



ELIGIBILITY CENTER



NCAA
GUIDE FOR
TWO-YEAR
TRANSFERS
2023-24

For Student-Athletes
at Two-Year Colleges

Inside

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ELIGIBILITY CENTER

Information

Visit

eligibilitycenter.org

ncaa.org/transfer

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Contact

NCAA legislative line:

877-917-6008, Monday-Friday

10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern time

International (including Quebec):

on.ncaa.com/intlcontact

Have a question about transferring?

- » Read this guide.
- » Search frequently asked questions at ncaa.org/studentfaq.
- » Review the [Two-Year Transfer Best Practices flyer](#).
- » Visit ncaa.org/transfer.
- » Contact the NCAA.

Other Resources

- » [National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics](#)
- » [NCAA Division I](#)
- » [NCAA Division II](#)
- » [NCAA Division III](#)



What Should You Consider Before Transferring?

Student-athlete success on the field, in the classroom and in life is at the heart of the NCAA's mission. Your college experience gives you the opportunity to receive a quality education and take your place among the student-athletes who have attended college, played sports, received their degrees and gone on to make important contributions to society.

The decision to transfer to another school involves important and sometimes difficult choices. Make sure you **understand the rules**, the options and the potential consequences of your decision. You do not want to risk your education or your chance to play NCAA sports.

This guide is for student-athletes transferring from a two-year school (junior or community college) to a four-year NCAA member school. Students currently attending a four-year school should refer to the **Guide for Four-Year Transfers**, available at ncaapublications.com.

Focus on Your Degree

More than 500,000 student-athletes compete in NCAA sports but few move on to compete at the professional or Olympic level. For the rest, the experiences of college athletics and the life lessons they learn along the way will help them as they pursue careers in business, education, athletics administration, communications, law, medicine and many more fields.

Professional opportunities are extremely limited and the likelihood of a college athlete becoming a professional athlete is low. The likelihood of an NCAA student-athlete earning a college degree is much greater: The graduation success rate for student-athletes attending a Division I school is 89%. The academic success rate for Division II is 76%; the rate for Division III is 88%.

Percentage of College Athletes Who Become Professional Athletes

	Men's Basketball	Women's Basketball	Football	Baseball	Men's Ice Hockey
High School Student-Athletes	540,800	399,100	1,006,000	482,700	35,300
NCAA Student-Athletes	18,800	16,500	73,700	36,000	4,300
NCAA Student-Athletes Drafted	52	31	254	791	71
*Percentage High School to NCAA	3.5%	4.1%	7.3%	7.5%	12.3%
*Percentage NCAA to Professional	1.2%	0.8%	1.6%	9.9%	7.4%

*Percentages of NCAA to major professional figures are based on the number of draft picks made in the NBA, WNBA, NFL, MLB and NHL drafts.

Learn as Much as You Can

If you decide to transfer, the NCAA wants to help your education and sports participation continue as smoothly as possible. But you have a responsibility as well. Learn as much as you can to protect your athletics eligibility and ensure that you will graduate on time. While staff at the NCAA and its member schools can give you advice, you need to understand how transfer rules apply to you before you decide to move to a new school.

This guide introduces you to the key issues involved in transferring. Before you transfer, you may need more information. Key people, including your coach or compliance administrator, can help you successfully work through the process. Take advantage of all the information available to you.

- » Visit [ncaa.org/transfer](https://www.ncaa.org/transfer) for FAQs and resources on key topics.
- » Talk to people at your current school, including staff in the athletics department, compliance office or your academic advisor.
- » Call the [conference](#) of the school you are considering.
- » Call the NCAA at 317-917-6008, Monday-Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern time.



Transfer Checklist

ADMISSIONS

Have you applied to the admissions department at the school you are transferring to?

INITIAL ELIGIBILITY

Have you registered with the NCAA Eligibility Center?

- » To play at a Division I or II school (or Division III school if you are an **international student-athlete**), you must register with the Eligibility Center at eligibilitycenter.org.
- » See [page 9](#) for more information.

ELIGIBILITY CLOCK

Do you have any remaining eligibility to compete in your sport after transferring?

- » Student-athletes have four seasons to compete in each sport.
- » See [Eligibility Clock](#) for more information.

TRANSFER ELIGIBILITY

*In some cases, student-athletes who transfer to an NCAA school must **sit out of competition** for an **academic year of residence** at their new school.*

- » You may be able to compete immediately if you meet division-specific two-year transfer criteria and/or a transfer exception.
- » See [transfer exceptions](#) for more information.

OTHER TRANSFER REQUIREMENTS

Do you meet other transfer requirements?

- » After initiating the proper transfer protocol with your current school, you may ask the compliance staff at your new school if you meet all transfer requirements.



How Do Transfer Rules Apply to You?

Note: This following information is for student-athletes transferring from a two-year school (junior or community college) to a four-year school. Students currently attending a four-year school should refer to the [Guide for Four-Year Transfers](#), available at ncaapublications.com.

You may be wondering how soon you can compete after you transfer. Before you can answer that question, you need to follow these steps to understand how the transfer rules apply to your situation:

1. **Determine if you are a transfer student-athlete.**
2. **Decide where you are going.**
3. **Understand your initial-eligibility status.**
4. **Register with the NCAA Eligibility Center, if needed.**

The rules also depend on whether you currently attend a two- or four-year school. For instance, if you attend a **two-year school** (community college or junior college) and want to transfer to an NCAA Division I or II school, you may need to graduate first from your two-year school before you can compete at your new school. If you transfer before you graduate, you may have to sit out of competition for an **academic year of residence** before you can compete.

The following information will help guide you through the process to determine if you qualify to transfer and what you must do to transfer.

1. Determine if You Are a Transfer Student-Athlete

To learn which transfer rules apply to your situation, you first need to determine whether your situation meets the common definition of a transfer.

Ask yourself if you have met any of the conditions – called “**transfer triggers**” – of a typical transfer situation:

1. Have you been a full-time student at a two- or four-year school during a regular academic term?
2. Have you practiced or competed with a college team? This includes during any full- or part-time enrollment and includes reporting to any practice that occurred prior to the start of an academic term.
3. Have you received athletics aid from a college while attending summer school?
4. Have you received financial aid while attending an NCAA Division I school during the summer?

If you answered “yes” to any of the above questions, you are likely a transfer student-athlete because you have met conditions that trigger your transfer status. Now you need to learn how to meet the transfer rules so you can play your sport at a new NCAA school.

If you answered “no” to all the above questions, you probably are not a transfer student-athlete and the transfer rules may not apply to you. Contact the compliance staff at your new school and ask them to certify your eligibility status.

