

KeepPlayingBaseball.org – Junior Year Checklist

Fall

Academics

☐ Remind your high school guidance counselor that you want to play college baseball and repeat the following steps like the prior semesters. Get a list of classes at your school that are approved by the NCAA, and make a plan to meet the NCAA requirements at the *highest level*. The rules can change quickly. Be sure you check in with your counselor at least twice a year to make sure you stay on track.

☐ Be your counselor's second set of eyes.

Visit <https://web3.ncaa.org/hsportal/exec/homeAction> and navigate to the "List of NCAA Courses" tab at the top. Enter your high school and double check that you are enrolled in the correct number of Core Courses for eligibility at the highest level.

☐ Set high academic goals and hold yourself to a high academic standard. Set a goal to keep your grades *above* what you need to play at the *highest level* you hope to play.

☐ Continue to work hard in the classroom and take responsibility for your own performance. Find and use resources (parents, teachers, coaches, tutors, etc.) if you struggle with a class or subject. Your grades as a junior carry the same weight as your grades as a senior for eligibility purposes.

☐ It's time to schedule and take the SAT or ACT for the first time. Give yourself plenty of time to study and take the test early enough in the schoolyear so that you can spend a few months studying again and retake the test if your scores aren't as good as you want them to be.

Development

☐ Play fall ball, another sport, or develop a training program to improve your strength and conditioning and on-field skills.

☐ Seek honest and objective feedback about your playing abilities and use the feedback to set measurable on-field goals to improve on your weaknesses and strengths. This pattern should be repetitive by now. That's a good thing! Objective feedback and continuously improving your development plan is a key to getting better and playing at the next level.

☐ Watch professional baseball on TV. Pay attention to the details and the decisions pros make.

☐ Continue to use the Think the Game section and think about the mental game requirements of college baseball. At the college level, your ability to think like a ballplayer is as important as your physical skills.

KeepPlayingBaseball.org – Junior Year Checklist

Recruiting

- ☐ Continue to spend time each day reading, researching, and learning about the recruiting process and what it will take to get recruited to play college baseball. At this point, you may have to spend more time understanding the process and researching schools.
- ☐ Continue to explore the different college baseball options that are available to you and update your list of schools you think might be a good fit for you. You'll be continuously updating this list as your college preferences evolve and you begin to figure out what level you should target.
- ☐ Make a skills video that you can make available to college coaches. Use KPB's video resources to make a video college coaches want to see for free.
- ☐ Register with the NCAA Eligibility Center (www.ncaa.org). Review the NCAA rules about eligibility, recruitment, and maintaining your amateur status.
- ☐ Begin taking informal campus visits (and formal campus visits where applicable). Campus visits will help you figure out which type of school and campus is right for you.
- ☐ Continue preparing yourself for contact with and exposure to college coaches. Some players may be ready to contact coaches at schools of interest now (see check box below) and others may need to continue to be patient as they develop their baseball skills. Use KPB blog articles to help figure out what timing is right for you and act accordingly. You should make sure you have everything ready for contacting college coaches (transcripts, test scores, skills video, references, etc.).
- ☐ Craft an email template that you can personalize for each school of interest with all the important information college coaches need to evaluate and begin recruiting you. If your skills are ready to be evaluated, make every effort to let coaches at your top schools know that you are interested in their programs. Don't be obnoxious, but don't be shy.

Winter

Academics

- ☐ Ask your parents or guardians to review the information that they will need to fill out applications for financial aid. Tell them about your plans and show them your list of top-choice schools.
- ☐ Continue to work hard in the classroom. Winter is a great time to get ahead and prepare for the busy spring schedule. Get help if your grades are not as good as you need them to be to get into your top-choice schools.

