

HOW TO GET A COLLEGE BASEBALL SCHOLARSHIP

AN INTERACTIVE STEP BY STEP GUIDEBOOK FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ATHLETES



BY JOSH SPENCE

1st Edition
April 2020



Introduction

Thank you for purchasing the 'How to' get a College Baseball Scholarship - An Interactive step by step guidebook for International Student-Athlete.

With baby steps, your College Baseball Journey begins today! The goal is attainable BUT you have to be the driving force in this process. Not your Parents, Not your Coaches, Not the Academy/ Team you play for. YOU NEED TO BE ACCOUNTABLE FOR YOUR DESTINY! Nobody is going to knock on your door and make your dreams come true, especially as an international student-athlete.

This guidebook will serve as a step-by-step tutorial on:

- The Different College Institutions and the route to get there
- Communicating with Coaches: What goes into your cover letter and recruiting video
- Finding the right school for you
- How to get 'Facetime' with College Programs
- Negotiating your scholarship offer
- Accepting your offer and how to let other programs know
- Understanding the F1 Visa Process

*** If at any juncture you would like to ask a question ***

Please don't hesitate to email me at: BuiltBaseball@hotmail.com.

You can also find me on social media at: @BuiltBaseball

Josh Spence

Contents



College Baseball Breakdown	Page 1
Understand the timeline of getting recruited	Page 2
Finding your dream school	Page 3
Communicating with College Programs	Page 4
Getting ‘Facetime’ with College Programs	Page 7
Negotiating your Scholarship	Page 8
Accepting your Scholarship	Page 9
Understand the F1 Visa Process	Page 10
Useful tips	Page 11
Thank you	Page 12



College Baseball Breakdown

1

There are over 1,700 College Baseball programs in the USA which span over three Sectors. Those governing bodies are the NJCAA, NCAA and NAIA. Each have their own subtleties and understanding them will help navigate your recruiting experience.

Always remember! You are a STUDENT-Athlete first not just an ATHLETIC-Student. To play at the NCAA level you will need to align your High-School credits to be eligible.

	NJCAA	NCAA	NAIA
Years of study:	2	4	4
Degree Type:	Associates	Bachelors	Bachelors
Baseball Programs:	512 (+CCCAA 103)	Division 1: 298 Division 2: 238 Division 3: 365	205
MLB Draft Eligibility:	YES	After their Junior year or 21 years of age.	YES
Athletic Scholarships Per Team:	24 (CCCAA = 0)	Division 1: 11.7 Division 2: 9 Division 3: 0	12
Go through the NCAA Clearinghouse	NO	D1 & D2: Yes D3: No	NO
Only a HS Diploma	YES	NO	NO
ACT and/or SAT Entrance Exam:	NO	YES	YES
Grades and Class Rankings:	NO	YES	YES

Recruiting Timeline

2



Year 9 (Freshman) and Year 10 (Sophomore)

- To ensure you give yourself the best chance to find the right program for you, start researching schools and finding information on:
 - NJCAA, NCAA or NAIA?
 - Coaches?
 - Geographic Location?
 - Programs History?
 - Where do players transition too after they graduate?
 - I have created a worksheet to help formulate what your dream school looks like - [Click Here](#).
- Start compiling a list of programs you would like to compete at.
 - It's ok to have a 'Dream School' but apply yourself to get recruited by all.
 - The more schools that are interested in you, the more leverage you can create when negotiating scholarship offers.
- The subjects you choose can effect your eligibility depending on where you go. Keep that in mind as you choose your subject areas.
 - There are **16 CORE COURSES** to take in High-School to be eligible for the NCAA level
 - [Click Here](#) to see what they are.
- Registering with NCAA Eligibility Center - [Click Here](#).
- Once you have registered with the NCAA Eligibility Center, part of the process is submitting your transcripts. I would recommend submitting transcripts after each year of completion. For more information - [Click Here](#).