CASE STUDY

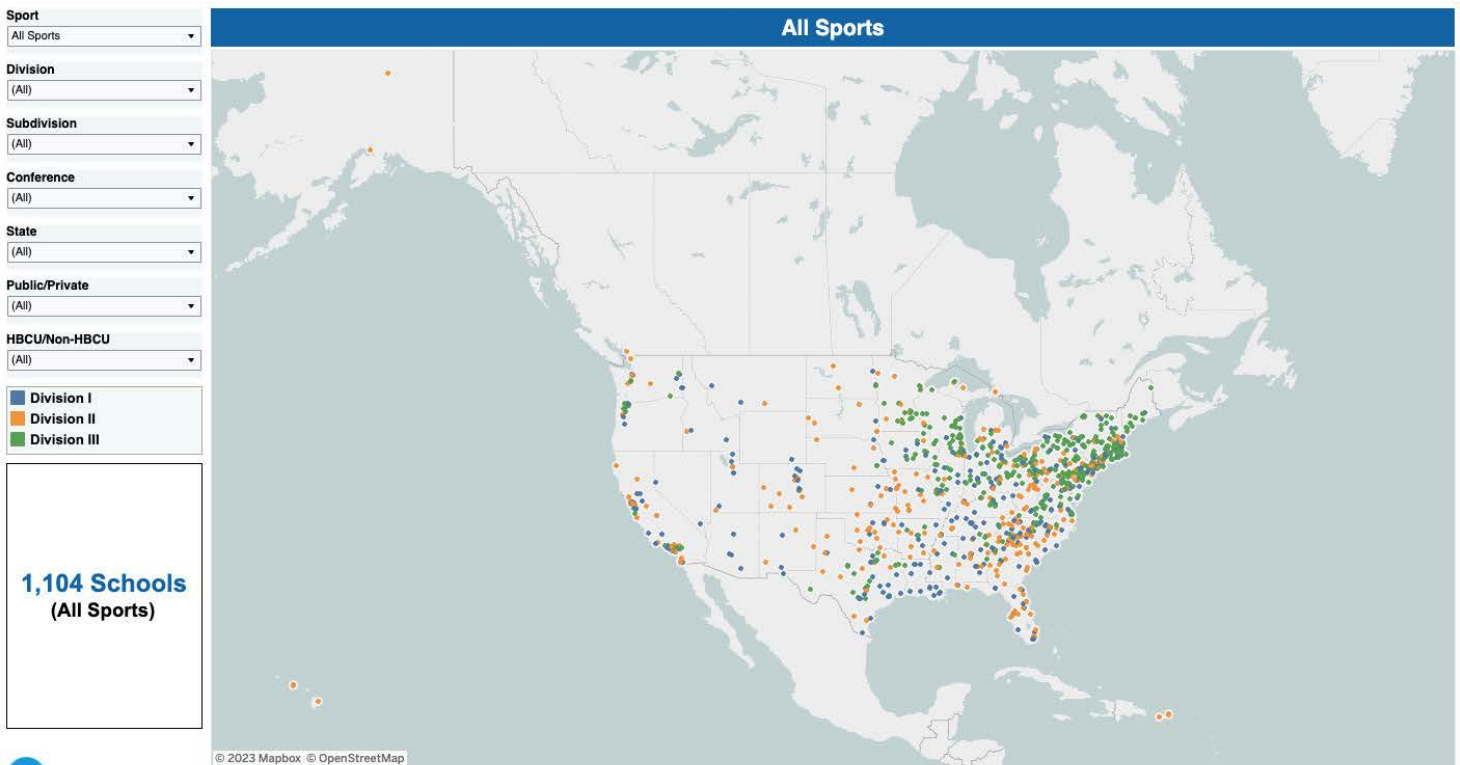
Jaylon was recruited to play basketball at a two-year school. He enrolled in classes as a full-time student and attended class on the first day of the semester.

On the fourth day of class, Jaylon went to the registrar's office and dropped from 12 credit hours to nine, making him a part-time student for the rest of the semester.

At the end of the semester, Jaylon decided that he wanted to transfer to an NCAA school.

Is Jaylon a transfer student-athlete?

Yes. The transfer rules applied to Jaylon the minute he became a full-time student and went to class on the first day of the semester.



Note: This map is updated annually and is based on data from the 2022-23 academic year. All provisional schools that reported sponsorship data to NCAA are included. Schools in reclassifying status are included in their current primary division. Hover over each school for details on membership status.

2. Decide Where You Are Going

Now that you know if you are a transfer student-athlete, you need to decide which school you want to attend. As you think about new schools, keep in mind academics are just as important as athletics. Your new school should help you meet all your goals - on the field, in the classroom and in life.

Each NCAA school is part of a division and a conference, and has its own admission policies. Transfer rules are different for each NCAA division and may be more restrictive for some conferences.

Learn more about your new school's division

As you research schools, take time to learn more about each NCAA division. Schools in Divisions I and II may offer athletics scholarships to cover tuition, fees, room and board, and books. Division III schools do not award athletics scholarships but do offer financial aid based on academics or need.

» See [page 8](#) for more on the NCAA's three divisions.

Learn more about your new school's conference

In some cases, conference transfer rules can be more restrictive than NCAA rules, so you need to have a clear picture before you make a move. For instance, conferences may differ on how long you must attend a new school before you may compete.





Learn more about your new school's admission policies

Meeting the NCAA transfer rules does not guarantee you will be admitted to a new school. You also need to meet the school's admission requirements - including academic standards - before you can play NCAA sports.

- » Visit on.ncaa.com/MemberMap for a full list of NCAA schools, sorted by division, sport and conference, and a database with contact information for each school's athletic department.
- » Talk to the academic, admissions and financial aid offices at the school you wish to attend to make sure the school will be a good fit for you.

Our Three Divisions

The NCAA's three divisions were created in 1973 to align like-minded campuses in the areas of fairness, competition and opportunity.

DIVISION	 DIVISION I	 DIVISION II <i>MAKE IT YOURS</i>	 DIVISION III <i>DISCOVER DEVELOP DEDICATE</i>
NUMBER OF SCHOOLS*	351 (33%)	293 (27%)	433 (40%)
MEDIAN UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT	8,449	2,300	1,655
STUDENTS WHO ARE ATHLETES	1 in 22 	1 in 9 	1 in 6 
AVERAGE NUMBER OF TEAMS PER SCHOOL	19	16	19
PERCENTAGE OF NCAA STUDENT-ATHLETES IN EACH DIVISION	 36%	 25%	 39%
ATHLETICS SCHOLARSHIPS	Multiyear, cost-of-attendance athletics scholarships available 58% of athletes receive athletics aid	Partial athletics scholarship model 67% of athletes receive athletics aid	No athletics scholarships 80% of athletes receive nonathletics aid
DID YOU KNOW?	 Division I student-athletes graduate at a higher rate than the general student body.	 Division II is the only division with schools in Alaska, Puerto Rico and Canada.	 Division III's largest school has 27,642 undergraduates. The smallest? 228 .

