



# PGA

South Florida Section  
*Junior Golf*

# Frequently Asked Questions

- **When should I start the recruiting process?**
  - When the recruiting process starts really depends on the sport. A good rule of thumb is to start your freshman year. During your Freshman year you will want to meet with your high school counselor and come up with an academic game plan. Make sure you are meeting all the needs of the NCAA and NAIA in addition to the specific colleges that interest you. Look for summer camps that will help you develop as a student-athlete and gain you some valuable exposure to coaches as well.
  - During your Sophomore year research programs you are interested in and contact coaches. The summer after your sophomore year you should consider attending the camps held by those teams.
  - Your Junior year is the most important in the recruiting process. This is the year coaches will be looking at your statistics and the admissions department will be looking at you academic achievements. Make sure you have already established a relationship with coaches so when your senior year starts they already know you are interested in their program.
  - By the time you start your senior year you should have narrowed down your list of possible schools to five or six. If you have not already established a relationship with the coach you should do it now.
- **What should I look for in a College?**
  - Look for the best fit for you. A great question to ask yourself is, “Would I consider attending this school even if I’m not going to play sports?” Does the college have the academic majors and social features that are suited to you? What are the graduation rates for student-athletes and in what sports? Do you want to live at home, close to home, or be as far away from home as possible? What size school do you want to attend? Are you willing to go to a college affiliated with a religious denomination that is not your own? You will want to start a list of things that are important to you in a college and revise the list as you refine your search.
- **When and how should you initiate a phone call to a College Coach?**
  - A good way to differentiate yourself in the recruiting process is to initiate a phone call to a college coach. This demonstrates to a coach that you are being proactive in the college process as well as displaying a high level of maturity and independence. Phone calls should only be initiated once you have thoroughly researched the school/golf program, evaluated your golf and academic profile to ensure you are closely aligned to that particular school’s requirements and emailed your introductory letter and resume to the coach. Once these actions have been executed, a follow up phone call to confirm the coach has received your information would be appropriate. Introducing yourself “live” can be a great way to further express your interest in the school/golf program, learn more about the coach and team as well as what the coach expects from a prospective student-athlete. For key talking points, please visit <https://jqaa.org/resources/college-golf/>.
- **What kinds of schools can offer athletic scholarships?**
  - NCAA Division I & II schools, NAIA schools, and some Junior Colleges are all eligible to give athletic scholarships. NCAA Division III schools are able to give other types of scholarships and financial aid.



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- **What is the NCAA Clearinghouse?**
  - The NCAA department that used to be called the clearinghouse is now known as the eligibility center. The eligibility center is the organization that determines if you are academically eligible to play college athletics. In high school there are a certain number of core courses required and minimum GPA and ACT/SAT scores you need to earn. You only need to register with the eligibility center if you plan on playing at the NCAA Division 1, 1-A or 2 levels.
- **Can you still play college sports without getting an athletic scholarship?**
  - Absolutely, scholarship athletes are student-athletes who are invited to be on a team. There are, however, more spots on the team than allowed scholarships. Students who try out and make a collegiate athletic team are called walk-ons. If you are looking to walk-on to a team make sure you contact the coach to find out if there are available spots, when try-outs are, and what they are looking for in their athletes.
- **What does it mean to “Red Shirt” as a college Student – Athlete?**
  - Redshirting describes a student-athlete who does not represent their school in intercollegiate competition in their respective sport for an entire academic year of college. The NCAA defines ‘competition’ as participation against outside competition (another team(s) from another college(s)). The “redshirt” designation indicates that a student-athlete has not exhausted a season of eligibility as defined by NCAA rules. It is important to note that during a redshirt year a student-athlete is allowed to participate in all practices, intrasquad qualifiers/matches, workouts, team meetings and training sessions. Per NCAA rules, each student-athlete has five years, from the time of his or her initial full-time enrollment in college, to compete in four years of athletic competition. NCAA rules also state that any intercollegiate competition, regardless of the duration, shall count as one season of competition in that sport. For example, if a college golfer played one 18 hole round of intercollegiate competition, he/she would be charged with one of their four years of eligibility. Occasionally a student-athlete will elect to redshirt during their initial year of college to adjust to the demands of being a student-athlete. In these instances, coaches will support the student-athlete realizing they would benefit from an additional year of development prior to participating in intercollegiate competition. Additionally, a redshirt year provides student-athletes the opportunity to spread their academic workload over a five-year period and established a strong academic foundation from the beginning. The decision to redshirt is a collaborative decision made by the student-athlete, his/her parents and the college coach. Redshirting can also be utilized when a student-athlete gets injured prior to the season and the prospects of he/she competing for the majority of the season are limited. A player who suffers a mid-season injury can apply for a medical redshirt season. Injured players who opt to redshirt can then rehabilitate their injury while preserving their NCAA maximum seasons of eligibility.



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## Important Terms:

- **Contact:** A contact happens any time a college coach says more than hello during a face-to-face meeting with you or your parents off the college's campus.
- **Dead Period:** A college coach may not have any face-to-face contact with you or your parents on or off the college campus at any time during a dead period. The coach may write and call you or your parents during this time.
- **Evaluation:** An evaluation happens when a college coach observes you practicing or competing.
- **Official visit:** During an official visit, the college can pay for transportation to and from the college for you, lodging and meals (Division I allows for up to three meals per day) for you and your parents or guardians, as well as reasonable entertainment expenses including three tickets to a Division I home sports event or five tickets to a Division II home sports event. Before a college may invite you on an official visit, you must provide the college with a copy of your high school transcript and ACT, SAT or PLAN score (test scores are required for Division I only) and register with the NCAA Eligibility Center.
- **Unofficial visit:** Any visit by you and your parents to a college campus paid for by you or your parents. The only expense you may receive from the college is three complimentary admissions to a Division I home athletics contest or five complimentary admissions to a Division II home athletics contest. You may make as many unofficial visits as you like and may take those visits at any time. The only time you cannot talk with a coach during an unofficial visit is during a dead period.
- **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.
- **Verbal commitment:** A verbal commitment happens when you verbally agree to play sports for a college before you sign or are eligible to sign a National Letter of Intent. The commitment is not binding on you or the school and can be made at any time.
- **Walk-on:** Someone who is not typically recruited by a school to participate in sports and does not receive a scholarship from the school, but who becomes a member of one of the school's athletics teams.

## Helpful Links:

- <http://new.collegegolf.com/> - [golfstat.com](http://golfstat.com) - [birdiefire.com](http://birdiefire.com) - [eligibilitycenter.org](http://eligibilitycenter.org) - [playnaia.org](http://playnaia.org)
- [nccga.org](http://nccga.org) - [roadtocollegegolf.com](http://roadtocollegegolf.com) - <https://www.ajga.org/parents/collegegolf.asp> - <https://jgaa.org/resources/college-golf/>

## Reminders:

A prospective student-athlete may initiate phone calls to a college coach at any time, regardless of their graduation year. However, college coaches are restricted in terms of when and how often they are able to return or initiate phone calls to a prospective student-athlete. NCAA rules allow Division I coaches to return or initiate a phone call to a prospective student-athlete beginning September 1 of a prospect's junior year in high school. There is no limit on the number of calls a Division I coach can make. In Division II, there is no limit on the number of calls a college coach can make beginning June 15 prior to a prospect's junior year in high school. For Division III coaches, there is no limit on the number of calls or when they can be made. Understanding the NCAA rules a coach must abide by will allow you to be better prepared for how a coach may or may not reply to your phone call.