



Eligibility Center



2016-17 GUIDE FOR
TWO-YEAR TRANSFERS
FOR STUDENT-ATHLETES AT TWO-YEAR COLLEGES

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What Should I Think About 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 should give 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.

NCAA transfer rules are designed to help student-athletes such as you make sensible decisions about the best place to earn a degree and develop athletic skills. 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.

FOCUS ON YOUR DEGREE

More than 480,000 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 sports and the life lessons they learn along the way will help them as they pursue careers in other 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: graduation success rates are 84 percent in Division I, 72 percent in Division II and 87 percent in Division III.

Percentage of college athletes who become professional athletes

	NCAA Student-Athletes	Approximate No. Draft Eligible	No. Draft Slots	No. Drafted	% NCAA to Major Pro*
Football	71,291	15,842	256	255	1.6%
Men's Basketball	18,320	4,071	60	47	1.2%
Women's Basketball	16,319	3,626	36	32	0.9%
Baseball	33,431	7,429	1,216	638	8.6%
Men's Ice Hockey	3,976	884	211	60	6.8%
Men's Soccer	23,602	5,245	76	72	1.4%

* Percent NCAA to Major Pro figures are based on the number of available draft slots in the NFL, NBA, WNBA, MLB, NHL and MLS drafts only.

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: to learn as much as you can to protect your eligibility. 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. But before you transfer, you may need more information. Key people, including your coach or athletics compliance officer, can help you successfully work through the process. Take advantage of all the information available to you.

- Visit the NCAA website at [NCAA.org/transfer](https://www.ncaa.org/transfer) for FAQs and printable resources on key topics.
- Talk to people at your current school, including staff in the athletics department or compliance office.
- Call the conference of your new school.
- Call the NCAA at 317-917-6008, Monday through Friday from 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 Division II school, you must register with the Eligibility Center at eligibilitycenter.org.
 - See [page 11](#) for more information.

CONTINUING ELIGIBILITY

- ☐ Do you have any remaining eligibility to compete in your sport after transferring?
 - Student-athletes have four seasons to compete in each sport.
 - See [page 23](#) for more information.

TRANSFER ELIGIBILITY

- ☐ In most cases, student-athletes who transfer to an NCAA school must sit out of competition for a year.
 - You may be able to compete immediately if you meet a transfer exception.
 - See [pages 20 to 22](#) for more information.

OTHER TRANSFER REQUIREMENTS

- ☐ Do you meet other transfer requirements?
 - Ask the athletics compliance office at your new school if you meet all of its transfer requirements.
 - See [pages 12 to 19](#) for more information.

HOW DO THE TRANSFER RULES APPLY TO ME?

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. Make sure you have registered with the NCAA Eligibility Center, if needed

The rules also depend on whether you currently attend a two-year or a four-year school. For instance, if you attend a two-year school (some people call that a community college or a 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 wait a year before you can compete.

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. It may seem fairly simple, but you need to answer this basic question before you can continue.

How do I know if I am a transfer student-athlete?

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-year or four-year college during a regular academic term? Classes taken during summer terms do not count.
2. Have you practiced with a college team?
3. Have you practiced or competed while enrolled as a part-time student?
4. Have you received athletically related financial aid from a college while attending summer school?
5. If you attended a Division I school, have you received any type of financial aid from a college while attending summer school?

If you answered “yes” to any of those questions, you are a transfer student-athlete because you have met conditions that have triggered 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 those questions, you probably are not a transfer student-athlete and the transfer rules may not apply to you. Contact the athletics compliance office at your new school and ask it to certify your eligibility status.

CASE STUDY

Brady was recruited to play basketball at a two-year college called Wisteria Lane College. 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, Brady 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, Brady decided that he wanted to go to Marcus University, an NCAA school.

Is Brady a transfer student-athlete?

Yes.

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



2. DECIDE WHERE YOU ARE GOING

Now that you know whether 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.

Division I

Among the three NCAA divisions, Division I schools generally have the biggest student bodies, manage the largest athletics budgets and offer the most generous number of scholarships. Schools who are members of Division I commit to maintaining a high academic standard for student-athletes in addition to a wide range of opportunities for athletics participation.

