



Estimated Probability of Competing in College Athletics

	High School Participants	NCAA Participants	Overall % HS to NCAA	% HS to NCAA Division I	% HS to NCAA Division II	% HS to NCAA Division III
Men						
Baseball	491,790	34,980	7.1%	2.1%	2.2%	2.8%
Basketball	550,305	18,712	3.4%	1.0%	1.0%	1.4%
Cross Country	266,271	14,350	5.4%	1.8%	1.4%	2.2%
Football	1,057,382	73,063	6.9%	2.7%	1.8%	2.4%
Golf	141,466	8,527	6.0%	2.1%	1.7%	2.2%
Ice Hockey	35,210	4,199	11.9%	4.8%	0.6%	6.5%
Lacrosse	111,842	13,899	12.4%	2.9%	2.3%	7.1%
Soccer	450,234	24,986	5.5%	1.3%	1.5%	2.7%
Swimming	138,364	9,691	7.0%	2.7%	1.1%	3.1%
Tennis	158,171	7,957	5.0%	1.6%	1.1%	2.3%
Track & Field	600,136	28,595	4.8%	1.8%	1.2%	1.7%
Volleyball	57,209	2,007	3.5%	0.7%	0.7%	2.0%
Water Polo	21,286	1,013	4.8%	2.7%	0.7%	1.3%
Wrestling	244,804	7,175	2.9%	1.0%	0.8%	1.1%
Women						
Basketball	430,368	16,532	3.8%	1.2%	1.1%	1.5%
Cross Country	226,039	15,966	7.1%	2.6%	1.8%	2.7%
Field Hockey	60,549	6,066	10.0%	3.0%	1.3%	5.7%
Golf	75,605	5,372	7.1%	2.9%	2.1%	2.2%
Ice Hockey	9,599	2,355	24.5%	8.8%	1.2%	14.5%
Lacrosse	93,473	11,752	12.6%	3.7%	2.7%	6.2%
Soccer	388,339	27,638	7.1%	2.4%	1.9%	2.8%
Softball	367,405	19,999	5.4%	1.7%	1.6%	2.1%
Swimming	170,797	12,684	7.4%	3.3%	1.2%	2.9%
Tennis	187,519	8,736	4.7%	1.5%	1.1%	2.1%
Track & Field	494,477	29,907	6.0%	2.7%	1.5%	1.8%
Volleyball	444,779	17,387	3.9%	1.2%	1.1%	1.6%
Water Polo	20,826	1,159	5.6%	3.4%	0.9%	1.3%

Sources: High school figures from the [2016-17 High School Athletics Participation Survey](#) conducted by the National Federation of State High School Associations; data from [club teams](#) not included. College numbers from the NCAA [2016-17 Sports Sponsorship and Participation Rates Report](#).

Last Updated: April 20, 2018



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Methodology and Notes

High school to NCAA

- High school figures come from the [2016-17 High School Athletics Participation Survey](#) conducted by the National Federation of State High School Associations. College numbers are from the NCAA's [2016-17 Sports Sponsorship and Participation Rates Report](#). These college numbers account for participation in college athletics at NCAA-member schools only.
- High school-to-NCAA percentages were calculated by dividing the number of NCAA participants in 2016-17 by the number of HS participants in that same year. This assumes that high school and college rosters are turning over at roughly the same rate (e.g., both HS and college participation numbers include four classes of students and both sets of teams turn over roughly one-quarter of their rosters each year). In prior versions of this table, more complex calculations were used to estimate the number of HS departures and open college roster slots each year; however, these more involved calculations did not lead to substantially different percentages than the simple calculation used currently. Given several potential confounds (e.g., multi-sport participation in high school, frequency of redshirt in NCAA Division I football that would lead to a 5-year rather than 4-year college track), these calculations should be considered approximations and not exact accounting.
- The high school-to-NCAA divisional percentages were calculated by dividing the number of 2016-17 participants within each NCAA division by the total number of HS participants. For example, we estimate that approximately 3.4% of HS boys basketball participants go on to play at an NCAA school (Divisions I, II or III), but only 1.0% of HS participants do so at the Division I level.
- As the high school figures account only for participants on high school teams and not those competing exclusively on club teams or similar, the true pre-college to NCAA percentages could be lower in some sports (e.g., ice hockey, tennis). Data for several sports (e.g., rowing, skiing, gymnastics) are not shown due to the low number of high school programs in those sports relative to non-scholastic pre-college participation opportunities.