*The number of schools for each division is current as of the 2022-23 academic year. This does not include reclassifying, provisional or exploratory schools. Student-athlete participation numbers include NCAA championship sports only and are current as of the 2021-22 academic year.

How is each division governed?

NCAA schools develop and approve legislation for their own divisions. Groups of presidents and chancellors lead each division in the form of committees with regularly scheduled meetings.

What are the eligibility requirements in each division?

If you want to compete at an NCAA school, you must meet academic and/or amateurism standards set by NCAA members. Academic and amateurism standards are outlined in this guide and can be found on each division's page on ncaa.org.

3. Understand Your Initial-Eligibility Status

Once you know whether you are a transfer student-athlete and have identified the school you want to attend, you need to find out what your initial-eligibility status is for your new school.

Why do you need to know your initial-eligibility status?

In part, your initial-eligibility status determines which transfer rules apply to you and how many seasons of competition you may have remaining to play at your new school.

What is your initial-eligibility status?

High school student-athletes who want to compete in NCAA sports during their first year at a Division I or II school need to meet certain division-wide academic standards. Your initial-eligibility status indicates whether you meet the academic standards to compete in your first year at a Division I or II school.

The NCAA Eligibility Center will determine your initial-eligibility status based on the NCAA-approved **core courses** you took in high school, the grades and number of credits you earned in those courses. If you do not have an academic initial-eligibility status, talk to the compliance office at your new school.

Division III schools set their own admissions and academic requirements. If your first college enrollment was at a Division III school, you probably were not assigned an academic initial-eligibility status by the Eligibility Center. However, **international student-athletes** (first-year enrollees and transfers) enrolling at a Division III school after Aug. 1, 2023, must be certified as an amateur by the Eligibility Center. If you are transferring to a Division III school, you need to meet the admission requirements of the school you plan to attend.

4. Register With the NCAA Eligibility Center, if Needed

By now you should know **if you are a transfer student-athlete**, which school you want to attend and what your initial-eligibility status is. If you want to transfer to a Division I or II school and you have never registered with the Eligibility Center, you need to visit eligibilitycenter.org to register before you continue the transfer process.

If you have not registered with the Eligibility Center, your **initial-eligibility status** is “nonqualifier.” Schools cannot assume you are a qualifier or partial qualifier.



Visit ncaa.org/student-athletes/future to learn more about initial-eligibility statuses.



When Can You Play?

There are several aspects of your college experience that determine when you may compete after transferring. Find the chart on the following pages that applies to you to figure out when you may compete.

Depending on your college experience, you may be able to compete as soon as you transfer or you may need to spend one **academic year** as a full-time student at your new school before you are eligible to compete.

For your academic year of residence to count, you must attend classes only at the school where you plan to compete and be a **full-time student** (at least 12 credit hours). You cannot meet this requirement by attending your new school part time or by not attending school at all.

Each school determines its own full-time status, so check with the compliance office at your new school to find out how many credit hours you need to take.

- » For a semester or quarter to count toward your academic year of residence, you must enroll before the 12th day of that academic term.

Additional progress-toward-degree rules from the NCAA, your new school or your new school's conference may affect when you can play. For more information, talk to the compliance office at your new school.

If you are an international student and attend a two-year school outside of the United States, use the rules for student-athletes at four-year schools in the **Four-Year Transfer Guide**.

CASE STUDY

Jackson transferred to an NCAA school before the beginning of the school year and is sitting out a year. He completed 12 credit hours in the fall and 12 credit hours in the spring. At his new school, students who take 12 credit hours are considered full-time students.

Did Jackson complete his academic year of residence?

Yes. Since Jackson completed two full-time semesters (12 + 12), he satisfied the full-time requirement for the year.

CASE STUDY

Sydney transferred to an NCAA school and is sitting out a year. At her new school, students with 12 credit hours are considered full-time students.

Sydney completed 12 hours in the fall. In the spring, she enrolled for nine hours and was considered a part-time student.

Did Sydney complete her academic year of residence?

No. Sydney did not complete two semesters as a full-time student. She must still complete a second semester as a full-time student before she has fulfilled her academic year of residence.

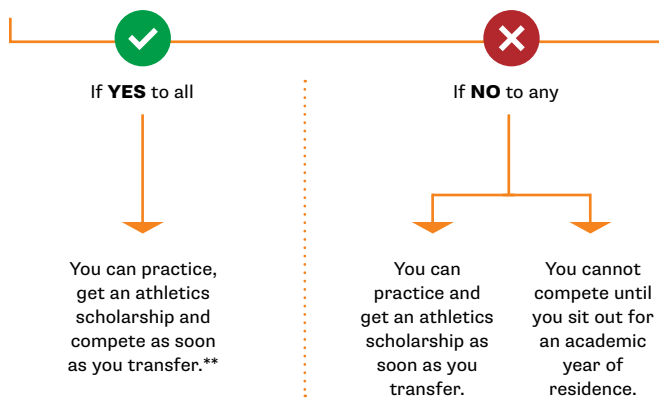
Planning To Go Division I 2-4 TRANSFER

**YOU PLAN TO ATTEND A DIVISION I SCHOOL.
YOU HAVE NEVER ATTENDED A FOUR-YEAR SCHOOL FULL TIME.**

You are a qualifier:

At your two-year school, did you:

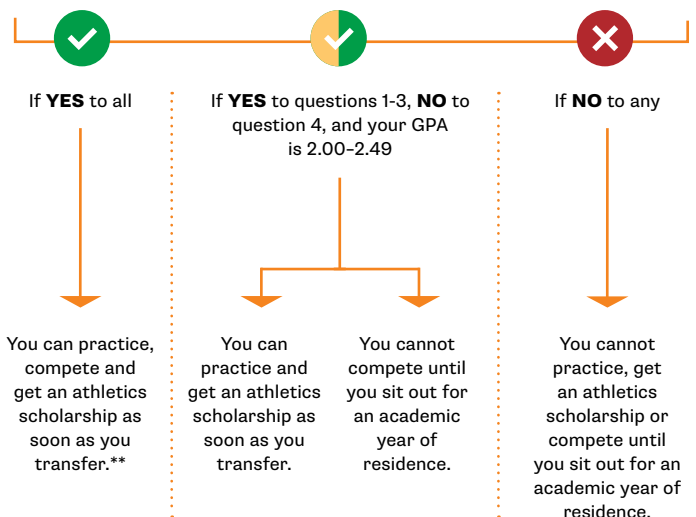
1. Complete at least **one semester** or **quarter** as a **full-time student**? *Summer school does not count.*
2. Complete an average of **12 transferable credit hours** in each term you attended full time?*
3. Earn a **GPA of 2.5** in those transferable credit hours?