With nearly 350 colleges and universities in its membership, Division I schools field more than 6,000 athletic teams, providing opportunities for more than 170,000 student-athletes to compete in NCAA sports each year.

Division I is subdivided based on football sponsorship. Schools that participate in bowl games belong to the Football Bowl Subdivision. Those that participate in the NCAA-run football championship belong to the Football Championship Subdivision. A third group doesn't sponsor football at all. The subdivisions apply only to football; all other sports are considered simply Division I.

Division II

Division II is a collection of 310 colleges and universities that provide thousands of student-athletes the opportunity to compete at a high level of scholarship athletics while excelling in the classroom and fully engaging in the broader campus experience. This balance, in which student-athletes are recognized for their academic success, athletics contributions, and campus and community involvement, is at the heart of the Division II philosophy.

The Division II approach provides growth opportunities through academic achievement, learning in high-level athletics competition and a focus on service to the community. The balance and integration of these different areas of learning provide Division II student-athletes with a path to graduation while cultivating a variety of skills and knowledge for life after college.

Division III

More than 170,000 student-athletes at 450 institutions make up Division III, the largest NCAA division both in number of participants and number of schools. The Division III experience offers participation in a competitive athletic environment that pushes student-athletes to excel on the field and build upon their potential by tackling new challenges across campus.

Academics are the primary focus for Division III student-athletes. The division minimizes the conflicts between athletics and academics, and helps student-athletes progress toward graduation through shorter practice and playing seasons and regional competition that reduces time away from academic studies. Participants are integrated on campus and treated like all other members of the student body, keeping them focused on being a student first.



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.

See NCAA Conferences on [page 26](#) for a link to conferences' websites or visit [NCAA.org](https://www.ncaa.org).

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 [NCAA.org](https://www.ncaa.org) for a full list of NCAA schools, sorted by division, sport, and conference. You also will find a database to help you find the names, addresses and phone numbers for athletics contacts at each school.
- 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.
- Once you get written permission to contact from your current school, talk to the athletics compliance office at the school you wish to attend about your transfer options. Learn more about permission to contact on [page 25](#).
- Contact the NCAA national office or the appropriate conference office for more information about your specific case.



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 I need to know my 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 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 core courses you took in high school, the grades and number of credits you earned in those courses and your scores on standardized tests. If you do not have an initial-eligibility status, talk to the athletics compliance department at your new school.

There are four possible initial-eligibility statuses: qualifier (Divisions I and II), partial qualifier (Division II only), nonqualifier (Divisions I and II) and academic redshirt (Division I only).

- If you were eligible to practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year at a Division I or II school, you were a qualifier.
- If you were not eligible to practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year at a Division I or II school, you were a nonqualifier.
- If you attended a Division I school and you were eligible in your first year to practice and receive an athletics scholarship – but you were not eligible to compete – you were an academic redshirt. Only Division I schools use the academic redshirt status.
- If you attended a Division II school and you were eligible in your first year to practice and receive an athletics scholarship – but you were not eligible to compete – you were a partial qualifier. Only Division II schools use the partial-qualifier status.

Division III schools set their own admissions and eligibility standards. If your first college enrollment was at a Division III school, you probably were not assigned an initial-eligibility status by the Eligibility Center. If you are thinking of transferring to a Division III school, you need to meet the admission requirements of the school you plan to attend.

How do I figure out my initial-eligibility status for my new school?

Division I and Division II have different initial-eligibility standards so your initial-eligibility status may change if you are moving to a school in a different division. For instance, if you were a partial qualifier at a Division II school, your initial-eligibility status could change to nonqualifier if you transfer to a Division I school.

To determine your initial-eligibility status at your new school, ask yourself if you would have been eligible to compete at your new school had you chosen to go there as a freshman after graduating high school. Use the following academic standards for each division as a guide.