Year 11 (Junior)

- Take your SAT or ACT Exam. This is arguably one of the hardest tests you will take at the High-School level BUT one of the most rewarding if you score well. High marks in your SAT exam can lead to academic scholarship opportunities (or grants) which can open doors both financially for your family and make you more appealing from a programs perspective (now they can have a scholarship'd player on the roster without using their limited supply of athletic scholarships).

Year 12 (Senior)

- Whether you're still looking for a scholarship or achieved one, make sure you are still remaining in contact with coaches.
 - A lot can happen in 12 months, stay in the loop!
- Re-take the SAT or ACT. You can take these exams as many times as you'd like and they will keep the best score from your last 6 tries.

Finding your Dream School

3



FIND YOUR DREAM SCHOOL: *But apply yourself to get recruited by all!*

Your DREAM school and the RIGHT school for you may not be the same, and that's ok. but "If you can't describe it, you can't have it". Find the criteria that's important to you and turn that information into tangible questions to ask coaches. Find the college that matches you, your priorities and your long-term career goals. Some example questions to ask coaches are:

- Do you have a need for my position in my current class?
- Is there scholarship money still available?
- What does the Fall schedule look like?
- What help is there academically if I need it?
- What is the living situation like?
- How do most students eat on campus?
- Where do most of your players go after graduating? (*great JUCO question*)

Here are a series of links to help research college baseball programs as well:

- <https://d1baseball.com/>
- <https://www.ncaa.com/sports/baseball/d1>
- <https://bleacherreport.com/college-baseball>
- <https://www.njcaa.org/sports/bsb/index>
- <https://www.naia.org/sports/bsb/index>
- Josh Spence discusses what helped him decide his dream school - [Click Here](#).
- Why you should keep a 'Log' - [Click Here](#).
- College Coach Log Example - [Click Here](#).



Communicating with College Programs

4

The best method to introduce yourself with college programs is through email. Every college program has a team website and under the 'roster' section you will be able to research the coaches details. There are two important pieces to your introductory email, they are: your **Cover Letter** and your **Recruiting Video**.

Your cover letter is a brief introduction of yourself, it has all the information coaches need to help formulate a decision if they would like to pursue you. Scholarships aren't given out after receiving the first email, it takes time. Don't be discouraged if you do not get a reply, these programs receive 100's to 1,000's of emails. Be persistent! Sometimes it just comes down to being in the right place at the right time and circumstances can change (Injuries happen as well as the MLB draft can effect college placements).

Tips for your Cover Letter:

- Address the Coach, By Coach [Then their last name].
 - Add your name, Position and Class (when you will be a freshman in college).
 - Add something personal about the program and finish with asking their opinion what is the best way to get recruited by them. How to get 'Facetime?'.
 - Place your 'BIO' here. The standard information to include is Height, Weight, Throwing Velocity, 60 yard time and any Strength and Condition numbers.
 - If there is any other tangible information that will help positively separate you, make sure you add it too! For example: You may be elite in another sport,
 - Before signing off, here is where you attach your recruiting video and references.
- For an example of a cover letter - [Click Here](#).



Communicating with College Programs

5

Tips for your Recruiting Video:

Your recruiting video needs to be short and sharp (under 2 minutes). Remember these coaches are getting 100's of emails weekly from High-school players, how can you create a buzz and separate yourself from your peers? For Recruiting Video Do's and Do Not's - [Click Here](#).

Once you have created your video, the best place to upload it is [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)

- It's Free.
- Accessible anywhere there's internet.
- limits the data usage in the emails you send.

Some tips for making a Recruiting Video:

If you have a Phone with a camera, a tripod and a computer; You have everything to make a recruiting video. You don't need a lot of experience in editing to make a recruiting video, Yes it takes a little practice but YOU are perfectly capable of doing it! Remember the simpler the better. If you google 'Baseball recruiting video' there are a bunch of examples (for better and worse) on Youtube.

- Recruiting Video Misconceptions - [Click Here](#).

!!! ATTENTION PITCHERS !!!

If you use Twitter, there is a page called @FlatgroundApp. It is a huge resource for putting your video online and getting recruited. There's a few Do's and Don'ts when using tagging their page in your tweet to ensure maximum exposure on their platform - [Click Here](#).