You are a nonqualifier or academic redshirt (or qualifier who does not meet criteria listed on the left side of this page):

At your two-year school, did you:

1. Graduate from your **two-year school**? You must have earned **25% of your credit hours** at the two-year school awarding your degree.
2. Complete at least **three semesters** or four quarters as a **full-time student**? *Summer school does not count.*
3. Complete **48 transferable credit hours** if your school uses semesters or **72 transferable credit hours** if your school uses quarters? *Your transferable credit hours **must include** all the following subjects:
 - » **English:** Six hours if your school uses semesters or eight hours if your school uses quarters.
 - » **Math:** Three hours if your school uses semesters or four hours if your school uses quarters.
 - » **Science:** Three hours if your school uses semesters or four hours if your school uses quarters.
4. Earn a GPA of 2.5 in those transferable credit hours?



*You may not use more than two credit hours of physical education activity courses to fulfill the transferable degree credit and GPA requirements unless you are enrolling in a degree program requiring physical education activity courses.

**If you are a baseball, softball or basketball student-athlete who transfers to a new school in the middle of the academic year, you may not compete until the fall term.

*You may not use more than two credit hours of physical education activity courses to fulfill the transferable degree credit and GPA requirements unless you are enrolling in a degree program requiring physical education activity courses. Remedial English and math classes may not be used to satisfy this requirement.

**If you are a baseball, softball or basketball student-athlete who transfers to a new school in the middle of the academic year, you may not compete until the fall term.

Disclaimer: Your academics and athletics eligibility must be certified by the compliance office at the NCAA school you are transferring to.

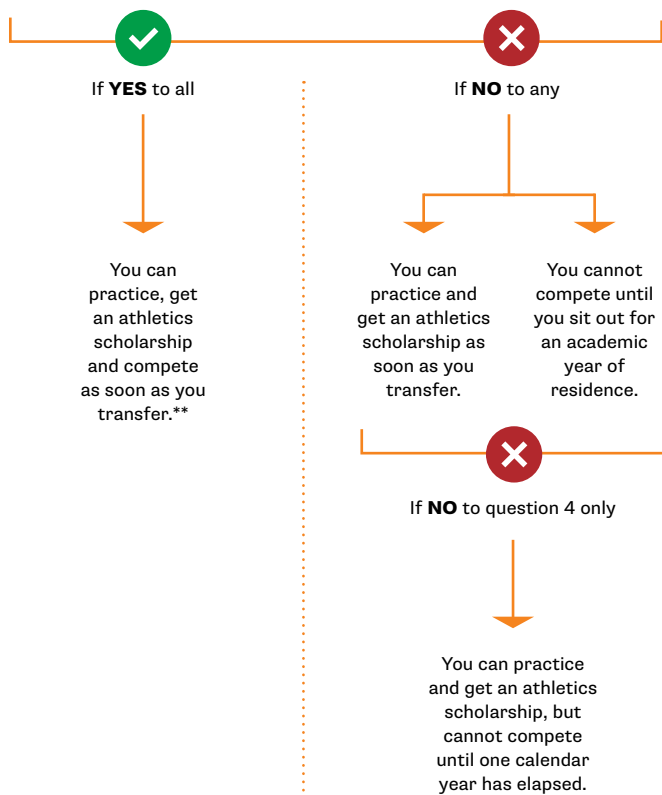
Planning To Go Division I 4-2-4 TRANSFER

**YOU PLAN TO ATTEND A DIVISION I SCHOOL.
YOU ATTENDED A FOUR-YEAR SCHOOL FULL TIME AND NOW ATTEND A TWO-YEAR SCHOOL FULL TIME.**

You are a qualifier:

At your two-year school, did you:

- 1. Graduate** from your **two-year** school? You must have earned **25%** of your credit hours at the two-year school **awarding your degree**.
- Complete an average of **12 transferable credit hours** for each term you attended **full time**?*
- Earn a **GPA of 2.5** in those transferable credit hours?
- Before competing** for your new NCAA Division I school, has **one calendar year** elapsed since your **last day** of enrollment at your original **four-year** school?



*You may not use more than two credit hours of physical education activity courses to fulfill the transferable degree credit and GPA requirements unless you are enrolling in a degree program requiring physical education activity courses.

**If you are a baseball, softball or basketball student-athlete who transfers to a new school in the middle of the academic year, you may not compete until the fall term.

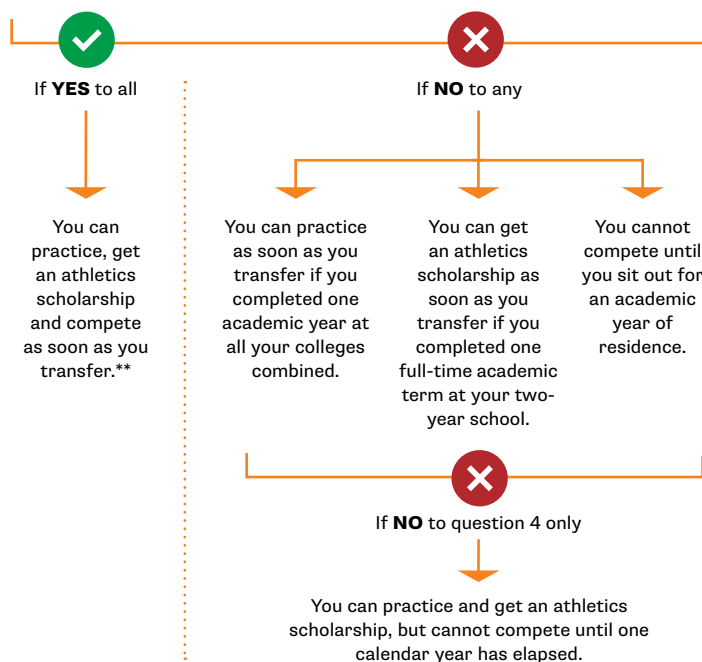
A qualifier can also use the nonqualifier standard to avoid the year in residence.

Disclaimer: Your academics and athletics eligibility must be certified by the compliance office at the NCAA school you are transferring to.

You are a nonqualifier or academic redshirt:

At your two-year school, did you:

- 1. Graduate** from your **two-year** school? You must have earned **25%** of your credit hours at the two-year school **awarding your degree**.
- Complete an average of **12 transferable credit hours** for each term you attended **full time**? *Your transferable credit hours **must include** all the following subjects:
 - » **English:** Six hours if your school uses semesters or eight hours if your school uses quarters.
 - » **Math:** Three hours if your school uses semesters or four hours if your school uses quarters.
 - » **Science:** Three hours if your school uses semesters or four hours if your school uses quarters.
- Earn a **GPA of 2.5** in those transferable credit hours?
- Before competing** for your new NCAA Division I school, has **one calendar year** elapsed since your **last day** of enrollment at your original **four-year** school?



