

What is the NCAA and the Differences Between Divisions I, II and III?

What is the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)?

The NCAA, or National Collegiate Athletic Association, was established in 1906 and serves as the athletics governing body for more than 1,200 colleges, universities, conferences and organizations. The national office is in Indianapolis, Indiana, but the member COLLEGES AND universities develop the rules and guidelines for athletics eligibility and athletics competition for each of the three NCAA divisions. The NCAA is committed to the student-athlete and to governing competition in a fair, safe, inclusive and sportsmanlike manner

	NCAA Division I	NCAA Division II	NCAA Division III
Division Facts?	<p>Division I members must offer at least 14 sports (at least seven for men and seven for women, or six for men and eight for women). The institution must sponsor at least two team sports (for example, football, basketball or volleyball) for each gender. The school also must have participating male and female teams or participants in the fall, winter and spring seasons.</p>	<p>Division II is an intermediate-level division of competition, which offers an alternative to both the highly competitive level of intercollegiate sports offered in Division I and the non-SCHOLARSHIP level offered in Division III.</p> <p>Division II provides an intersection where athletically gifted students can compete at a high level, while maintaining much of a traditional student experience. Excellent outcomes come from athletics programs that are properly aligned with the educational mission of the institution. This balance is what distinguishes Division II from the others, and this philosophy is at the heart of all decisions made by the division’s governing bodies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Division III student-athletes report active academic engagement and participation in academic “extras,” such as research with faculty, study abroad opportunities and capstone/senior thesis projects. • Division III student-athletes report significantly greater gains in time management when compared with non-athletes. Male student-athletes also report significantly greater gains in leadership when compared with male non-athletes. • Division III student-athletes are more likely to report that they see themselves as part of the campus community. • Division III student-athletes report greater involvement in volunteering. They also are more likely to report “leadership potential” as an important consideration in choosing a career.
Total Membership	<p>335 members. Public / PRIVATE: In Division I, 66 percent of the members are public institutions; 34 percent are private.</p>	<p>Division II has 302 member institutions, with 281 currently classified as active member institutions and 21 institutions advancing through the membership process. These schools range in size from less than 2,500 to over 15,000, with the average ENROLLMENT being around 4,500.</p>	<p>442 Total Members (436 Active and 6 Provisional / Reclassifying) *Division III is the NCAA’s largest division. 81 percent (352) of active Division III institutions are private, while 19 percent (84) of institutions are public.</p>
Financial Aid	<p>Institutions must offer a minimum amount of Financial Aid but may not exceed established maximums. Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) football, men’s and women’s basketball, women’s gymnastics, women’s volleyball and women’s tennis are considered Head-Count sports FOR FINANCIAL AID purposes in Division I. Financial Aid Equivalencies (one grant-in-aid package divided into smaller pieces) may be offered in all other sports.</p>	<p>Very few of the 100,000 student-athletes competing in Division II receive a full athletics grant that covers all of their expenses, but most of them will receive some Financial Aid to help them through school. For the rest of their expenses, student-athletes are on their own—using academic SCHOLARSHIPS, student LOANS AND employment earnings just like most other students attending the Division II institution. This healthy partnership is the essence of Division II, where student-athletes are valued for their athletics contribution and for being an important part of the overall student body.</p>	<p>It is important to recognize that Financial Aid and funding differ at the Division III School versus Division I and Division II schools. Student athletes who play their sport at the Division III level do not receive Financial Aid related to their athletic ability. This is a result of their emphasis on the impact of athletics on the players not the spectators, allowing the primary focus to be on academics. Since athletics are funded like any other academic department, their recruiting budget is much lower. Division III schools offer Financial Aid packages in the form of academic scholarships, leadership scholarships, merit-based scholarships, grant money and needs based Financial Aid. A benefit of this structure is that, unlike athletic scholarships, academic scholarships cannot be taken away due to season or career ending injuries, only through the academic non-performance of the awarded scholarshio.</p>
Athletes must register with:	NCAA Eligibility Center for Division I sports	NCAA Eligibility Center for Division II sports	N/A