



Education is important. As the numbers show, there are more than 400,000 NCAA student-athletes, and most of them go pro in something other than sports. The following are the percentage of NCAA student-athletes who become professional athletes in specific sports:

- Baseball – 8.9%**
- Men’s ice hockey – 3.8%**
- Football – 1.7%**
- Men’s soccer – 1.6%**
- Men’s basketball – 1.2%**
- Women’s basketball – 0.9%**

# How do Athletic Scholarships Work?

**Does the NCAA award athletics scholarships?** No. Individual schools award athletics scholarships, but athletics grants-in-aid are partially supported through the NCAA revenue distribution. NCAA Division I and Division II members provide more than \$2 billion in athletics scholarships annually to more than 126,000 student-athletes. Division III members do not offer athletically-related financial aid.

**Is an athletics scholarship guaranteed for four years?** Athletics scholarships, like most merit-based scholarships, are limited to one academic year. The school must notify the student-athlete in writing by July 1 whether the athletics scholarship will be renewed for the next academic year. Athletics scholarships may be renewed for a maximum of five years within a six-year period of continuous college attendance. If a student-athlete’s aid will be reduced or canceled, the college or university must provide the student-athlete with an opportunity to appeal. In most cases, the coach decides who gets a scholarship, what it covers and whether it will be renewed.

**What do athletics scholarships cover?** Per NCAA guidelines, full scholarships cover tuition and fees, room, board and required course-related books. Many student-athletes receive athletics scholarships that only cover a portion of these costs.

**What is a full athletic scholarship worth these days?** At an in-state, public school in 2009, the NCAA estimates the average yearly value of a full scholarship at just more than \$15,000. For an out-of-state public institution, the average cost is approximately \$25,000 per year. Full scholarships at private schools average slightly more than \$35,000. *USA Today* recently estimated the value of a full athletics scholarship at \$120,000 per year. But the real value of athletics scholarships is intangible. Without them, many student-athletes would be unable to pursue their athletics and academic dreams.

**Can student-athletes receive other non-athletic financial aid?** Yes. Thousands of student-athletes benefit from academic scholarships, NCAA financial aid programs such as the NCAA Division I Student-Athlete Opportunity Fund and noninstitutional need-based aid such as Federal Pell Grants. Student-athletes and parents should check with their athletics department or college financial aid office regarding permissible sources of financial aid.

**Is an athletics scholarship the same thing as a National Letter of Intent (NLI)?** No, but they are often confused with each other. They actually are separate documents with separate purposes. The NLI seeks to limit recruiting pressure by providing the prospect an opportunity to make a binding commitment to a school, while the athletics scholarship sets forth the amount of financial aid the student-athlete will be receiving for the next academic year. The NLI must be accompanied by an athletics scholarship to be valid. You can visit [www.national-letter.org](http://www.national-letter.org) for more information about the NLI.

**Do many high school athletes earn athletics scholarships?** Very few, in fact. According to recent statistics, about two percent of high school athletes are awarded athletics scholarships to compete in college. Academic, not athletics, achievement is the most reliable path to success in life.

**Do many NCAA student-athletes go on to play professionally?** Even fewer! Of the student-athletes participating in sports that have professional leagues, very few go on to be professional athletes. In reality, most student-athletes depend on academics to prepare them for life after college.