*You may not use more than two credit hours of physical education activity courses to fulfill the transferable degree credit and GPA requirements unless you are enrolling in a degree program requiring physical education activity courses.

Remedial English and math classes may not be used to satisfy this requirement. Transferable English, math and natural/physical science courses earned at previous four-year college may be used.

**If you are a baseball, softball or basketball student-athlete who transfers to a new school in the middle of the academic year, you may not compete until the fall term.

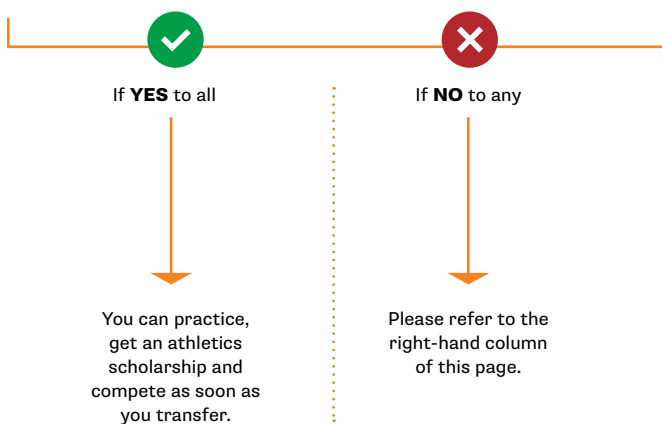
Planning To Go Division II 2-4 TRANSFER

Additional DII 2-4 transfer information on [page 14](#)

You have never attended a four-year school full time, are a qualifier and have attended only one semester or quarter at a two-year school full time:

At your two-year school, did you:

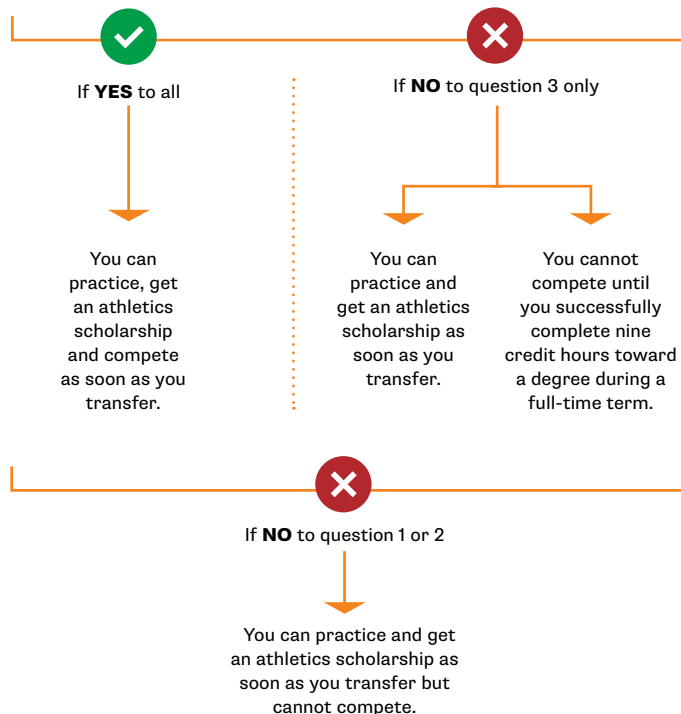
1. Complete only **one semester** or quarter as a **full-time student**? *Summer school does not count.*
2. Complete at least **12 transferable credit hours** for the semester or quarter you attended full time?*
3. Earn a **GPA of 2.2** in all transferable credit hours?
4. Earn at least nine-semester or eight quarter hours during your last full-time term.



You have never attended a four-year school full time, have been enrolled for more than one full-time term in a two-year school but have not graduated and are a qualifier or partial qualifier:

At your two-year school, did you:

1. Complete at least **two semesters** or three quarters as a **full-time student**? *Summer school does not count.*
2. Complete an average of **12 transferable credit hours** for each term you attended full time, earning a **GPA of 2.2** in all transferable credit hours? *Your transferable credit hours **must include all** the following subjects:
 - » **English:** Six hours if your school uses semesters or eight hours if your school uses quarters.
 - » **Math:** Three hours if your school uses semesters or four hours if your school uses quarters.
 - » **Science:** Three hours if your school uses semesters or four hours if your school uses quarters.
3. Earn at least nine-semester or eight quarter hours during your last full-time term.



*You may not use more than two credit hours of physical education activity courses to fulfill the transferable degree credit and GPA requirements unless you are enrolling in a degree program requiring physical education activity courses.

Remedial courses may not be used to satisfy these requirements.

Disclaimer: Your academics and athletics eligibility must be certified by the compliance office at the NCAA school you are transferring to.

Planning To Go Division II 2-4 TRANSFER

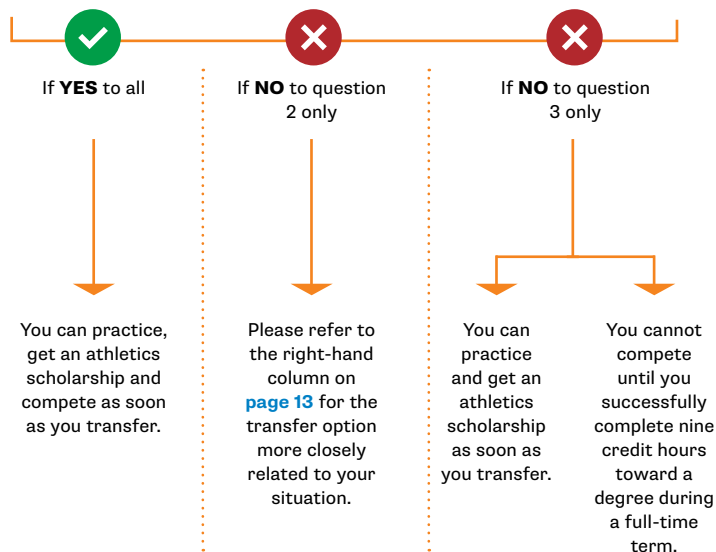
Continued from [page 13](#)

**YOU HAVE NEVER ATTENDED A FOUR-YEAR SCHOOL FULL TIME.
YOU GRADUATED FROM YOUR TWO-YEAR SCHOOL.**

If you are a qualifier or partial qualifier and graduated from your two-year school:

At your two-year school, did you:

1. Complete at least **two semesters** or three quarters as a **full-time student**? *Summer school does not count.*
2. Earn at least **25%** of the credit hours needed to fulfill the degree requirement at the **two-year school** awarding your degree?
3. Earn at least nine-semester or eight-quarter hours during your last full-time term.