The information contained in this document is for general information purposes only. The information is provided by Keep Playing Baseball (KPB), and while we endeavor to keep the information up to date and correct, we make no representations or warranties of any kind, express or implied, about the completeness, accuracy, reliability, suitability, or availability with respect to the website or the information, services, or related graphics contained on the website for any purpose. Any reliance you place on such information is therefore strictly at your own risk. In no event will we be liable for any loss or damage, including without limitation, indirect or consequential loss or damage arising out of, or in connection with, the use of this website or any of the documents or links available through the website. The inclusion of any links does not necessarily imply a recommendation or endorse the views expressed within them.

KeepPlayingBaseball.org – Junior Year Checklist

- ☐ Continue to make it a point to communicate well with your teachers and make personal connections. You may need several teachers to write you letters of recommendation for your college applications next year. Build relationships early and show them that you care about your school work.
- ☐ Continue to ask questions and learn about careers that interest you. Attend a college fair or use college search tools like <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search> to find schools that fit what you are looking for.
- ☐ Re-visit your list of schools of interest and zero in on your top-choice schools. If you haven't done so already, go to the websites of all the schools and learn as much as you can about what you have to do to get in. Don't rely on minimum requirements. Find the average GPA and test scores of successful applicants, and do your best to exceed those averages.

Development

- ☐ Ask your coaches for a good strength and conditioning plan and make sure you are making the weight room a priority.
- ☐ Play another sport if you are interested.
- ☐ Reflect back on your fall season and evaluate how you did with your goal setting. Use that information to set new goals for the winter off-season and adjust your plan for reaching your goals.
- ☐ Continue to take care of your body. Stay in shape. Ask your coaches for off-season routines that are appropriate for your age and position. Learn all you can about how you can protect yourself from injury during the coming season.
- ☐ Get to know the influential coaches in your league, community, and online. Continue to learn how to filter information that you can use and think critically about information and instruction that you are given.
- ☐ Use the off-season to balance rest with preparation. Your success for the coming season is created during the off-season. Make sure you are giving yourself plenty of time to prepare to return to the field in the spring. Make it a point to hit the ground running when high school ball starts.

Recruiting

- ☐ Start to involve your parents/guardians into your recruiting conversations and make sure you are on the same page about the types of schools you are interested and the budget you have for schools.
- ☐ Re-visit your list of schools of interest and zero in on your top-choice schools. If you haven't done so already, go to the websites of each baseball program and research everything you can about the program, the players, and the coaches. Find out exactly what to do on the KPB blog.

The information contained in this document is for general information purposes only. The information is provided by Keep Playing Baseball (KPB), and while we endeavor to keep the information up to date and correct, we make no representations or warranties of any kind, express or implied, about the completeness, accuracy, reliability, suitability, or availability with respect to the website or the information, services, or related graphics contained on the website for any purpose. Any reliance you place on such information is therefore strictly at your own risk. In no event will we be liable for any loss or damage, including without limitation, indirect or consequential loss or damage arising out of, or in connection with, the use of this website or any of the documents or links available through the website. The inclusion of any links does not necessarily imply a recommendation or endorse the views expressed within them.

KeepPlayingBaseball.org – Junior Year Checklist

- ☐ Follow college coaches at programs of interest on social media so you can get insight into what's important to them and how they run their programs.
- ☐ Start to prepare yourself for contacting college coaches and seeking exposure. Some players may be ready as sophomores and some may need to wait as late as senior year. Use KPB blog articles to help figure out what timing is right for you. Regardless, you can begin to make sure you have everything ready for contacting college coaches (transcripts, test scores, skills video, references, etc.). If you feel like you are ready to start reaching out to coaches, winter is a good time to do it.
- ☐ If you haven't already, craft an email template that you can personalize for each school of interest with all the important information college coaches need to evaluate and begin recruiting you. If your skills are ready to be evaluated, make every effort to let coaches at your top schools know that you are interested in their programs. Don't be obnoxious, but don't be shy.
- ☐ Continue to spend time each day reading, researching, and learning about the recruiting process and what it will take to get recruited to play college baseball. Use www.KPBrecruiting101.org to help you understand each new phase (Contacting coaches, visiting campus, etc) of the recruiting process as you get to it.
- ☐ Continue to spend time doing research on schools of interest. Figure out the standards and requirements necessary to play at that level.