Estimated Probability of Competing in Professional Athletics

	NCAA Participants	Approximate # Draft Eligible	# Draft Picks	# NCAA Drafted	% NCAA to Major Pro	% NCAA to Total Pro
Baseball	34,980	7,773	1,215	735	9.5%	--
M Basketball	18,712	4,158	60	50	1.2%	19.3%
W Basketball	16,532	3,674	36	34	0.9%	4.9%
Football	73,063	16,236	253	253	1.6%	1.9%
M Ice Hockey	4,199	933	217	60	6.4%	--
M Soccer	24,986	5,552	88	78	1.4%	--



Estimated Probability of Competing in Professional Athletics

Methodology and Notes

General

- College participation numbers are from the NCAA's [2016-17 Sports Sponsorship and Participation Rates Report](#). These college numbers account for participation in college athletics at NCAA-member schools only.
- To estimate the number of NCAA student-athletes in a sport eligible for a particular year's professional draft, the total number of NCAA student-athlete participants in the sport was divided by 4.5. This figure was used to provide a general estimate of the number of student-athletes in a draft cohort (single draft class) in a given year, accounting for redshirting, degree completion delays due to transfer, etc. that extend the average time to graduation to just beyond four year in all sports. In other words, we observe a year-to-year departure rate (whether due to graduation, dropout or departure for a professional sports opportunity) of just below one-quarter of the total number of student-athletes in each sport. Because the sports examined (M/W basketball, football, baseball, men's ice hockey and men's soccer) have dramatically different rules for draft eligibility, these calculations should be treated as estimates only.
- Data on available professional opportunities are described below for each sport.

Baseball

- MLB draft data from 2017. There were 1,215 draft picks in that year; 735 of those picked were from NCAA schools (source: [MLB Draft Tracker 2017](#)). Of the 735, Division I student-athletes comprised 650 of those chosen, Division II provided 73 and Division III had 12.
- Percent NCAA to Pro calculated as number of NCAA student-athletes taken in the draft (n=735) divided by the approximate number draft eligible. Not all of the student-athletes drafted go on to play professional baseball and many draftees fail to reach the Major League.

Men's basketball

- NBA draft data from 2017. There were 60 draft slots in that year and 50 went to NCAA players (others chosen were international players not attending U.S. colleges). Percentage NCAA to Major Pro calculated using the 50 NCAA selections. Since 2006, 12 international players have been drafted on average each year.
- On 2017-18 opening day NBA rosters, former NCAA players filled 83% of roster spots (all from Division I schools). (Source: [Jim Sukup, College Basketball News](#)).

- Data on other professional opportunities in men's basketball were collected by NCAA staff with the assistance of Marek Wojtera from eurobasket.com. Tracking 2016-17 international opportunities for the 2016 draft cohort, it was determined that an additional 751 former NCAA student-athletes played internationally, in the NBA D-League, or in the NBA as undrafted players (535 from Division I, 181 from Division II and 35 from Division III) after leaving college; this includes international players who attended NCAA institutions. These numbers were combined with the NBA draftees to calculate an approximate NCAA to Total Professional opportunities figure (calculated as $[50 + 751] / 4,158 = 19\%$).
- We estimate that 4.1% of draft-eligible Division I players were chosen in the 2017 NBA draft (50 / 1,219). However, in total, 48% of draft-eligible Division I players competed professionally (NBA, D-League, or internationally) in their first year after leaving college (calculated as $[50 + 535] / 1,219$). Approximately 18% of draft-eligible players from the five Division I conferences with autonomous governance (ACC, Big Ten, Big 12, Pac-12 and SEC) were drafted by the NBA in 2017 (40 / 225), while 77% played professionally somewhere in their first year post-college (calculated as $[40 + 134] / 225$).