Disclaimer: Your academics and athletics eligibility must be certified by the compliance office at the NCAA school you are transferring to.

Planning To Go Division II 4-2-4 TRANSFER

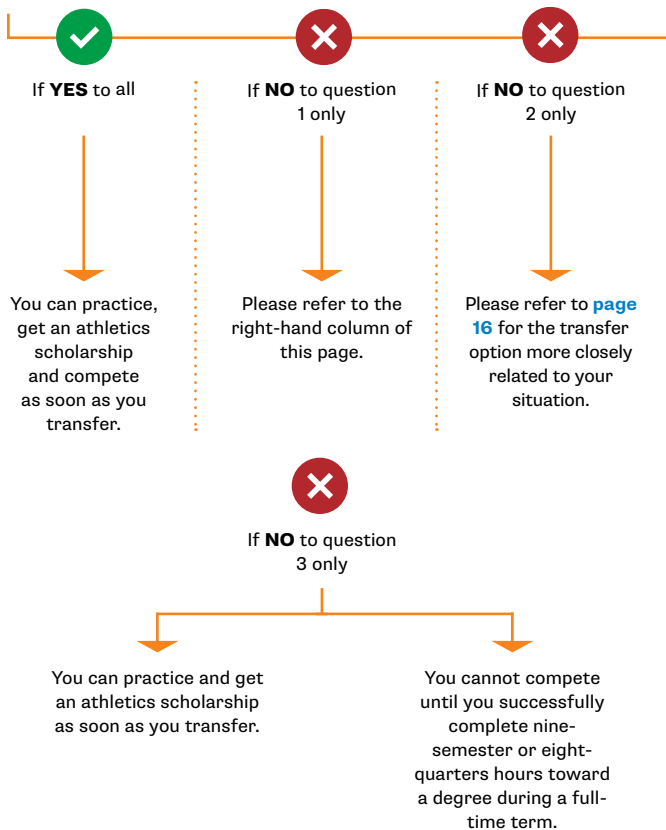
Additional DII 4-2-4 transfer information on [page 16](#)

YOU ATTENDED A FOUR-YEAR SCHOOL FULL TIME AND NOW ATTEND A TWO-YEAR SCHOOL FULL TIME.

If you attended only one semester or quarter at a two-year school full time and graduated and are a qualifier or partial qualifier:

At your two-year school, did you:

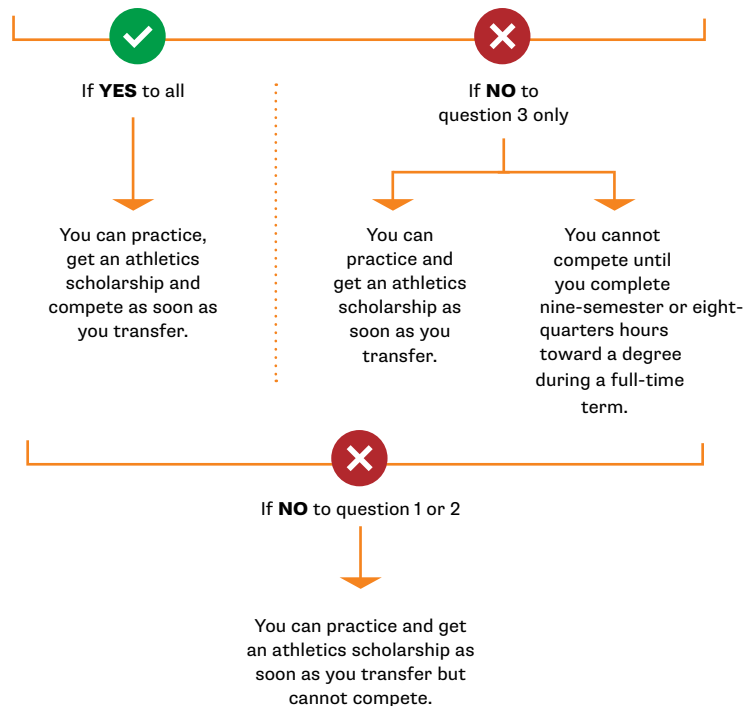
1. Graduate from your two-year school?
2. Complete only one semester or quarter as a full-time student?
3. Earn at least nine-semester or eight-quarter hours during your last full-time term.



If you did not graduate from the two-year school and are a qualifier or partial qualifier:

At your two-year school, did you:

1. Complete at least two semesters or three quarters as a full-time student? *Summer school does not count.*
2. Complete an average of 12 transferable credit hours for each term you attended full time, earning a GPA of 2.2 in all transferable credit hours? *Your transferable credit hours must include all the following subjects:
 - » **English:** Six hours if your school uses semesters or eight hours if your school uses quarters.
 - » **Math:** Three hours if your school uses semesters or four hours if your school uses quarters.
 - » **Science:** Three hours if your school uses semesters or four hours if your school uses quarters.
3. Earn at least nine-semester or eight-quarter hours during your last full-time term.



*You may not use more than two credit hours of physical education-activity courses to fulfill the transferable degree credit and GPA requirements unless you are enrolling in a degree program requiring physical education-activity courses.

Remedial English and math classes may not be used. Transferable English, math and natural/physical science courses earned at previous four-year college may be used.

Disclaimer: Your academics and athletics eligibility must be certified by the compliance office at the NCAA school you are transferring to.

Planning To Go Division II 4-2-4 TRANSFER

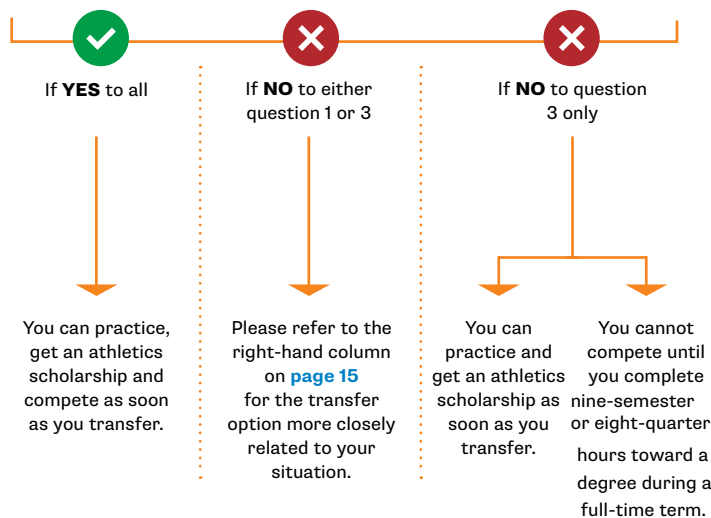
Continued from [page 15](#)

YOU ATTENDED A FOUR-YEAR SCHOOL FULL TIME AND NOW ATTEND A TWO-YEAR SCHOOL FULL TIME. YOU ATTENDED THE TWO-YEAR SCHOOL FOR AT LEAST TWO SEMESTERS OR THREE QUARTERS FULL TIME AND GRADUATED.

