

KeepPlayingBaseball.org – Freshman Year Checklist

Fall

Academics

Tell your high school guidance counselor that you want to play college baseball. Get a list of classes at your school that are approved by the NCAA, and make a plan to meet the NCAA requirements at the *highest level*. The rules can change quickly. Be sure you check in with your counselor at least twice a year to make sure you stay on track.

Be your counselor's second set of eyes.

Visit <https://web3.ncaa.org/hportal/exec/homeAction> and navigate to the "List of NCAA Courses" tab at the top. Enter your high school and double check that you are enrolled in the correct number of core courses for eligibility at the highest level.

Set high academic goals and hold yourself to a high academic standard. Set a goal to keep your grades *above* what you need to play at the *highest level* you hope to play.

Work hard in the classroom and take responsibility for your own performance. Find and use resources (parents, teachers, coaches, tutors) if you struggle with a class or subject. Your grades as a 9th grader carry the same weight as your grades as a senior for eligibility purposes.

Development

Play fall ball, another sport, or adopt a training program to improve your strength and conditioning and on-field skills.

Seek honest and objective feedback about your playing abilities and use the feedback to set measurable on-field goals to improve on your weaknesses and build on your strengths.

Watch professional baseball on TV. Pay attention to the details and the decisions pros make.

Get familiar with KPBB's Think the Game section and use the articles to start learning about the mental game of college baseball.

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Recruiting

- Spend 10-15 minutes a day reading, researching, and learning about the recruiting process and what it will take to get recruited to play college baseball.

Winter

Academics

- Continue to work hard in the classroom. Get help if your grades are not as good as you need them to be to get into your top-choice schools.
- Make it a point to communicate well with your teachers and make personal connections. You will likely need several teachers to write you letters of recommendation when it comes time to apply to colleges and universities. Build relationships early and show these teachers that you care about your school work.

Development

- Play another sport if you are interested.
- Reflect back on your fall season and evaluate how you did with your goal setting. Use that information to set new goals for the winter off-season and make improvements to your plan for reaching these goals.
- Take care of your body. Stay in shape. Ask your coaches for off-season routines that are appropriate for your age and position. Learn all you can about how you can protect yourself from injury during the coming season.
- Get to know the influential coaches in your league, community, and online. Learn how to filter information that you can use and think critically about instruction and information that you are given.

Recruiting

- Continue to learn about how the recruiting process works and what college coaches are looking for in recruits.
- Continue to spend time each day learning and researching. Start to explore the different levels of college baseball and schools that you may be interested in attending. Use your imagination and enjoy exploring the many different options. There's no need to shorten your list at this point. Cast a wide net!

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Spring

Academics

Check with your guidance counselor again to make sure that you are still taking the right classes. Check the NCAA website again to make sure any new classes are NCAA approved courses. Continue to work hard in the classroom.

Development

Ask your coaches for an honest and objective evaluation of your playing ability and get tips on how you can improve your game. This feedback and the adjustments you make will keep you on the path of consistent improvement.

Recruiting

Ask a lot of questions of coaches, older players, family members, or friends who can help you decide what you might want to study and where you might want to go to school.

Be the kind of player who is remembered for the right reasons every time you step onto the field. Be mentally and physically prepared for every game and practice. Be the first one on and off the field. Be the first guy to show up and the last guy to leave. You *never* know who might be watching you on the field or in the dugout.

Continue to spend time each day learning and researching the recruiting process, what it takes to play college baseball, and what you need to do to keep getting better.

Summer

Academics

Take summer school if you did not complete all of the NCAA required courses on your plan with the grades you need.

Development

Focus on developing your skills and strength.

Play competitive summer ball or take part in a high level training and strength and conditioning program.

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Start to create a personalized plan for how you will continue to improve and what you need to do to get to the next level. Not all players should be doing the same thing. The more your plan can work to minimize weaknesses and build on strengths, the better off you will be.

Recruiting

Make sure you are a good prospect online as well as on the field. Make sure that everything on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or any other online service supports the fact that you are a good teammate and a dedicated athlete.

Continue your research on college baseball and the recruiting process.

Make sure you are familiar with all the levels of college baseball.

Visit the www.KPBrecruiting101.org site for next recruiting steps and more information on what you should be doing given where you are in the recruiting process.

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