Spring

Academics

- ☐ Check with your guidance counselor again to make sure that you are still taking the right classes. Check the NCAA website again to make sure any new classes are NCAA approved courses. Continue to work hard in the classroom.
- ☐ Study hard and retake the SAT or ACT (if necessary). By taking it again now, you allow yourself the opportunity to make studying for the exam a priority over the summer and re-taking it again early fall as a senior, if your scores still aren't where they need to be.

Development

- ☐ Ask your coaches for an honest and objective evaluation of your playing ability. Are you getting the same feedback you got last year? Have you improved in the areas where you were weak? Continue to get tips on how you can improve your game, but most importantly implement strategies that will eliminate weaknesses and improve on your strengths!

The information contained in this document is for general information purposes only. The information is provided by Keep Playing Baseball (KPB), and while we endeavor to keep the information up to date and correct, we make no representations or warranties of any kind, express or implied, about the completeness, accuracy, reliability, suitability, or availability with respect to the website or the information, services, or related graphics contained on the website for any purpose. Any reliance you place on such information is therefore strictly at your own risk. In no event will we be liable for any loss or damage, including without limitation, indirect or consequential loss or damage arising out of, or in connection with, the use of this website or any of the documents or links available through the website. The inclusion of any links does not necessarily imply a recommendation or endorse the views expressed within them.

KeepPlayingBaseball.org – Junior Year Checklist

Recruiting

- ☐ Talk to coaches, scouts, or other trusted knowledgeable family and friends about what level of college baseball would be best for you.
- ☐ Create a list of supportive people who can help you with contacts, information, references, and resources that you might need. Make sure you ask for help whenever you need it.
- ☐ Be a sponge for information! Ask a lot of questions of coaches, older players, family members, or friends who can help you decide what you might want to study and where you might want to go to school.
- ☐ Continue to spend time each day learning and researching the recruiting process, what it takes to play college baseball, and what you need to do to keep getting better. You will not regret learning about the process, even if you aren't ready to start engaging with college coaches. This preparation will allow you to take advantage of your opportunities when you are ready!
- ☐ Attend college games in your area. Ask yourself how you match up to the competition. Think about what you need to do to get to that level. Learn about the mental side of the game.
- ☐ Be the kind of player who is remembered for the right reasons every time you step onto the field. Hustle: be mentally and physically prepared for every game and practice. Be the first one on and off the field. Be the first guy to show up and the last guy to leave. You *never* know who might be watching you on the field or in the dugout.
- ☐ Be good at communicating with college coaches. For some this may mean writing high quality, personalized emails of interest, for others it may mean being responsive to the coaches who are expressing interest or maintaining relationships with the coaches that are actively recruiting you.

Summer

Academics

- ☐ Take summer school if you did not complete all of the NCAA required courses on your plan with the grade you need. As always, be sure to check to make sure the summer courses you take are on the NCAA core courses list.
- ☐ If you still need to improve your SAT or ACT score, make studying for the exam a priority this summer. Without the necessary grades and test scores, it doesn't matter how good you are on the field. If you are taking the exam in the fall, make this a priority!

The information contained in this document is for general information purposes only. The information is provided by Keep Playing Baseball (KPB), and while we endeavor to keep the information up to date and correct, we make no representations or warranties of any kind, express or implied, about the completeness, accuracy, reliability, suitability, or availability with respect to the website or the information, services, or related graphics contained on the website for any purpose. Any reliance you place on such information is therefore strictly at your own risk. In no event will we be liable for any loss or damage, including without limitation, indirect or consequential loss or damage arising out of, or in connection with, the use of this website or any of the documents or links available through the website. The inclusion of any links does not necessarily imply a recommendation or endorse the views expressed within them.