If you are a qualifier or partial qualifier:

At your two-year school, did you:

1. Complete at least **two semesters** or three quarters as a **full-time student**?
2. **Graduate** and earn at least **25%** of the credit hours needed to fulfill the degree requirement at the **two-year school** awarding your degree?
3. Earn at least nine-semester or eight-quarter hours during your last full-time term.



Disclaimer: Your academics and athletics eligibility must be certified by the compliance office at the NCAA school you are transferring to.

Planning To Go Division III

YOU PLAN TO ATTEND A DIVISION III SCHOOL.

If you have never attended a four-year school:

At your two-year school, did you **practice or compete** in intercollegiate sports?



If **YES**

You can compete immediately after your transfer **ONLY** IF you would have been academically and athletically eligible to compete had you stayed at your two-year school.



If **NO**

You are immediately eligible to compete upon transfer to the Division III school.

If you attended a four-year school and now attend a two-year school:

1. At the time of transfer from your previous four-year school, would you have been athletically and academically eligible had you remained at your previous **four-year school** without ever attending the two-year school?
2. At your two-year school, did you complete at least **two full-time semesters** or **three quarters** (summer school does not count) **AND** complete **24 transferable credit hours** if your school used semesters or **36 transferable credit hours** if your school used quarters?



If **YES** to either question 1 or 2

You can compete immediately upon transfer to the Division III school.



If **NO** to both questions 1 and 2

You are not eligible to compete for a Division III school until you have served an academic year of residence at the Division III school.

A 4-2-4 transfer can become eligible after a term(s) in residence at the certifying Division III school provided the student has enrolled full time for at least two semesters or three quarters between the two-year school and the certifying Division III school, **AND** the student has earned a total of 24 semester or 36 quarter hours while enrolled at the two-year school and Division III school. Hours at the two-year school must be transferable-degree credits.

Disclaimer: Your academics and athletics eligibility must be certified by the compliance office at the NCAA school you are transferring to.

Transfer Exceptions

There are a number of transfer **exceptions** that could allow you to practice, compete or receive an athletics scholarship during your first year at your new school. Remember, other school or conference rules also may affect your timeline. Talk to the compliance office at your new school about whether you qualify for a transfer exception. Your new school will decide if you qualify. If you don't meet a transfer exception, you will need to meet all transfer criteria listed within the 2-4 or 4-2-4 sections outlined previously in this guide.

Basic Restrictions for Transfer Exceptions

There are several basic restrictions for transfer exceptions:

- » An individual who was not a qualifier for Division I shall not be permitted to use the following exceptions as a 2-4 transfer.
- » An individual who was not a qualifier for Division II shall not be permitted to use the following transfer exceptions.
- » If you signed a National Letter of Intent and transfer during your first year as a full-time college student, you may not be able to compete at your new school for a certain period of time. Learn more about the NLI program on [page 23](#).
- » You may not use an exception if you are completing a year of residence at your current school.
- » If you are a baseball, softball or basketball student-athlete and transfer to a Division I school at the start of winter or spring term, you will not be eligible to compete until the next fall term.



If You Have Never Attended a Four-Year School

1. Your sport is dropped or not sponsored at your two-year school but you plan to attend a Division I or II school.

If your current school drops your sport, or if it did not sponsor your sport while you were a student, you may use an exception to compete immediately after transferring to a Division I or II school.

- » You may use this exception only if you transfer after your current school publicly announces it will drop your sport.
- » To qualify for this exception, you must have a GPA of at least 2.5 for Division I or 2.2 for Division II.

2. You plan to attend a Division II school but have not been recruited by that school.

If you have never been recruited by the Division II school you plan to attend, you may use an exception to compete immediately after transferring to a Division II school. To qualify for this exception, you must meet all the following conditions:

- » You have not received an athletics scholarship.
- » You have not competed for any previous school, and you have not participated in any countable athletically related activities beyond a 14-consecutive-calendar period at any previous school.

3. You have not participated in your sport for two years and plan to attend a Division I or II school.

If you have not participated in your sport for two years, you may use an exception to compete immediately if you meet one of the following conditions:

- » You have not competed with an intercollegiate sports team for two years before practicing or competing with your new school.
- » You have not practiced for more than a 14 consecutive calendar day period with an intercollegiate sports team for two years before practicing or competing with your new school.
- » You did not practice or compete in noncollegiate amateur competition for two years while you were a full-time student.

4. You plan to attend a Division III school.

If you plan to attend a Division III school, you may be eligible to compete immediately if you meet an exception. To qualify, you must meet any of the following conditions:

- » You have never practiced nor competed in intercollegiate athletics.
- » You would have been academically and athletically eligible at the time of transfer.
- » You have not practiced or competed with an intercollegiate sports team for two consecutive years.

If You Have Attended a Four-Year School and Now Attend a Two-Year School

If you have attended a four-year school but now attend a two-year school and want to transfer to an NCAA school, you may use an **exception** to compete immediately if you meet one of the following conditions:

1. **You want to return to your original school.**
2. **Your sport was not sponsored at your first four-year school.**
3. **You have not participated in your sport for two years.**
4. **You plan to attend a Division II school but have not been recruited by that school.**
5. **You plan to attend a Division III school.**

1. You want to return to your original school.

If you attend a two-year school but want to transfer back to the Division I or II school you previously attended, you may use an exception to compete immediately, provided you were eligible at the time you transferred from your Division I or II school.

2. Your sport was not sponsored at your first four-year school.

If the first four-year school you attended did not sponsor your sport while you were a student, you may be able to use this exception to compete immediately after transferring to a Division I or II school if you meet all the following conditions:

- » You have not attended another four-year school that offered your sport.
- » You completed an average of 12 transferable credit hours at your two-year school.
- » You earned a GPA of at least 2.5 for Division I or 2.2 for Division II in those transferable credit hours.
- » If you are transferring to a Division I school, this exception only applies if you were a Division I qualifier.
- » If you are transferring to a Division II school, this exception only applies if you were a Division II qualifier and your current two-year school also never sponsored your sport at the intercollegiate level.

3. You have not participated in your sport for two years.

If you have not participated in your sport for two years, you may use an exception to compete immediately if you meet one of the following conditions:

- » You have not competed with an intercollegiate sports team during the two years prior to practicing or competing with your new school.
- » You have not practiced for more than a 14 consecutive calendar day period with an intercollegiate sports team during the two years prior to practicing or competing with your new school.
- » You did not practice or compete in noncollegiate amateur competition for two years while you were a full-time student.

