



RECRUITING GUIDE

trombly baseball recruiting guide

You could scour the Internet for hours and hours for recruiting advice and find numerous sites that provide tips and steps to follow that will assist you in the recruiting process. The coaching staff for Trombly Baseball wants to make the process as easy as possible, so to save you some time, we have compiled information that we believe will make the recruiting process a little bit easier, which we must acknowledge right away...it is NOT an easy process and it differs for each individual! This is not a cookie-cutter approach, but provides advice/structure that each student-athlete can use. That being said, there are NO guarantees! Put in the work and you give yourself a BETTER CHANCE at playing college baseball.

Reality Check

Your odds of playing baseball in college are steep. In 2017, approximately 11%-12% of ALL high school baseball players played college baseball; 2% played Division I. Those percentages will remain pretty constant by the time you are ready to select a college to attend.

Receiving an athletic scholarship is even less likely. Keep in mind that a scholarship of any kind is an investment being made by the school and/or the baseball program at that school. With that in mind, coaches are going to be highly selective in granting a scholarship or even part of a scholarship. Also consider, that while it does not happen frequently, but it does happen, a coach can withdraw a scholarship at any time, for any reason. Division I programs can offer 11.7 athletic scholarships; however, not all programs fund all 11.7 scholarships, and some don't have athletic scholarships (i.e. Ivy League). Typical Division I programs have 35 on a

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roster, so even those with all 11.7 scholarships divide those athletic scholarships (often into thirds). Division II programs can offer up to 9 athletic scholarships (roster average of 39); NAIA offer up to 12 (rosters of 38); JuCo offer up to 24 (rosters of 30). Division III offer 0 athletic scholarships (rosters of 34).

While playing Division I baseball is everyone's dream, the reality is that there are a much greater number of opportunities to play at another level; 82% of all college programs are NOT Division I. The reality is that most Division I programs have identified their targets/recruits by the time players are sophomores in high school. So, if Division I programs have not contacted you by the summer between your sophomore and junior years, the chances that a Division I school will come knocking become that much slimmer. However, there are exceptions; for instance, some programs will need to make late additions as a result of their in-coming freshmen getting drafted and signing to play pro ball.

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Regardless of division, there are programs at all levels that offer academic scholarships, and financial aid is always available on a needs basis. In fact, athletic or merit-based scholarship money far surpasses athletic-based money, almost 4-to-1 (\$11+ billion vs. \$3 billion).

For more info, check out

<http://www.scholarshipstats.com/baseball.html>

The site provides a breakdown for a large percentage of college baseball programs that includes location, division, average scholarship amounts, tuition, SAT/ACT limits, and acceptance rate.

The Good News

Trombly Baseball has everything a high school player could want and need in working the recruiting process and has a record of success, with approximately 650 players going on to play college baseball in the past 15 years. The coaches in the Academy have ties with numerous colleges across the country at every level. As high school coaches, many with college playing experience ourselves, we understand the process better than most since we work with high school players on a daily basis; we have been a part of the process ourselves and/or we have guided many of our own players along the way. Those who tout their professional/big league experience don't always understand the struggles of the other 99%. Those who have struggled through the process have learned much more than those who have had it come easy for them.

Our coaches have been through the process and have continued to adapt as the recruiting process has evolved

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throughout the years. “If you’re good, they will find you,” is less true now than it was 10 years ago. College coaches in general, but especially those with smaller budgets and from smaller schools, rarely scout players during the Spring season anymore and focus their attention on recruiting players in the Summer and Fall at tournaments where hundreds and even thousands of players compete for their attention. This creates a double-edge sword: College coaches are in attendance, but how do you stand out in the crowd? As you will see below, we will provide some suggestions to navigate this dilemma and we will also provide opportunities to capture the college coaches’ attention.

As one of the few Easton Elite travel ball organizations and a member of Program 15 and New Balance Future Stars Series, Trombly Baseball is held in high esteem among college coaches and tournament directors. This sterling reputation provides us access to the top tournaments and showcases in the country.

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against the top competition, that many other organizations simply cannot provide. If playing college baseball is your goal, you need to play in front of as many college coaches as possible, against the best competition you can find. Simply put, playing for Trombly Baseball will ensure that that part of the recruiting process is addressed.

