COLLEGE RECRUITMENT   
There are more than 1,600 college baseball programs in America.  All except NCAA DIII offer full or partial baseball scholarships. Even at the DIII level many schools will provide financial aid in the form of academic or other scholarships.

Help yourself out with Good Grades:  
Despite a plethora of scholarship opportunities across the various baseball divisions, the competition is indeed fierce.  You can give yourself a leg up by taking care of business in the classroom.  Achieve at least a 3.0 GPA and you are giving yourself a better chance at landing one of those coveted baseball scholarships.

Don’t Expect a Full Scholarship:  
Baseball is what they call an equivalency sport.  This means that colleges only have a limited number of scholarships to divide up between the entire roster.  For instance, a NCAA DI coach has 11.7 total scholarships and can divide those up any way he wants, perhaps giving half scholarships to virtually every player or giving full rides to just a select number of players, usually pitchers, catchers or power hitters.

At the DII level there are 9 scholarships per team, NAIA schools have 12 scholarships, and fully funded Junior Colleges can offer up to 24 scholarships.

Can You Play More Than One Position:  
Being willing and able to play more than one position is a definite plus in the college baseball recruiting process. If you can play multiple positions well a coach can then go out and recruit position specialists and use you to fill in the defense.

Another good strategy is to customize your pitch to college coaches based on what you know they are looking for.  For example, let’s say you do your research and learn that one of your target programs needs a strong-armed outfielder to bat lead-off and it just so happens that you led your league in walks and outfielder put outs.  Take that highly relevant information and communicate it to the coach.

Keep Track of Important Dates:  
Once you start high school it’s never too early to plan out a recruiting schedule.  Plan on attending a week-long baseball camp in the summer between your freshman and sophomore year.

Start looking into showcases your sophomore year.  Your junior year you should be attending advanced camps, preferably at some of the colleges on your short list.  Reserve July for showcase events.  Official visits start in November.

Keep in mind that any league you choose to play in during your later high school years should give you maximum exposure.  It’s nice to play with your friends when you’re younger, but as you inch closer to baseball scholarship deadlines you will want to play in front of the people who can help you land a baseball scholarship.

Junior College Has Serious Baseball Players:  
[Junior College baseball](http://www.collegesportsscholarships.com/junior-college-juco-baseball.htm) is a viable option out of high school, especially if you are a late bloomer or need to shore up your grades.  Maybe you just need some time to get stronger and develop–a year or two more. The JC level is an excellent opportunity to play against excellent competition before moving on to a four year university.

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IT IS NEVER TOO EARLY TO START THINKING ABOUT RECRUITMENT  
Can recruiting start too early? Not if you are in high school. Should coaches be trolling the little league fields looking for their next starting pitcher? Probably not.Just in the last year one prominent football school made headlines when it got a verbal commit from a seventh grade quarterback. Really? There is being diligent and proactive and then there is crossing the line.

Recruiting can vary from sport to sport. A great rule of thumb is to actively start the recruiting process your freshman year of high school.

FRESHMAN YEAR  
|During your freshman year you will want to meet with your high school counselor and come up with an academic game plan. Make sure you are meeting all the needs of the NCAA and NAIA in addition to the specific colleges that interest you. Look for summer camps that will help you develop as a student-athlete and gain you some valuable exposure to coaches as well.

SOPHOMORE YEAR  
During your sophomore year research programs you are interested in and contact coaches. Despite the common misconception, you as an athlete are allowed to contact coaches and talk to them, they are just not allowed to initiate the conversation. The summer after your sophomore year you should consider attending the camps held by those teams–this is a great way for coaches to see you in action, learn more about you, your work ethic, and your character.

JUNIOR YEAR  
|Your junior year is the most important in the recruiting process. This is the year coaches will be looking at your statistics and the admissions department will be looking at your academic achievements. Make sure that you have already established a relationship with coaches so that when your senior year starts they already know that you are interested in their program.

SENIOR YEAR  
By the time you start your senior year you should have narrowed down your list of possible schools to five or six. If you have not already established a relationship with the coach then you should do it at this point. You don’t want to miss getting recruited because you waited too long.

FIND YOUR HAPPY PLACE  
There is a happy balance when trying to get noticed by coaches. If you start too young coaches won’t want to talk to you because they are trying to focus on the next couple of years of recruits.

On the other hand if you wait too long you could miss opportunities that have already gone to other athletes since coaches were not aware of your talents or that you were interested in their program.

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**SEVEN THINGS PARENTS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT COLLEGE SPORTS RECRUITING**

**UNDERSTAND YOUR CHILD’S SKILL LEVEL**As a parent who is raising a successful high school student-athlete you have probably been thinking of ways to get your child noticed by college coaches. Encouraging your child is great, but knowing and understanding their skill level is most important when helping them find the right college and division level that is the best fit.

**TEACH YOUR KID TO BE PROACTIVE IN HIS RECRUITMENT**When going through the college sports recruitment process your child needs to realize that college coaches don’t want to speak to a student-athlete’s parents. Coaches will not be able to get a sense of who the athlete is when they deal primarily with the parents.

Some coaches may take a parent’s persistence as a negative warning sign and dismiss the athlete who is not personally taking part in his own recruitment. College coaches may stop recruiting a student-athlete they believe has pushy parents. Don’t let this happen to you.

**LET THEM DO IT THEMSELVES**You may feel you’re helping your busy child by doing some of the recruiting legwork for them. The truth is, though, that you may actually be hurting their chances at a scholarship by limiting the development of relationships with coaches. If your student-athlete is dedicated and willing to spend time on their own recruitment they will be fine contacting coaches on their own.

**GET AN OUTSIDER’S OPINION**To get a better understanding of how your son or daughter matches up in their sport have them ask to be evaluated by a non-biased coach (preferably someone you don’t have to pay). Attending sports camps and showcases can also help athletes improve their skills while getting advice from college coaches.

**HAVE AN OPEN MIND**Be open to obtaining lots of advice. Use the evaluation wisely and understand what your child will need to work on in order to make it to the college level of play. Be there to coach and encourage your child on the work (athletically and academically) that will have to be done early in order to play sports in college.

**BE INVOLVED, BUT NOT TOO MUCH**It is good to be a parent who is involved in your child’s sports recruitment. But he will benefit the most in the long run when you play a supportive role and let him be the star. As a parent it may be hard to let your child be in charge of his own recruiting, but it is his life and will essentially be his decision where he attends college.

**FINANCIAL AID AND SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES**Most questions that surround higher education are about money. Setting the standard early in terms of budgeting and what your family can afford to spend on your child’s education will help in athletic scholarship negotiations.

If a college is interested in your child they will find a way to accommodate them the best they can. Don’t disregard colleges because of the financial aspects. Be aware of the costs up front so you know what to expect.

Athletic scholarship money changes from year to year–making sure that your child asks the right questions when developing relationships with college coaches will help them gain the most out of a possible scholarship opportunity.