



Baseball Scholarship & Financial Aid Information

As a general rule, “full ride” scholarships very rarely exist in college baseball, except perhaps in the NAIA and the NJCAA. Unlike the revenue-producing sports football and basketball, baseball must divide its number of scholarships among an entire team in order to be competitive. The maximum number of scholarships that a Division I baseball team can give is **11.7**, and most programs don’t even have that many!

Roughly 80% of all baseball scholarship money goes to positions in the middle of the diamond because the best athletes and defensive players are here. Pitching has always been and will always be the #1 priority for college coaches in recruiting. The scholarship hierarchy is generally as follows, but specifically depends on a program’s need in a particular year:

1. Pitchers—the most important position on the field—warrants the most investment \$\$
2. Shortstops/ Catchers
3. Centerfielders
4. Second basemen
5. Corner Infielders/ Corner Outfielders

Point of Reference

Because of the limited baseball scholarship money in college, you must understand that **ANY** baseball scholarship offer that is made to you by a coach should be viewed as significant, no matter how small the monetary amount may be. Likewise, if a Division I or II coach offers you any baseball money whatsoever, it means that he wants you in his program and the money offer, while maybe not large in sum, is a gesture reinforcing his sincere desire to have you compete for a position on the team. Many recruits make the mistake of scoffing at a 25% scholarship offer (the minimum that can be offered in Division I) accompanied by an excellent chance to play, wrongly thinking that the coach’s offer is a “slap in the face”. Moreover, because Division I baseball coaches must offer at least 25% (this rule was incepted in 2008) if they want to give a scholarship, it means there are now more recruited walk-ons than ever before. Because of these constraints placed on baseball coaches, they are not able to offer books or a few hundred dollars in scholarship money and thus must work harder to attract recruited walk-ons with the promise of an opportunity to compete for playing time.

Should I sign Early?

You must first understand that roughly only 10% of players that commit to play college baseball actually sign their National Letter of Intent in the early signing period (November). Therefore, very few even have the option to do so. There are advantages and disadvantages to signing early, but generally you should only sign early if you can pump your fist in excitement after signing on the dotted line. In other words, if you already had a specific school in mind and know that the coach really wants to have you, then it is probably not a bad idea. Otherwise, think long and hard before signing.

Financial Aid Packages

Division III, Ivy League (Division I) and Patriot League (Division I) coaches are not permitted by the NCAA to give athletic scholarships. Therefore, these coaches are left waiting to see what a recruit's financial aid "package" will be. The "package" refers to the total dollars of both government and school aid (grants, merit scholarships, loans, work study, etc...) that will be awarded to a student-athlete for college. The financial aid packages at each institution will vary slightly or greatly in some cases, as some schools are notorious for allocating "weak" packages while others are known for giving "strong" packages. Coaches that have no baseball scholarships to give are often at the mercy of their financial aid offices when it comes to recruiting because if their school cannot match the financial aid package of a competitive institution that has a comparable total cost of attendance, athletes will usually choose the school that gives the better aid package.

Be aware that loans are considered by some college financial aid offices to be a part of a student's "package" while others do not claim loans as aid because they only offer temporary financial assistance that ultimately must be paid back. Loans can be very helpful, even necessary for many to attend college, but remember that loans are never "free" money, unlike government grants, merit scholarships, or academic grants, which are essentially like cash in your pocket to defray college costs.

**FOR DETAILED FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION AND TIPS FOR RECEIVING THE
BEST PACKAGE, SEE PAGES 86-90 IN
"HIGH SCHOOL PLAYER'S GUIDE TO COLLEGE BASEBALL", FOUND IN YOUR
LOCKER**