Questions to Consider

- **DO YOU WANT TO START COLLEGE AT A 2-YEAR OR 4-YEAR SCHOOL?**
- **WHERE WILL YOU BE HAPPY WHEN/IF YOU NO LONGER PLAY BASEBALL?**

For some players, starting college at a JuCo is a better option for numerous reasons: academics, finances, location, etc. For others, starting at a 4-year university is the only way to go. Again, decide what is best for you and your family.

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Another reality check: You get recruited to play college baseball, but what if something happens that prevents you from playing anymore?

- **What if you get cut?**
- **What if you get hurt?**
- **What if the coach leaves?**
- **What if your athletic scholarship is pulled?**
- **What if? What if? What if?**

Also Consider

- **Academics**
- **Location/Atmosphere**
- **Finances**

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Academics

SAT, ACT, GPA are acronyms that mean a lot in this process. Are you excelling academically in high school? Are you taking any AP/IB/Honors courses? Have you been squeaking by with a 2.0? Do the schools you're interested in offer the major/area of study that interests you? Which schools have a reputation in that area of study that ensures employment upon graduation from college? Academic opportunities and rigor vary greatly in college, so be sure to match your academic needs with the schools you are interested in.

Location/Atmosphere

A big part of what makes up the "college experience" is influenced by the location of the school and its environment. Do you like the heat of Arizona? The humidity in Florida? Rain in the Pacific Northwest? Will you get homesick if you don't see Mom every weekend? Do you want to attend a large school, where you might be just a number in a large auditorium? Do you want to know

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your professors and classmates and they know you? Do you want to have a big-time college basketball or football team to root for? Do you prefer a small college in Podunk? Because of the greater time commitment and workload, are you okay not having much of a social life?

The location/atmosphere can be a make-or-break factor for a lot of college-bound student athletes. The amount of free time that you have as a high school student is significantly reduced by the demands in the classroom, on the field, and in the weight room.

Finances

Many of life's major decisions are based on money/affordability. Are mom and dad going to help pay the bill? Will you have to work, go to school, and play baseball? If you get a 50% scholarship (a big offer) to USC, will you be able to afford the other \$30,000+ a year? While you may be fortunate enough to earn a scholarship, there will likely be some additional amount to pay and it's important to know how much you and the family can afford.

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The college you choose or the plan you choose to take out of high school must consider these questions while other dynamics and experiences as you progress through high school will begin to help you narrow down your choice. The bottom line: Choose a plan and school where you will be happy away from the baseball field.

Give Yourself the Best Chance

The better your grades and SAT/ACT scores, the better your chances of playing baseball in college. Remember, your odds of earning an academic or merit-based scholarship far outweigh your odds of being awarded an athletic scholarship. College coaches recognize that good grades are an indication of qualities they are looking for in their baseball players: the ability to meet the college's academic standards, dedication, focus, good work ethic, and good time-management skills. Having good enough grades and/or test scores to qualify for a merit-based scholarship also increases your

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odds of playing college baseball because it allows college coaches to “save” an athletic scholarship for another student-athlete, while still bringing you onboard. Plus, a financial aid package and/or merit-based scholarship could cover more or even all of your college expenses, which that baseball scholarship you so desire likely will not.

Also realize that there will be several opportunities between now and the day you step onto the college campus of your choice. Those opportunities, no matter how important or insignificant you think they are, could become a tipping point in a college offering you an athletic scholarship or crossing your name off their recruiting board. Many of these opportunities have nothing to do with how well you play the game. Remember, a scholarship is an investment in the eyes of college coaches, and they want to minimize their risks while maximizing their rewards; remember how few

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scholarships each program has available, and you will begin to realize how much they are looking at you as a person and student, and not just as a baseball player. If you want to give yourself the best chance at playing college baseball, make sure that while you are a high school student you do everything we have outlined on the next page!



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Set realistic expectations for college

- o Focus on colleges that suit your skill set
- o Find schools where you can thrive academically

Take ownership of the recruiting process

- o Reach out to coaches of programs that you are interested in
- o Spend an average of an hour a day working the recruiting process

Maintain good academic standing

- o Don't cut class
- o Maintain your GPA (3.0 or higher is advised)
- o Take advantage of study halls and tutors
- o Don't cheat
- o Show respect to teachers and fellow students
- o Avoid detentions and suspensions
- o Develop good relationships with teachers, who will eventually write your college letters of recommendation
- o Meet with your guidance counselor to discuss NCAA/NAIA curriculum and grade requirements

Maintain poise and sportsmanship at all times. College coaches watch you during competition, even when you are not playing.