Communicating with College Programs

6

Recruiting Video Examples

Your recruiting video should be a combination of game and practice footage. Ultimately you want 2 minutes (give or take) of video to send to coaches. Make sure you put your best footage first!

The following Practice videos were filmed on a tripod with an iPhone 6s:

- Infielder Recruiting Video Example - [Click Here](#).
- Hitting Recruiting Video Example - [Click Here](#).
- Outfielder Recruiting Video Example - [Click Here](#).
- Pitcher Recruiting Video Example - [Click Here](#).
- Catcher Recruiting Video Example - [Click Here](#).

Note: If you search 'Recruiting Videos' in YouTube you will be able to see a plethora of examples to draw from (both good and bad).

Getting 'Facetime'

7



Once you have connected with coaches, start finding ways to get 'facetime' with them. Having positive tangibles will help connect you but to harness your best scholarship opportunity they need to see you perform in-person.

There are several pathways to get 'facetime' with schools. The most efficient way I have found is asking them (the Coach) what would be the best method. You may be surprised by the answer.

Most Coaches will suggest to attend their programs camp but some may suggest to play at a particular showcase or tournament.

Major High-School tournaments/ showcases in the USA are:

- Perfect Game: <https://www.perfectgame.org/Tournaments/>
- PBR: <https://www.prepbaserballreport.com/tournaments>
- AZ Fall Classic: <https://azfallclassic.com/>
- Boras Classic: <https://borasclassic.com/>

If playing in one of these tournaments is something you want to pursue, reaching out to club-ball/ travel-ball teams in the USA is how you will get in. Please note, There are some programs internationally that will travel to play in these tournaments.

When you have the opportunity to compete in a showcase, don't get caught up about stats or performance. College Coaches want to see your 'processes', like:

- How you prepare
- The intent you play with
- How you interact with teammates
- How you deal with failure

- For an example of a College programs reply - [Click Here](#).
(This was during my High-School years, before I had an email address).

- Why Facetime is so important - [Click here](#) to learn more.



Negotiating your Scholarship

8

Athletic scholarship breakdown:

- NJCAA: 24 Athletic Scholarships
- CCCAA: 0 Athletic Scholarships
- NCAA D1: 11.7 Athletic Scholarships
- NCAA D2: 9 Athletic Scholarships
- NCAA D3: 0 Athletic Scholarships
- NAIA: 12 Athletic Scholarships

College Coaches need to offer at minimum 25% when negotiating scholarships with players.

Academic scholarships don't count towards Athletic scholarship numbers. So if you do well in the classroom and have a solid SAT score, you become much more of an asset! Remember you're a STUDENT athlete not an ATHLETIC student...

Variables in a scholarship:

- Tuition and Fees
- Room
- Books and Course related materials
- Meal Plan

Every program will have their own 'formula' to build a successful roster, Don't hesitate to ask the coach what scholarships they have given out to players of your year and position. This will help narrow down schools to find the 'right fit'.

Theres a right way and wrong way to leverage other scholarship offers to position yourself in-front of your 'dream school'.

DO NOT talk bad about other coaches or programs, what you will find is that ALL these coaches are connected and you never know who is friends with who.

Insider Tip: The earlier you can start beginning the conversation of scholarships, the better. This is all the more reason to position yourself at the age of 15-16 to do so as opposed to 17-18. That being said, just because you're 18 and haven't received a scholarship doesn't mean you're out of luck. The biggest variable that occurs is High-school seniors committing to college programs then signing out of the draft, thus opening a window of opportunity for you. If you're looking for scholarships, hit up the schools who have been effected by players leaving because they have just been selected. The MLB draft is around early June.

For insight into the negotiating process - [Click Here](#).



Accepting your Scholarship

9

!! CONGRATULATIONS !!

Make sure you send a thank you note/ message to coaches who were pursuing you (offered you a scholarship). Even though you will not be entering their program, there's a good chance you will cross-paths again in your baseball journey.

This is how you create a network. Baseball is bigger than one persons decision to go to a school, it's a people business. A small message will go along way, even if you do not get a reply back.

