiting contacts only on the member institution's campus.

An example of how these definitions apply can be found in the 2008-2009 Recruiting Calendar

August 1 – 31, 2009	CONTACT PERIOD
September 1 – 10, 2009	QUIET PERIOD
September 11 – November 8, 2009	CONTACT PERIOD
November 9 – 12, 2009	DEAD PERIOD (Early Signing Period)
November 13 – January 6	QUIET PERIOD
January 7 – 11, 2010	DEAD PERIOD
January 12 - February 28, 2010	QUIET PERIOD
March 1 – April 11, 2010	CONTACT PERIOD
April 12 – 15, 2010	DEAD PERIOD
April 16 – July 31, 2010	CONTACT PERIOD

Detailed information about recruiting is available in the online edition of the NCAA Guide for the College-Bound Student-Athlete.

http://www.ncaastudent.org/NCAA_Guide.pdf

College Eligibility and other rules can be reviewed at the following link...

<http://www.ncaapublications.com/Uploads/PDF/2008-09%20CBSA9c29e699-00f6-48ba-98a9-6456c9b98957.pdf>