Always:

- o Cheer on teammates
- o Respond to umpires and/or bad calls in a professional manner
- o Interact positively with coaches
- o Keep your head up. Don't pout regardless of score or situation
- o Avoid fighting
- o Celebrate with class

Make yourself stand out for the RIGHT reasons

- o Make good choices ... every day.
- o Character matters
- o Post nothing on social media you may later regret
- o Dress like a student-athlete, not a thug

If these are things that you don't feel comfortable doing or you are not interested in following these suggestions, playing college baseball may not be as important to you as you think.

Freshman Year

The Spring of your Freshman year can be very telling about what level you might be able to play in college. For instance, if you are a starter on a highly competitive varsity team in a highly competitive league, chances are Division I schools may want to keep an eye on you and you may receive a phone call or mail from some of them. On the other hand, if you are a backup on the Freshman team, chances are you are going to have to work harder and do more to make yourself stand out when you play in the Summer and Fall.

Sophomore Year

By the Spring of your sophomore year, you should have a more realistic idea as to what level would best suit your skill set in college. Again, consider what level you are on for your high school program. Also consider the amount of contact received from colleges and what levels are contacting you. These are good indicators. If Division I programs haven't expressed interest, that's okay, there is still time, but you might want to start focusing on Division II, NAIA, Division III, or JuCo and expanding your research into those levels, if you haven't already. Remember, this is a fluid process and ever-changing, so as things change, adjust your plan as necessary.

Junior Year

Your Junior year is considered by many to be the most crucial year in high school, both academically and athletically. If you are not starting on the varsity team as a Junior, it becomes highly unlikely that Division I programs will be a good fit for your skill set. An athletic scholarship also becomes less likely if you are not starting by this time; there are exceptions, but very few. Again, it is time to reevaluate your expectations and start narrowing down what is the best fit for your academic and athletic talents.

Senior Year

Senioritis looms large and can sabotage all the hard work you put into the first three years of high school. You are almost to the finish line, but you need to continue to work hard in the classroom and on the field, whether you are committed to a college or not. Ideally, you will know which school you will be attending before Spring, but that is not an absolute; you may extend your decision into May!

Freshman Year Checklist

- Sit down as a family and start discussing what makes a school desirable and questions that you will need to answer throughout the process (cost, location, majors, academic requirements and rigor, facilities, etc.).
- Meet with your counselor and discuss your desire to play college baseball. Develop a schedule with core courses that meet NCAA requirements.
- Take AP/IB/Honors level courses if you can be successful (grades of B or higher).
- Look for and participate in Community Service activities.
- Be open and willing to ask coaches for an evaluation and feedback on your strengths and weaknesses.
- Attend college baseball games at every level possible to see what each level of play looks like and to see how coaches interact with their players.
- If you haven't done so before your Freshman year, create a profile on FieldLevel and create a list of target schools that you are interested in. Start with at least 25 schools, across all levels; you may increase or decrease this number over time.
- Start researching those schools online and in person (if possible) to discover answers to those questions that you and your family have developed
- Begin taking and uploading video of yourself performing in games and practices. Upload to FieldLevel and/or create a YouTube page.
- Develop a Contact List for any emails, phone calls, snail mail you send and/or receive and keep track of those correspondences.
- Find out when, how often, and how coaches are allowed to contact you. There are "dead" periods and "quiet" periods that you can contact them, but they can't contact you.

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- Send short emails to college coaches and Cc the coaching staff, briefly introducing yourself and expressing your interest in their programs.
- Respond to ALL contacts that reach out to you, even if you aren't interested; you can politely decline their interest.
- In the Summer and Fall, play in the highest level tournaments/showcases (USA Tournament, VTools, Fall Classics, etc.).
- Prior to playing in tournaments/showcases, see if any colleges that you are interested in will be in attendance.
- Send emails with your team's schedule at least a week before to those colleges.
- Follow up with coaches, even if they weren't there, after the events to let them know how you did. Find a positive in your performance and highlight that.
- If the out-of-town events you compete in are near colleges that you are interested in, kill two birds with one stone and go check out the campus and facilities.
- If you have received contact from college coaches, and it fits your schedule, set up an unofficial visit and/or watch a Fall practice.
- Attend one or two local camps to see how you compare to other campers.