Division I Qualifier Before August 1, 2016

If you first enrolled in college before August 1, 2016, you had to meet all of the following requirements to be a Division I qualifier, allowing you to practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year:

- Complete 16 NCAA-approved core courses in high school:
 - Four years of English
 - Three years of math (Algebra I or higher)
 - Two years of natural/physical science (including one year of lab science if your high school offers it)
 - One additional year of English, math or natural/physical science
 - Two years of social science
 - Four additional years of English, math, natural/physical science, social science, foreign language, comparative religion or philosophy
- Earn at least a 2.0 GPA in core courses.
- Earn an SAT combined score or ACT sum score matching your core-course GPA on the Division I sliding scale, which balances test scores and core-course GPA.
- Graduate high school.

Division I Qualifier After August 1, 2016

If you first enrolled in college after August 1, 2016, you had to meet all of the following requirements to be a Division I qualifier, allowing you to practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year:

- Complete 16 NCAA-approved core courses in high school:
 - Four years of English
 - Three years of math (Algebra I or higher)
 - Two years of natural/physical science (including one year of lab science if your high school offers it)
 - One additional year of English, math or natural/physical science
 - Two years of social science
 - Four additional years of English, math, natural/physical science, social science, foreign language, comparative religion or philosophy
- Complete 10 of the required 16 core courses before the start of your seventh semester of high school. Seven of the 10 core courses must include English, math and natural or physical science.
- Earn at least a 2.3 GPA in core courses.
- Earn an SAT combined score or ACT sum score matching your core-course GPA on the Division I sliding scale, which balances test scores and core-course GPA.
- Graduate high school.

Division I Academic Redshirt

If you first enrolled in college after August 1, 2016, you had to meet all of the following requirements to be a Division I academic redshirt, allowing you to practice and receive an athletics scholarship, but not compete, during your first academic term:

- Complete 16 NCAA-approved core courses in high school:
 - Four years of English
 - Three years of math (Algebra I or higher)
 - Two years of natural/physical science (including one year of lab science if your high school offers it)
 - One additional year of English, math or natural/physical science
 - Two years of social science
 - Four additional years of English, math, natural/physical science, social science, foreign language, comparative religion or philosophy
- Earn at least a 2.0 GPA in core courses.
- Earn an SAT combined score or ACT sum score matching your core-course GPA on the Division I sliding scale, which balances test scores and core-course GPA.
- Graduate high school.

Division I Nonqualifier

If you did not meet the Division I qualifier requirements, you were not eligible to practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year at a Division I school.



Division II Qualifier

You had to meet all the following requirements to be a Division II qualifier, allowing you to practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year:

- Complete 16 NCAA-approved core courses in high school:
 - Three years of English.
 - Two years of math (Algebra I or higher).
 - Two years of natural or physical science (including one year of lab science if your high school offers it).
 - Three additional years of English, math or natural or physical science
 - Two years of social science
 - Four additional years of English, math, natural or physical science, social science, foreign language, comparative religion or philosophy
- Earn at least a 2.0 GPA in core courses.
- Earn an SAT combined score of 820 or an ACT sum score of 68.*
- Graduate high school.

Division II Partial Qualifier

If you graduated high school and met one of the following requirements, you were a Division II partial qualifier, allowing you to practice and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year, but not allowing you to compete:

- Earn a 2.0 GPA in 16 core courses:
 - Three years of English.
 - Two years of math (Algebra I or higher).
 - Two years of natural or physical science (including one year of lab science if your high school offers it).
 - Three additional years of English, math or natural or physical science
 - Two years of social science
 - Four additional years of English, math, natural or physical science, social science, foreign language, comparative religion or philosophy
- Earn an SAT combined score of 820 or an ACT sum score of 68.*

Division II Nonqualifier

If you did not meet the Division II qualifier or partial-qualifier requirements, you were not eligible to practice, receive an athletics scholarship or compete during your first year at a Division II school.

4. MAKE SURE YOU HAVE REGISTERED WITH THE NCAA ELIGIBILITY CENTER

By now you should know whether 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 that you would have been a qualifier or partial qualifier.

*The minimum combined SAT score of 820 applies to tests taken before March 1, 2016.
The minimum combined SAT score required for tests taken on or after March 1, 2016,
will be evaluated based on the concordance established by the College Board.

WHEN CAN I 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 at your new school as a full-time student before you are eligible to compete. This time is called an academic year in residence and is designed to allow you to become comfortable in your new environment.

