

Your Winter Recruiting Checklist

Follow these steps to ensure you find the best athletic, academic, social and financial college fit.

December



Continue applying to schools.

Keeping up with [admissions standards and deadlines can be tough](#)—by now, you should know which of the schools on your target list offer rolling admissions vs. set admissions deadlines and whether they [use the Common App](#).



Register with the NAIA Eligibility Center.

Are you applying to NAIA programs? Every student-athlete has to [create an account with PlayNAIA.org](#) in order to play sports at an NAIA college or university.



Compare college offers.

From knowing the difference between [verbal offers and commitments](#) to [preferred and recruited walk-on offers](#), review these terms now so you have a better understanding of the offers you may receive.

December 4



D1 football early signing period

Football recruits can sign with D1 schools between December 3-5, 2025 ahead of the regular signing period beginning February 4, 2026.

January



Complete your FAFSA ASAP.

If you haven't submitted your FAFSA, now is the time. [Financial aid](#) is awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis. This form determines your eligibility for federal grants, loans and work-study funds.



Become a master negotiator.

What happens if you receive multiple scholarship offers? Not all offers are the same, so it's a good idea to [learn how to negotiate](#) to maximize your total financial aid packages.

February 4



D1 and D2 football regular signing period begins

This is just the first (not the only!) day in the regular period football student-athletes can officially sign with D1 and D2 schools. This period ends on April 1 (D1) and August 1 (D2).

February



Complete your amateurism questionnaire.

Whether you're signing with an NCAA D1 or D2 college or still narrowing down your options, make sure you've [completed your amateurism questionnaire](#) within your NCAA Certification Account.