KeepPlayingBaseball.org – Junior Year Checklist

- ☐ Visit <https://web3.ncaa.org/hportal/exec/homeAction> and check your core courses for senior year. Make sure your schedule for senior year is set up so that you meet ALL NCAA eligibility requirements. Count up your core courses and make sure you will have all the requirements met.
- ☐ Get all the materials you need to prepare your college applications in the fall.
- ☐ Remind your parents or guardians about the information and forms that they will need to provide so that you can finish your applications.

Development

- ☐ Focus on developing your skills and strength.
- ☐ If possible, consider attending college camps or events in your area for developmental and exposure purposes. At the camps, ask lots of questions, get used to interacting with college coaches, and pay close attention to the instruction. Be a sponge and show coaches what you can do!
- ☐ Play competitive summer ball or work with coaches, trainers, and/or health professionals to take part in a high level training and strength and conditioning program. Junior summer is the most important summer for recruiting purposes. It's time to show college coaches that you are serious about playing at the next level. Even though you will be seeking exposure and contacting schools of interest, keep development a top priority. It's possible to balance development and seeking exposure.
- ☐ Ask your coaches for a plan and get in the weight room and keep strength and conditioning a focus. College coaches love physical players and having a base level of strength and conditioning experience will help a lot with the transition to college baseball once you get there.
- ☐ Re-examine your personalized plan for how you will continue to improve and what you need to do to get to the next level and make the necessary adjustments. Not all players should be doing the same thing. The more your plan can work to minimize weaknesses and build on strengths, the better off you will be.

Recruiting

- ☐ Update your recruiting video so that it reflects your current ability and skills.
- ☐ Continue to make sure you are a good prospect online as well as on the field. Make sure that everything on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or any other online service supports the fact that you are a good teammate and a dedicated athlete.
- ☐ Increase your research on college baseball and the recruiting process. Devote extra time to researching programs at the top of your list. You won't regret the time you put in making sure programs are the right fit for you!

The information contained in this document is for general information purposes only. The information is provided by Keep Playing Baseball (KPB), and while we endeavor to keep the information up to date and correct, we make no representations or warranties of any kind, express or implied, about the completeness, accuracy, reliability, suitability, or availability with respect to the website or the information, services, or related graphics contained on the website for any purpose. Any reliance you place on such information is therefore strictly at your own risk. In no event will we be liable for any loss or damage, including without limitation, indirect or consequential loss or damage arising out of, or in connection with, the use of this website or any of the documents or links available through the website. The inclusion of any links does not necessarily imply a recommendation or endorse the views expressed within them.

KeepPlayingBaseball.org – Junior Year Checklist

- ☐ Make sure you are familiar with all the levels of college baseball. Keep an open mind and explore all options.
- ☐ If you haven't done so already, start reaching out to coaches at schools of interest. Send personalized emails to each coach. Get help writing introductory emails on the KPB site to improve your chances of having coaches read your emails.
- ☐ Make sure you have everything ready for contact with college coaches (transcripts, test scores, references, skill video, game schedule, etc.)
- ☐ Evaluate different exposure opportunities while still keeping your focus on development. Junior summer is not your last opportunity to get recruited and you don't need to get desperate, but it is a good opportunity to start actively putting yourself out there to be evaluated by college coaches.
- ☐ Consider attending camps or showcases that fit your budget and will be attended by college coaches at schools of interest that fit your academic and baseball skill sets.
- ☐ Try to set up campus visits with programs that are recruiting you.

The information contained in this document is for general information purposes only. The information is provided by Keep Playing Baseball (KPB), and while we endeavor to keep the information up to date and correct, we make no representations or warranties of any kind, express or implied, about the completeness, accuracy, reliability, suitability, or availability with respect to the website or the information, services, or related graphics contained on the website for any purpose. Any reliance you place on such information is therefore strictly at your own risk. In no event will we be liable for any loss or damage, including without limitation, indirect or consequential loss or damage arising out of, or in connection with, the use of this website or any of the documents or links available through the website. The inclusion of any links does not necessarily imply a recommendation or endorse the views expressed within them.