

Transfer terms for NCAA

Eligibility Timeline

Division I 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 red shirt, if you do not attend school or even if you go part-time during your college career.

Division II 10-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 fulltime 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.

Progress-toward-degree: A system of academic benchmarks ensuring a student-athlete makes progress towards a bachelor's degree at a reasonable pace.

Season of competition: NCAA student-athletes are allowed to compete for four seasons in one sport. Division I and II student-athletes who compete for any amount of time during a season use up one season in their sport. Division III student-athletes who practice or compete after the first date of competition in their sport use up one season in their sport.

Exceptions

One-time transfer exception: If you transfer from a four-year school, you may be immediately eligible to compete at your new school if you meet ALL the following conditions:

- You are transferring to a Division II or III school, or you are transferring to a Division I school in any sport other than baseball, men's or women's basketball, football (Football Bowl Subdivision) or men's ice hockey. If you are transferring to a Division I school for any of the previously-listed sports, you may be eligible to compete immediately if you were not recruited by your original school and you have never received an athletics scholarship.
- You are academically and athletically eligible at your previous four-year school.
- You receive a transfer-release agreement from your previous four-year school.

Waiver: An action that sets aside an NCAA rule because a specific, extraordinary circumstance prevents you from meeting the rule. An NCAA school may file a waiver on your behalf; you cannot file a waiver for yourself. The school does not administer the waiver, the conference office or NCAA does.

Initial Eligibility

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

National Letter of Intent: NCAA schools that are part of the program may send a [National Letter of Intent](#) to a prospective student-athlete they have recruited. The letter is a legally-binding contract. It explains what athletics financial aid the school agrees to provide the student-athlete for one full academic year, only if the student is admitted to the school and is eligible for financial aid under NCAA rules. If you sign a National Letter of Intent, you agree to attend that school for one academic year and other schools that are part of the National Letter of Intent program can no longer recruit you.

Recruited: If a college coach calls you more than once, 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 to be recruited. In Division I, a written offer of financial aid to attend summer school before full-time enrollment does not mean you have been recruited.

Schools

Certifying school: The new school that you want to attend determines whether you are eligible to play.

Membership: The colleges, universities and athletics conferences that make up the NCAA. The members introduce and vote on rules. They establish programs to govern, promote and further the purposes and goals of intercollegiate athletics. The membership is divided into three main divisions — Divisions I, II and III — each with its own governing structure.

Students

Nonqualifier (Division I or II): A student-athlete planning to attend a Division I or II school who has not met academic requirements to be a Division I or II qualifier. If you are a nonqualifier, you may not practice, compete or receive an athletics scholarship from a Division I or II school during your first year of full-time enrollment. You will have only three seasons of competition in Division I, although you may earn a fourth season by completing 80 percent of your undergraduate degree before the start of your fifth year of in college.

Partial qualifier (Division II): A student-athlete who has not met all the academic requirements necessary to be a qualifier but has completed the necessary core courses at the minimum GPA or achieved the minimum SAT/ACT score. If you are a partial qualifier, you may practice on campus and receive financial aid from a Division II school, but you may not compete for one academic year. Division I does not have partial qualifiers.

Qualifier: A student who, for purposes of determining eligibility for financial aid, practice and competition, has:

- Graduated from high school;
- Successfully completed the required core curriculum consisting of a minimum number of courses in specified subjects within prescribed timeframe;
- Obtained a specified minimum GPA in the core curriculum; and
- Obtained a specified minimum SAT or ACT score.

Redshirt: In Divisions I or II, redshirting refers to someone who is enrolled full-time at a school, but does not play for an entire academic year for the sole purpose of saving a season of competition. A redshirt does not play in any college games or scrimmage in a given sport for an entire academic year, even though that student is otherwise eligible. If you do not play in a sport the entire academic year, you have not used a season of competition. However, if you play in even one second of a game as a college student-athlete, you are not a redshirt. Redshirting does not exist in Division III because if you play or practice after your first opportunity to compete, you are charged with a season of participation.

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.

Transfer Process

Academic year in residence: Under the basic transfer regulations, you must spend an academic year in residence at the school to which you are transferring. If you transfer from a four-year college to an NCAA school, you must complete one academic year in residence at the new school before you can play for or receive travel expenses from the new school, unless you qualify for a transfer exception or waiver. To satisfy an academic year in residence, you must be enrolled in and successfully complete a full-time program of studies for two-full semesters or three-full quarters. Summer school terms and part-time enrollment do not count toward fulfilling an academic year in residence.

Permission-to-contact: If you are enrolled full time in a four-year school, athletics staff members from an NCAA school cannot contact you or your parents unless they first have a letter from your current athletics director (or athletics administrator designated by the athletics director). If your current school does not grant you written permission-to-contact, the new school cannot encourage you to transfer and — in Divisions I and II — cannot give you an athletics scholarship until you have attended the new school for one academic year. If you are transferring from a school that is not a member of the NCAA or NAIA, you do not need a permission-to-contact letter.

Self-release: If you are a student at a Division III school and you want to transfer to another Division III school, you may issue your own permission-to-contact self-release to allow another Division III school to contact you about transferring.

Transferable credit hours: Credit hours earned at your previous school that your new school will accept as degree credit. Each school determines how many and which credit hours are acceptable for transferring.

Transfer trigger: A condition that affects your transfer status. A transfer student is a student who transfers from a collegiate institution after having triggered any of the conditions:

- Enrolled full-time during any term and attended class or in Division I if you are enrolled full time and are on campus on the opening day of classes.
- Reported for a regular squad practice.
- Practiced or competed while enrolled less than full-time..
- Received institutional financial aid while attending summer school.