Sophomore Year Checklist

- Have on-going conversations with your family and school counselor about your plans to play baseball in college and any changes to your plans.
- Start to determine the most important attributes your prospective college should have.
- Take PLAN and/or PSAT.
- Start preparing to take the SAT and/or ACT test in your Junior year.
- Register with NCAA, NAIA, NJCAA eligibility centers.
- Complete recruiting questionnaires for all schools on your list and follow up with an email.
- Review your list of 25+ schools and start eliminating those that are no longer a good fit; add schools that have shown interest in you or that you have become interested in; your list may be up to 50 at this point.
- Start to prioritize or rank schools that meet your criteria.
- Send videos or links to videos to coaches as part of your correspondence, if you haven't been doing so already.
- Start looking at the rosters and schedules of the programs that interest you and start to determine if you would fit in there in a couple years and/or if they recruit from your area.
- Visit local colleges, even if you aren't interested in them, just to get an idea of what you want to look for when you do visit those colleges you are interested in.
- Visit a few colleges on your list that you have ranked at or near the top of your list, if it fits your schedule and budget.
- Attend prospect camps, preferably invitee camps that are for selected players, at schools that are at or near the top of your list.
- Avoid prospect camps, or revenue camps, that are simply cattle calls where anyone and everyone gets invited.

In addition to the these, continue the steps outlined during your Freshman year and/or do those that you did not get to.

Junior Year Checklist

- Register for the SAT and/or ACT and mark "9999" in the code box so that your scores are sent to the NCAA Eligibility Center. Your eligibility status will be sent to schools that request it.
- Take the SAT and/or ACT tests in the Fall semester, so you can retake them in the Spring, if you determine it is in your best interest to try again for a higher score.
- Request your transcripts be sent to the NCAA Eligibility Center at the end of the semester for a preliminary evaluation.
- Take SAT Subject Tests if the schools you are considering require them or if taking them will improve your chances for admission.
- Take AP/IB tests if your coursework has prepared you for them.
- Ask teachers and coaches to write letters of recommendation.
- Start to narrow down your college list, eliminating schools that have stopped showing interest in you or that you are no longer interested in for whatever reasons.
- Make sure your athletic profile on FieldLevel is complete, up to date with a 2 to 3 minute highlight video, and verified by your high school coach or Trombly staff.
- Try to make as many unofficial visits to your target schools that have shown mutual interest during Fall and/or Christmas Breaks, or other times that fit your schedule and budget; again, schedule to meet with the coaching staff, if possible.
- When corresponding with college coaches, try to gauge where you stand and what their time frame is for making scholarship offers. Don't be afraid to ask!
- Try to make weekly contact with updates regarding your accomplishments in the classroom and on the field.
- Let coaches know (politely) if you are no longer interested in attending their schools.

In addition, continue the steps outlined during your Freshman and Sophomore years and/or do those that you did not get to.

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- o **Narrow down your your list of prospective colleges to 10-20 by the end of Summer.**
- o **Verbally commit if your top choice offers you. Remember, the process is not over just because you verbally commit! Nothing is official until you sign your NLI as a senior.**
- o **Along with the other top-line tournaments, play in the Arizona Junior Fall Classic, especially if you are not committed.**

In addition, continue the steps outlined during your Freshman and Sophomore years and/or do those that you did not get to.

Senior Year Checklist

- **Narrow your list of colleges down as much as possible and complete the application process as early as possible.**
- **Ask coaches what their timeframe is for offering scholarships and if there is a fee waiver for the application process.**
- **Complete and submit the FAFSA.**
- **Update your status with NCAA, NAIA, NJCAA Eligibility Centers.**
- **Ask coaches about financial aid and complete financial aid applications with their assistance.**
- **Contact players at your prospective colleges and ask for feedback about the school and baseball program.**
- **Take official visits, up to 5, if colleges offer. You can ask if they don't offer. Some may not offer anyone, but if they offer you, that is a strong indication that they want you wearing their uniform!**
- **Continue to respond to ALL coaches that contact you and let them know where you are in the decision-making process, or let them know if you are not interested in attending their college.**
- **If you have not committed by the Fall of your Senior year, play in the Arizona Senior Fall Classic.**
- **Continue to keep in touch with coaches on a weekly basis, especially if the interest is mutual.**
- **Coaches at colleges that do not offer athletic scholarships will help you with obtaining financial aid and help expedite the merit-based scholarship application process.**
- **If you are accepting an athletic scholarship, sign your National Letter of Intent.**
- **Request final transcripts and proof of graduation be sent to the college of your choice.**
- **Ask your coach for a summer workout schedule and start preparing for your Freshman year in college!**