Requiring student-athletes to sit out of competition for a year after transferring encourages them to make decisions motivated by academics as well as athletics. Most student-athletes who are not eligible to compete immediately benefit from a year to adjust to their new school and focus on their classes. Student-athletes who must sit out for a year at their new school may practice with their new team and get an athletics scholarship if they were academically eligible when they left their previous school.

For your academic year in residence to count, you must attend classes only at the school where you plan to compete and you must be a full-time student (generally 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 department 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 in residence, you must enroll before the 12th day of class.

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 staff members in the compliance office at your new school.

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

CASE STUDY

Kyle transferred to CBB College before the beginning of the school year and is sitting out a year. He completed 12 credit hours in the fall term and 12 credit hours in the spring term. At CBB, students who take 12 credit hours are considered full-time students.

Did Kyle complete his academic year in residence?

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

CASE STUDY

Megan transferred to Gatsby College and is sitting out a year. At Gatsby, students with 12 credit hours are considered full-time students.

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

Did Megan complete her academic year in residence?

No. Megan 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 in residence.

- You plan to attend a Division I school
- You have never attended a four-year school
- 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 2.500 in those transferable credit hours?

►► If **YES** to all

- ✓ You can practice, get an athletics scholarship and compete as soon as you transfer.**

►► If **NO** to any

- ✓ You can practice and get an athletics scholarship as soon as you transfer.
- ⊗ You cannot compete until you sit out for an academic year in residence.

*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 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 plan to attend a Division I school
- You have never attended a four-year school
- You are a nonqualifier

At your two-year school, did you:

1. Graduate from your two-year school? You must have earned 25 percent of your credit hours at your two-year school.
 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
 - Natural/physical science: three hours if your school uses semesters or four hours if your school uses quarters
4. Earn a GPA of 2.500 in those transferable credit hours?

►► If **YES** to all

- ✓ You can practice, get an athletics scholarship and compete as soon as you transfer.**

►► If **YES** to 1, 2 and 3, **NO** to 4, and your GPA is 2.00–2.49

- ✓ You can practice and get an athletics scholarship as soon as you transfer.
- ⊗ You cannot compete until you sit out for an academic year in residence.

►► If **NO** to any

- ⊗ You cannot practice, get an athletics scholarship or compete until you sit out for an academic year in residence.

*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 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 plan to attend a Division I school
- You attended a four-year school and now attend a two-year school
- You are a qualifier

At your two-year school, did you:

1. Graduate from your two-year school?
2. Complete an average of 12 transferable credit hours for each term you attended full time?*
3. Earn a GPA of 2.500 in those transferable credit hours?

AND

4. Has one calendar year elapsed since your last day of enrollment at your four-year school?

➤ If **YES** to all

- ✓ You can practice, get an athletics scholarship and compete as soon as you transfer.**

➤ If **NO** to any

- ✓ You can practice and get an athletics scholarship as soon as you transfer.
- ⊗ You cannot compete until you sit out for an academic year in residence.

**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 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 plan to attend a Division I school
- You attended a four-year school and now attend a two-year school
- You are a nonqualifier

At your two-year school, did you:

1. Graduate from your two-year school?
 2. Complete an average of 12 transferable credit hours for each term you attended full time?*
- Your transferable credit hours must include all of 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
 - Natural/physical science: three hours if your school uses semesters or four hours if your school uses quarters
3. Earn a GPA of 2.500 in those transferable credit hours?

AND

4. Has one calendar year elapsed since your last day of enrollment at your four-year school?

➤ If **YES** to all

- ✓ You can practice, get an athletics scholarship and compete as soon as you transfer.**

➤ If **NO** to any

- ✓ You can practice as soon as you transfer if you completed one academic year at all your colleges combined.
- ✓ You can get an athletics scholarship as soon as you transfer if you completed one full-time academic term at your two-year school.
- ⊗ You cannot compete until you sit out for an academic year in residence.

**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 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 have never attended a four-year school
- You are a qualifier
- You attended only one semester or quarter at a two-year school

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 an average of 12 transferable credit hours for the semester or quarter you attended full time?*
3. Earn a GPA of 2.200 in all normally transferable credit hours?
4. Earn nine transferable credit hours from your last full-time term of enrollment?