CASE STUDY

Ryan enrolled at a Division I school, was a qualifier and was on the swimming and diving team.

He then transferred to a two-year school and was on the swimming and diving team there as well. He did not receive an Associate of Arts (AA) degree.

Now, Ryan wants to return to his original Division I school.

Must Ryan serve an academic year of residence at the Division I school?

No. Even though he does not meet the requirements because he did not earn his AA degree from the two-year school, Ryan does not have to serve an academic year of residence at the Division I school because he is returning to his original school and was not sitting out an academic year of residence when he transferred.



4. You plan to attend a Division II school but have not been recruited by that school.

If you have never been recruited by the Division II school you plan to attend, you may use an exception to compete immediately after transferring to a Division II school. To qualify for this exception, you must meet all the following conditions:

- » You have not received an athletics scholarship.
- » You have not competed for any previous school nor participated in any practice activities beyond a 14 consecutive calendar day period at any previous school.

5. You plan to attend a Division III school.

If you plan to attend a Division III school, you may be eligible to compete immediately if you meet an exception. To qualify, you must meet any of the following conditions:

- » You have never practiced nor competed in intercollegiate athletics.
- » You would have been academically and athletically eligible at the time of transfer if you stayed at your original four-year school.
- » If you were not academically and athletically eligible at your original four-year school, then you must have been enrolled full time for at least two semesters (three quarters) at your current two-year college and have successfully completed at least 24-semester or 36-quarter transferable-degree credit hours.
- » You have not practiced or competed with an intercollegiate sports team for two consecutive years.



Eligibility Clock

Each division has different academic standards for maintaining academic eligibility. All the standards are designed to move the student-athlete toward graduation in a timely manner. As a transfer student, certification of your academic eligibility will happen once you are enrolled at your new school and includes an evaluation of your transfer credits. The compliance office at your new school can assist with this.

If you compete at a Division I school, you have five calendar years to play four seasons of competition. Your five-year clock starts when you enroll as a full-time student at any two- or four-year school. Your clock continues to tick down, even if you spend an **academic year of residence** as a result of transferring, redshirting, not attending school or enrolling part time during your college career.

If you compete at a Division II or III school, you have 10 full-time semesters or 15 full-time quarters to play four seasons of competition. You use a semester or quarter when you attend classes at a two- or four-year school as a full-time student or when you enroll part time and compete for your school. You do not use a term if you are not enrolled or if you attend part time without competing.

Important NCAA Terms

Academic year of residence (commonly referred to as “sitting out”): You may need to spend an academic year of residence without competing at your new school unless you qualify for a transfer exception. For an academic year of residence to count, you must complete a full-time program of studies for two semesters or three quarters. Summer school and part-time enrollment do not count toward an academic year of residence.

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

Continuing-eligibility rules (rules affecting how long you may compete in a certain sport):

- » **Division I:** If you play at a Division I school, you have five calendar years to play four seasons of competition. Your five-year clock starts when you enroll as a full-time student at any college. Your clock continues to tick down, even if you spend an academic year of residence as a result of transferring, redshirting, not attending school or enrolling part time during your college career.
- » **Divisions II and III:** If you play at a Division II or III school, you have the first 10 semesters or 15 quarters in which you attend as a full-time student to complete your four seasons of participation. You use a semester or quarter any time you attend class as a full-time student or enroll 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.

Financial aid (commonly referred to as “scholarship”): Any money for school you receive from a college or another source. Financial aid may be based on athletics, financial need or academic achievement.

Full time: Each school determines what “full-time” status means. Typically, you are a full-time student if you are enrolled for at least 12 credit hours in a term. Some schools define a full-time student as someone who takes fewer than 12 credit hours in a term.

Initial-eligibility rules: Initial-eligibility rules determine whether you may practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year at a Division I or II school.

International students: An **international student** is any student who attends a two- or four-year school outside the United States.

National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA):

The national governing body for over 1,100 colleges, universities, conferences and organizations.

NCAA Eligibility Center: The NCAA Eligibility Center evaluates your high school academic record and/or amateurism history to determine if you are eligible to participate during your first year at a Division I, II or III school.

National Letter of Intent: NCAA schools that are part of the NLI program may send an NLI to a college-bound student-athlete they have recruited to participate in their intercollegiate sports program.

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 eligible for financial aid under NCAA rules. If you sign an NLI, you agree to attend that school for one academic year and other schools that are part of the NLI program can no longer recruit you. For more information, visit nationalletter.org. The NLI program is not administered by the NCAA.

Nonqualifier: A student-athlete planning to attend a Division I school who has not met academic requirements to be a Division I qualifier will be deemed a nonqualifier. If you are a nonqualifier, you may not practice, compete or receive an athletics scholarship from a Division I school during your first year of full-time enrollment. (Division II **does not have nonqualifiers**.)

Partial qualifier: Any Division II student has not met the requirements necessary to be a qualifier. If you are a partial qualifier, you can practice on campus and receive financial aid from a Division II school, but you cannot 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.
- » Earned the required number of core-course credits in the required subject areas.
- » Earned a minimum GPA in the required subject areas.
- » For information on Division I and II initial-eligibility requirements, visit on.ncaa.com/IE_Flyer.

Recruited: If a college coach contacts you off campus, pays your expenses to visit the campus, or (in Divisions I and II) issues you an NLI or a written offer of financial aid, you are considered recruited. Prospective student-athletes will also be considered as recruited if a school initiates or arranges a telephone contact on more than one occasion for the purposes of recruitment.

Transfer exception: A transfer exception allows you to practice, compete or receive an athletics scholarship during your first year at your new school. Your new school decides if you qualify for a transfer exception.

Transfer trigger: A condition that can affect your transfer status. A student who triggers transfer status is a student who:

- » Has been a full-time student at a two- or four-year school during a regular academic term. Classes taken during summer terms do not count.
- » Practiced with a college team.
- » Practiced or competed while enrolled as a part-time student.
- » Received athletics aid from a college while attending summer school.

Note: This is not a complete list for Divisions I, II or III. Please consult with your NCAA school's compliance office for a complete review.

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

Two-year college: A school where students can earn an Associate of Arts, Associate of Science or Associate of Applied Science degree within two years. Also referred to as “community” or “junior” colleges.

Waiver: An action that sets aside an NCAA rule because a specific, extraordinary circumstance prevents you from meeting the rule. Only 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.

Walk-on: Someone who is not typically recruited by a school to participate in sports and does not receive an athletics scholarship from the school, but who becomes a member of one of the school's athletics teams.





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