An example of a thank you letter:

Hello Coach XXXX,
Thank you for the opportunity to be recruited by XXXXX,
however I have decided I will be playing XXXXX.

I am very grateful for the time you have given me, this was not an easy decision to make.
I wanted to lastly wish you the best going forward and continued success at XXXXX.

Thank you,
XXXXX

Why it is important to respectfully decline a college offer - [Click Here](#).



Understand the F1 Visa Process

10

Your step by step guide to obtaining an F1 Visa:

- 1) Receive form I-20 from your School. This will contain various information in regards to the scholarship you have been offered as well as giving you a SEVIS ID number (it will begin with the letter 'N').
 - SEVIS Payment Instruction - [Click Here](#).
- 2) With your I-20 you will now go to: <https://ceac.state.gov/GenNIV/Default.aspx> to fill out form DS-160. This is how you acquire your interview with the US Consulate. The cost to filing your DS-160 is \$160 USD.
- 3) Once you have filled out form DS-160 you will then need to pay the applicable fees for the F1 visa.
 - Pay the SEVIS Fee: This will cost \$350 USD.
Go to: <https://www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/index.html> for more information.
 - F1 Visa Fee: This will cost \$160 USD.
Go to: <https://www.ustraveldocs.com/au/au-niv-visafeeinfo.asp#payment> for more information.
- 4) Once you have paid the fees you are now aligned for your interview.
On the day remember to bring:
 - Receipts to the fees you have paid. (I would also bring a credit or debt card, incase a payment needs to be made, you will be able to do so at the consulate with this method).
 - A Passport valid for travel to the United States. Your passport must be valid for at least six months beyond your period of stay in the United States.
 - Your Nonimmigrant Visa Application. Form DS-160 confirmation page.
 - Photo (US passport 50mm/50mm). You will upload your photo while completing the online Form DS-160. If the photo is not accepted (this is not unusual) you must provide one at your interview. (I would recommend bring 3-4 photos to your interview).
 - Your I-20 That has been issued by the School.
 - Bank Statements, Which can be as simple as a letter from your bank stating you have to funds to cover what the scholarship does not.

Other useful websites to research the process are:

- <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/international-student-life-cycle>
- <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/forms/ds-160-online-nonimmigrant-visa-application/ds-160-faqs.html>

*** Outline of the F1 Visa process - [Click Here](#) ***



Useful Tips

11

- SAT Scores and a High GPA equals money in your pocket!
- Social Media has hurt more prospecting student-athletes than it has helped.
 - Your social media can be an asset however most teenagers use it incorrectly and create poor representations of themselves. As an international student-athlete your social media may be the only thing a college program can view to gain insight into the person you are.
- Facetime is key. Unfortunately this makes things difficult for international student-athletes but not unattainable to reach your goals. If you work within the timeframe provided you will give yourself every opportunity to create a pathway for yourself.
- Begin your Strength and Conditioning program today! The quickest way to get crossed off a coaches list is not being in physical shape. Although your physicality doesn't directly determine the success you will have in this game it will affect how college coaches project you. Remember, they are trying to formulate a decision on what type of athlete you will be in the next 24-36 months. What path are on? It is not too late to change the course if you need to make adjustments.
- Email **EVERY** program you can, I can not stress this enough. Cast a big net of opportunity and seize the moment.
 - Scholarship offers = Tangible leverage.
- If you're a senior (year 12) without a scholarship, watch the MLB Draft and take note of the players in High-School who get picked and see where they were committed to attend college. This may be a useful lead if your positions on the field align, as they most likely will be looking to fill the roster spot.
- Don't be discouraged if a program (especially your dream school) doesn't write back to you initially. Be persistent and respectfully write a follow up email.



Thank you!

12

Thank you for your purchase of the EGuidebook. If there are any questions about the recruiting process please do not hesitate to reach me at BuiltBaseball@hotmail.com or find me on social media @BuiltBaseball.

Enjoy your time getting recruited and remember;
There's a college program for everyone, you just have to find it.

Josh Spence