►► If YES to all

- ✓ You can practice, get an athletics scholarship and compete as soon as you transfer.*

►► If NO to 1, 2 or 3

- ✓ You can practice and get an athletics scholarship as soon as you transfer.
- ⊗ You cannot compete until you sit out for an academic year in residence.

►► If NO to only 4

- ✓ You can practice and get an athletics scholarship as soon as you transfer.
- ⊗ You cannot compete until you successfully complete nine credit hours toward a degree during a 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.*

***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.*

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

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 2.200 in all normally 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
 - Natural/physical science: three hours if your school uses semesters or four hours if your school uses quarters
3. Earn nine transferable credit hours from your last full-time term of enrollment?

►► If YES to all

- ✓ You can practice, get an athletics scholarship and compete as soon as you transfer.

►► If NO to 1 or 2

Nonqualifiers:

- ⊗ You cannot practice, get an athletics scholarship or compete until you sit out for an academic year in residence.
- ⊗ If you meet all the requirements but your GPA is between 2.0 and 2.2, you can practice and get an athletics scholarship as soon as you transfer. You cannot compete until you sit out for an academic year in residence.

Qualifiers or partial qualifiers:

- ✓ You can practice and get an athletics scholarship as soon as you transfer.
- ⊗ You cannot compete until you sit out for an academic year in residence.

►► If NO to only 3

- ✓ You can practice and get an athletics scholarship as soon as you transfer.
- ⊗ You cannot compete until you successfully complete nine credit hours toward a degree during a full-time term.

- You have never attended a four-year school
- You graduated from your two-year school
- You are a qualifier, partial qualifier or nonqualifier

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 percent of the credit hours needed to fulfill the degree requirement at the two-year school awarding your degree?***
3. **Earn nine transferable credit hours from your last full-time term of enrollment?**

.....
▶▶ If **YES** to all

- ✓ You can practice, get an athletics scholarship and compete as soon as you transfer.

.....
▶▶ If **NO** to only 2

- ⊗ Please refer to the right-hand column on the previous page titled 2-4 Transfer Planning to Go Division II.

.....
▶▶ If **NO** to only 3

- ✓ You can practice and get an athletics scholarship as soon as you transfer.
- ⊗ You cannot compete until you successfully complete nine credit hours toward a degree during a 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.*

- You attended a four-year school and now attend a two-year school
- You graduated from the two-year school
- You attended only one semester or quarter term at the two-year school
- You are a qualifier, partial qualifier or nonqualifier

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. Complete nine transferable credit hours during a full-time term?

►► If **YES** to all

- ✓ You can practice, get an athletics scholarship and compete as soon as you transfer.

►► If **NO** to only 1

- ✓ Please refer to the right-hand column on this page titled 4-2-4 Transfer Planning to Go Division II.

►► If **NO** to only 2

- ✓ Please refer to the only column on the next page titled 4-2-4 Transfer (Continued) Planning to Go Division II.

►► If **NO** to only 3

- ✓ You can practice and get an athletics scholarship as soon as you transfer.
- ⊗ You cannot compete until you complete nine credit hours toward a degree during a full-time term.

- You attended a four-year school and now attend a two-year school
- You did not graduate from the two-year school
- You are a qualifier, partial qualifier or nonqualifier

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 2.200 in all normally 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
- Natural/physical science: three hours if your school uses semesters or four hours if your school uses quarters

3. Complete nine transferable credit hours during a full-time term?

►► If **YES** to all

- ✓ You can practice, get an athletics scholarship and compete as soon as you transfer.

►► If **NO** to 1 or 2 (qualifier or partial qualifier)

- ✓ You can practice and get an athletics scholarship as soon as you transfer.
- ⊗ You cannot compete until you sit out for an academic year in residence.

►► If **NO** to 1 or 2 (nonqualifier)

- ⊗ You cannot practice, get an athletics scholarship or compete until you sit out for an academic year in residence.
- ⊗ If NO to only 2 but YES to the remaining AND your GPA is between 2.0 and 2.2, you can practice and get an athletics scholarship as soon as you transfer, but you cannot compete until you sit out for an academic year in residence.