Women's basketball

- WNBA draft data from 2017. There were 36 draft slots in that year's draft, 34 of which went to NCAA players (other selections were international players not attending U.S. colleges). All 34 NCAA selections came from Division I colleges. Percentage NCAA to Major Pro calculated using the 34 NCAA selections.
- Data on international professional opportunities in women's basketball were collected by NCAA staff with the assistance of Marek Wojtera from eurobasket.com, and are limited to the 2016 draft cohort. It was determined that an additional 146 former NCAA student-athletes from the cohort played internationally in 2016-17 (131 from Division I, 14 from Division II and 1 from Division III). These numbers were combined with the WNBA draftees to calculate an approximate NCAA to Total Professional opportunities figure (calculated as $[34 + 146] / 3,674 = 4.9\%$).
- We estimate that 3.1% of draft-eligible Division I players were chosen in the 2017 WNBA draft (34 / 1,111). However, in total, 15% of draft-eligible Division I players competed professionally (WNBA or internationally) in their first year after leaving college (calculated as $[34 + 131] / 1,111$). Approximately 14% of draft-eligible players from the five Division I conferences with autonomous governance (ACC, Big Ten, Big 12, Pac-12 and SEC) were drafted by the WNBA in 2017 (28 / 202), while 30% played professionally somewhere in their first year post-college (calculated as $[28 + 33] / 202$).

Football

- NFL draft data from 2017. There were 253 draft picks in that year's draft, all of whom were former NCAA players. NCAA to Major Pro figure calculated using these data.
- NCAA divisional breakdown of the 253 NCAA players selected in the 2017 NFL draft: Division I FBS (233), Division I FCS (14), Division II (6). The five football conferences with autonomous governance accounted for 183 of the 253 NCAA draft picks (SEC=53, ACC=45 [includes Notre Dame], Pac-12=36, Big Ten=35, Big 12=14).
- Data on Arena League and Canadian Football League opportunities were collected by NCAA staff via rosters on each organization's website (sources: cfl.ca and arenafootball.com) in February 2018. Due to the timing of each league's season, the 2016 draft cohort was used to estimate unique playing opportunities in the Arena League, while the 2017 draft cohort was used to track CFL rookies. It was determined that an additional 62 former NCAA student-athletes from those draft cohorts were listed on a roster (62 in the CFL, 0 in the Arena League). In the CFL there were 34 former Division I FBS players, 13 from Division I FCS, 13 from Division II and 2 from Division III. These numbers were

combined with the NFL draftees to calculate an NCAA to Total Professional opportunities proportion (calculated as $[253 + 62] / 16,236 = 1.9\%$).

- We estimate that 3.9% of draft-eligible Division I players were chosen in the 2017 NFL draft (247 / 6,254). Limiting this calculation to subdivision, 6.9% of FBS players were estimated to be drafted (233 / 3,398), as compared to 0.5% of FCS players (14 / 2,856). Narrowing further to the five Division I conferences with autonomous governance (ACC, Big Ten, Big 12, Pac-12 and SEC), we estimate that 11% were drafted (183 / 1,735). Accounting for Arena League and CFL opportunities, the NCAA to Total Professional figures are estimated as 4.7% for Division I ($[(247 + 47) / 6,254]$), 7.9% for FBS ($[(233 + 34) / 3,398]$) and 12% for the five autonomous conferences ($[(183 + 19) / 1,735]$).

Men's ice hockey

- NHL draft data from 2017 (source: hockeydb.com). There were 217 draft picks in that year. Only 5 players from NCAA rosters were selected in that draft (all from Division I teams). However, this is not indicative of the likelihood of going from a college team to a professional team due to the nature of the NHL draft, where players are typically selected prior to college enrollment.
- In examining the subsequent hockey pathways of 2017 draftees (hockeydb.com), *College Hockey, Inc.* reported that 60 of the 217 (source: collegehockeyinc.com) were current student-athletes or committed recruits at NCAA colleges. These numbers, although not fully comparable to those used in the other sports examined, were used to calculate an approximate NCAA to Major Pro percentage. Note that only a small subset of players drafted ever plays in an NHL game. Undrafted college players may go on to sign contracts with NHL teams after completing college (those numbers are not part of the current NCAA to Major Pro calculation).
- In 2018, 31% of players on active NHL rosters played college hockey (all Division I), up from about 20% in the year 2000 (source: collegehockeyinc.com). 67% of former college players in the NHL played at least three college seasons, and 33% played all four. Thanks to Nate Ewell at College Hockey, Inc. for providing these data.

Men's soccer

- MLS SuperDraft data from 2017. There were 88 draft slots in that year, but only 81 picks, 78 of whom were selected from NCAA schools. Of the 78 NCAA picks, 76 were NCAA Division I student-athletes and two were from Division II. Percentage NCAA to Major Pro calculated using the 78 NCAA selections. (Source: mlssoccer.com).
- These calculations do not account for other domestic (e.g., USL) or international professional soccer opportunities.