►► If **NO** to only 3 (qualifier, partial qualifier and nonqualifier)

- ✓ You can practice and get an athletics scholarship as soon as you transfer.
- ⊗ You cannot compete until you complete nine credit hours toward a degree during a 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.

- You attended a four-year school and now attend a two-year school
- You graduated from your two-year school
- You attended the two-year school for more than one semester or quarter term
- You are a qualifier, partial qualifier or nonqualifier

At your two-year school, did you:

1. Complete at least two semesters or three quarters as a full-time student?
2. Earn at least 25 percent of the credit hours needed to fulfill the degree requirement at the two-year school awarding your degree?
3. Complete nine transferable credit hours during a full-time term?

.....
▶▶ If **YES** to all

- ✓ You can practice, get an athletics scholarship and compete as soon as you transfer.

.....
▶▶ If **NO** to 1 or 2

- ✓ Please refer to the right-hand column on the previous page titled 4-2-4 Transfer Planning To Go Division II.

.....
▶▶ If **NO** to only 3

- ✓ You can practice and get an athletics scholarship as soon as you transfer.
- ⊗ You cannot compete until you complete nine credit hours toward a degree during a full-time term.

PLANNING TO GO DIVISION III

- You plan to attend a Division III school
- 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.

- You plan to attend a Division III school
- You attended a four-year school and now attend a two-year school

1. Would you have been eligible at the certifying Division III school if you had transferred directly from your previous four-year school without 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 1 or 2

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

► If NO to both 1 and 2

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

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 staff at your new school about whether you qualify for a transfer exception. Your new school will decide if you qualify for a transfer exception.

BASIC RESTRICTIONS FOR TRANSFER EXCEPTIONS

There are several basic restrictions for transfer exceptions:

- If you were a partial qualifier or a nonqualifier during your first year, you must spend at least one academic year in residence before you can use a transfer exception. Learn more about your initial-eligibility status on [pages 9 to 11](#).
- If you signed a National Letter of Intent (NLI) 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 24](#).
- You may not use an exception if you are completing a year of residence at your current school.
- If you are a baseball 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 are a tennis student-athlete transferring to a Division I school at the start of winter or spring term and you have competed or received an athletics scholarship from your current school during the same academic year, you will not be eligible to compete until the next fall term.

IF YOU HAVE NEVER ATTENDED A FOUR-YEAR SCHOOL

If you transfer from a two-year school to an NCAA Division I or II school, you may use an exception to compete immediately if you meet one of the following conditions:

1. Your sport is dropped or is not sponsored at your two-year school.
2. You plan to attend a Division II school and have not been recruited by that school.
3. You have not participated in your sport, or have participated minimally, for two years.
4. You plan to attend a Division III school.
5. You graduated from your two-year school.

1. Your sport is dropped or is not sponsored at your two-year 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 2.000 for Division II or 2.500 GPA for Division I.

CASE STUDY

Billy is a nonqualifier. He attended a two-year college for one year and played football. He then decided to transfer to NCAA Division II Ceylan University, where he was told by its compliance staff that he was not eligible to compete and had to sit one year in academic residence with Ceylan University. His transferable GPA was a 2.1 and he transferred a total of 26 credits, including the required six credits in English, three credits in math and three credits in science.

Why is Billy not eligible to compete in fall 2016 for Ceylan University? For a 2-4 transfer going Division II who completed one year of classes at a two-year college, a required transferable GPA of 2.2 or higher is needed for competition in the first academic year attending the Division II school. But because he averaged 12 transferable credits per the two semesters completed at the two-year college and his GPA fell between 2.000 and 2.200, Billy is able to ask the coaching staff and compliance staff at Ceylan University if he can receive athletics aid and practice during his academic year in residence. Before Billy can play in games, he must successfully complete his academic year in residence at Ceylan University.

2. You plan to attend a Division II school and 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 I or II school.

To qualify for this exception, you must meet all the following conditions:

- You have not received an athletics scholarship.
- You have not participated in any athletics activities or meetings for more than 14 consecutive days.
- You were eligible for admission at the Division II school before you enrolled at the two-year college.

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 practiced or competed with an intercollegiate sports team for two years before practicing or competing with your new school.
- You have not practiced for more than 14 consecutive days 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 use an exception to compete immediately if you have not practiced or competed with an intercollegiate sports team for two years.

5. You graduated from your two-year school

If you graduated from your two-year school, and earned at least 25 percent of your credit hours at your two-year school, you may use an exception to compete immediately after transferring to a Division II school.

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 Division I or II 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 and have not been recruited by that school.
5. You plan to attend a Division III school.
6. You graduated from your two-year school.

1. You want to return to your original school

If you attend a two-year school but want to transfer back to a Division I school you previously attended, you may use an exception to compete immediately if you were not sitting out an academic year in residence at the Division I school when you transferred to the two-year school.

CASE STUDY

Dauber is an NCAA qualifier out of high school and decided to attend NCAA Division I school Wayne Northern University on a soccer scholarship. He just finished his freshman year in spring 2016 but because of lack of playing time, he is now wanting to transfer to a two-year college, with the ultimate goal of returning to another four-year Division I program.

What criteria must Dauber complete while attending the two-year college in order to be eligible for practice, competition and athletics aid at his next Division I four-year institution in August 2017? Dauber must graduate from the two-year school, while averaging 12 transferable credit hours for each semester of attendance and a transferable GPA of 2.5 or higher while attending the two-year school.

Can Dauber compete while he is attending the two-year school? Dauber should consult with the two-year school on the specific requirements for two-year college participation as they vary by state and association. Please note, competing for the two-year school would use a season of eligibility per NCAA legislation.

Who would certify his transferable GPA and credit upon enrolling at the new Division I school in August 2017? Dauber would need to speak with the director of athletics compliance at the specific Division I school in which he is looking to enroll.

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

If the first four-year school that 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:

1. You have not attended another four-year school that offered your sport.
2. You completed an average of 12 transferable credit hours at your two-year school.
3. You earned a GPA of at least 2.500 for Division I or 2.000 for Division II in those transferable credit hours.
4. You are transferring to a Division I school and you completed two semesters or three quarters at your two-year school. Summer school does not count.

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 practiced or competed with an intercollegiate sports team for two years before practicing or competing with your new school.
- You have not practiced for more than 14 consecutive days 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 II school and 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 I or II school.

To qualify for this exception, you must meet all the following conditions:

- You have not received an athletics scholarship.
- You have not participated in any athletics activities or meetings for more than 14 consecutive days.
- You were eligible for admission at the Division II school before you enrolled at the two-year college.

5. You plan to attend a Division III school

If you plan to attend a Division III school, you may use an exception to compete immediately if you have not practiced or competed with an intercollegiate sports team for two years.

6. You graduated from your two-year school

If you graduated from your two-year school, and earned at least 25 percent of your credit hours at your two-year school, you may use an exception to compete immediately after transferring to a Division II school.

CASE STUDY

In 2009-10, Jeff enrolled at Oscar University, a Division I school. Jeff was a qualifier and was on the swimming and diving team.

He then transferred to Felix College, a two-year school, in 2010-11 and was on the swimming and diving team there as well. He did not receive an Associate of Arts (AA) degree.

Now in 2011-12, Jeff wants to return to Oscar University.

Must Jeff serve an academic year in residence at Oscar?

No.

Even though he does not meet the requirements because he did not earn his AA degree from Felix, Jeff does not have to serve an academic year in residence at Oscar because he is returning to his original school and was not sitting out an academic year in residence when he transferred.



CONTINUING ELIGIBILITY

While initial eligibility rules affect your first year at a Division I or Division II school, continuing eligibility rules determine how long you may compete. If you are transferring to an NCAA school, the length of time you may compete for that school will be based in part on continuing eligibility rules.

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-year or four-year school and does not stop until five years have passed. Your clock continues to tick down, even if you spend an academic year in residence as a result of transferring, if you red shirt, if you do not attend school or even if you enroll part time during your college career.

If you compete at a Division II or Division 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-year 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.

You are allowed to compete for up to four seasons in each sport for two-year or four-year schools. You do not gain back any seasons of competition by transferring to a new school. If you are transferring to a Division I or Division II school, you will be charged a season of competition for each academic year in which you competed. If you are transferring to a Division III school, you will be charged a season of competition for each academic year in which you competed or practiced on or after the date of the first competition. The amount of competition or practice does not matter – you are charged a season of eligibility for even a minute of competition or, in Division III, a minute of practice on or after the date of the first competition.

IMPORTANT NCAA DEFINITIONS

Academic year in residence — also commonly referred to as “sitting out” — You may need to spend an academic year in residence without competing at your new school unless you qualify for a transfer exception. For an academic year in 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 for an academic year in residence.

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

Continuing eligibility rules — Continuing eligibility rules affect 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 in residence as a result of transferring, if you red shirt, if you do not attend school or even if you enroll 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 institution. You do not use a term if you only attend part time with no competition or are not enrolled for a term.

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

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 will decide if you qualify for a transfer exception.

Financial aid — or 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 Division II school.

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

NCAA — also National Collegiate Athletic Association — the national governing body for more than 1,300 colleges, universities, conferences and organizations.

National Letter of Intent (NLI) — NCAA schools that are part of the program may send a National Letter of Intent to a prospective 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 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. For more information, go to www.nationalletter.org.

Nonqualifier — A student who has not graduated from high school or who, at the time specified in the NCAA rules, has not successfully completed the required number of core-curriculum courses or has not presented the required GPA and/or SAT or ACT score required to be a qualifier. If you are a nonqualifier, you cannot practice, compete or receive an athletics scholarship from a Division I or II school during your first academic year. You will have only three seasons of competition in Division I; however, a fourth season may be granted if you complete 80 percent of your designated degree program before the start of your fifth year of enrollment.

Partial qualifier — A student who has met some, but not all, of the academic 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.

Permission-to-contact letter — or written permission to contact — If you attend a four-year school full time, 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.

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
- Obtained a specified minimum GPA in the core curriculum
- Obtained a specified minimum SAT or ACT score.

Redshirt — In Divisions I or II, redshirt refers to someone who attends a school full time, 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 scrimmages 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.

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.

Season of competition — Generally, NCAA rules say that any competition in a season — regardless of the amount of time — counts as having played a season in that sport. If you play any time during a season, regardless of how long you played, it counts as having played for an entire season in that sport. Your season of competition starts when you spend one second in competition on the field, court, gym or track.

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 toward your degree. Each school determines how many and which credit hours are acceptable for transferring.

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-year or four-year college 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 financial aid from a college while attending summer school.

Two-year college — A school where students can earn an Associate of Arts (AA) degree, an Associate of Science (AS) degree or an Associate of Applied Science degree within two years. Some people call these schools community colleges or junior colleges.

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.

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.

WHERE TO FIND MORE INFORMATION

NCAA RESOURCES

[NCAA.org/transfer](https://ncaa.org/transfer)

[NCAA.org/eligibilitycenter](https://ncaa.org/eligibilitycenter)

Follow us on Twitter [@NCAA_EC](https://twitter.com/NCAA_EC)

U.S. callers: 317-917-6008

International callers: 317-917-6222

Monday-Friday

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

Certification Processing

NCAA Eligibility Center

Certification Processing

P.O. Box 7136

Indianapolis, IN 46207

Overnight Delivery

NCAA Eligibility Center

Certification Processing

1802 Alonzo Watford Sr. Drive

Indianapolis, IN 46202

NATIONAL LETTER OF INTENT RESOURCES

nationalletter.org

317-223-0706

NCAA CONFERENCES

[NCAA schools and conferences](#)

OTHER VALUABLE RESOURCES

National Junior College Athletic Association

njcaa.org

719-590-9788

1631 Mesa Avenue

Colorado Springs, CO 80906

California Community College Athletics Association

ccaasports.org

916-444-1600

2017 O Street

Sacramento, CA 95811

Northwest Athletic Conference of Community Colleges

nwacsports.org

360-992-2833

1933 Fort Vancouver Way

Vancouver, WA 98663