



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	482,740	36,011	7.5%	2.2%	2.3%	2.9%
Basketball	540,769	18,816	3.5%	1.0%	1.0%	1.4%
Cross Country	269,295	14,303	5.3%	1.8%	1.4%	2.1%
Football	1,006,013	73,712	7.3%	2.9%	1.9%	2.5%
Golf	143,200	8,485	5.9%	2.0%	1.6%	2.2%
Ice Hockey	35,283	4,323	12.3%	4.8%	0.6%	6.8%
Lacrosse	113,702	14,603	12.8%	3.1%	2.5%	7.3%
Soccer	459,077	25,499	5.6%	1.3%	1.5%	2.7%
Swimming	136,638	9,799	7.2%	2.8%	1.2%	3.2%
Tennis	159,314	7,785	4.9%	1.6%	1.0%	2.3%
Track & Field	605,354	28,914	4.8%	1.9%	1.2%	1.7%
Volleyball	63,563	2,355	3.7%	0.7%	0.7%	2.3%
Water Polo	22,475	1,072	4.8%	2.7%	0.8%	1.3%
Wrestling	247,441	7,300	3.0%	1.0%	0.8%	1.2%
Women						
Basketball	399,067	16,509	4.1%	1.3%	1.2%	1.7%
Cross Country	219,345	15,624	7.1%	2.7%	1.7%	2.7%
Field Hockey	60,824	6,119	10.1%	2.9%	1.4%	5.8%
Golf	79,821	5,436	6.8%	2.8%	1.9%	2.1%
Ice Hockey	9,650	2,531	26.2%	8.9%	1.1%	16.2%
Lacrosse	99,750	12,452	12.5%	3.7%	2.6%	6.2%
Soccer	394,105	28,310	7.2%	2.4%	1.9%	2.9%
Softball	362,038	20,419	5.6%	1.8%	1.7%	2.2%
Swimming	173,088	12,980	7.5%	3.3%	1.2%	3.0%
Tennis	189,436	8,596	4.5%	1.5%	1.0%	2.0%
Track & Field	488,267	30,326	6.2%	2.8%	1.5%	1.9%
Volleyball	452,808	17,780	3.9%	1.2%	1.1%	1.6%
Water Polo	21,735	1,217	5.6%	3.3%	1.1%	1.2%

Sources: High school figures from the [2018-19 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 [2018-19 Sports Sponsorship and Participation Rates Report](#).

Last Updated: April 8, 2020



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Methodology and Notes

High school to NCAA

- High school figures come from the [2018-19 High School Athletics Participation Survey](#) conducted by the National Federation of State High School Associations. College numbers are from the NCAA's [2018-19 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 2018-19 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 2018-19 participants within each NCAA division by the total number of HS participants. For example, we estimate that approximately 3.5% 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, [see this page](#) for sport-specific information regarding club and high school sport participation). 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	36,011	8,002	1,217	791	9.9%	--
M Basketball	18,816	4,181	60	52	1.2%	21%
W Basketball	16,509	3,669	36	31	0.8%	6.9%
Football	73,712	16,380	254	254	1.6%	--
M Ice Hockey	4,323	961	217	71	7.4%	--



Estimated Probability of Competing in Professional Athletics

Methodology and Notes

General

- College participation numbers are from the NCAA's [2018-19 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 years 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 (baseball, M/W basketball, football and men's ice hockey) 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 2019. There were 1,217 draft picks in that year; 791 of those picked were from NCAA schools (source: [MLB Draft Tracker](#)). Of the 791, Division I student-athletes comprised 686 of those selected, Division II provided 95 and Division III had 10.
- Percent NCAA to Pro calculated as number of NCAA student-athletes taken in the draft divided by the approximate number draft eligible (calculated as $791 / 8,002 = 9.9\%$). Not all of the student-athletes drafted go on to play professional baseball and many draftees fail to reach the Major League.
- We estimate that 28.5% of draft-eligible Division I players were selected in the 2019 MLB draft ($686 / 2,404$).

Men's basketball

- NBA draft data from 2019. There were 60 draft slots in that year and 52 went to NCAA players (seven others chosen were international players not attending U.S. colleges and one spent a season at a prep school). Percentage NCAA to Major Pro calculated using the 52 NCAA selections (calculated as $52 / 4,181 = 1.2\%$). Since 2009, 11 international players have been drafted on average each year.
- We estimate that 4.2% of draft-eligible Division I players were chosen in the 2019 NBA draft ($52 / 1,224$). Additionally, 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 2019 ($41 / 228$).
- On 2019-20 opening day NBA rosters, former NCAA Division I players filled 85% of roster spots. One NBA player attended a non-Division I college. (Source: [Jim Sukup, College Basketball News](#)).

- Data on other professional opportunities in men's basketball were collected in 2019 by NCAA staff with the assistance of Marek Wojtera from eurobasket.com. Tracking 2018-19 international opportunities for the 2018 draft cohort, it was determined that an additional 839 former NCAA student-athletes played internationally, in the G-League or in the NBA as undrafted players (606 from Division I, 194 from Division II and 39 from Division III) after leaving college; this includes international players who attended NCAA institutions. These numbers were combined with the 2018 NBA draftees to calculate an approximate NCAA to Total Professional opportunities figure (calculated as $[52 + 839] / 4,181 = 21\%$).
- We estimate that 53% of the 2018 Division I draft cohort competed professionally (NBA, G-League or internationally) in their first year after leaving college (calculated as $[52 + 606] / 1,230$). Approximately 80% of the 2018 draft cohort from the five Division I conferences with autonomous governance (ACC, Big Ten, Big 12, Pac-12 and SEC) played professionally somewhere in their first year post-college (calculated as $[38 + 144] / 228$).

Women's basketball

- WNBA draft data from 2019. There were 36 draft slots in that year's draft, 31 of which went to NCAA players (other selections were international players not attending U.S. colleges). All 31 NCAA selections came from Division I colleges. Percentage NCAA to Major Pro calculated using the 31 NCAA selections.
- We estimate that 2.8% of draft-eligible Division I players were chosen in the 2019 WNBA draft ($31 / 1,120$), while approximately 13% 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 2019 ($25 / 200$),
- 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 2018 draft cohort. It was determined that an additional 223 former NCAA student-athletes from the cohort played internationally in 2018-19 (208 from Division I, 13 from Division II and 2 from Division III). These numbers were combined with the 2018 WNBA draftees to calculate an approximate NCAA to Total Professional opportunities figure (calculated as $[32 + 223] / 3,692 = 6.9\%$).
- Using these figures, it is estimated that 21% of draft-eligible Division I players competed professionally (WNBA or internationally) in their first year after leaving college (calculated as $[32 + 208] / 1,124$). Approximately 12% 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 2018 ($24 / 204$), while 41% played professionally somewhere in their first year post-college (calculated as $[24 + 59] / 204$).

Football

- NFL draft data from 2019. There were 254 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 254 NCAA players selected in the 2019 NFL draft: Division I FBS (238), Division I FCS (11), Division II (5). The five football conferences with autonomous governance accounted for 197 of the 254 NCAA draft picks (SEC=64, Big Ten=40, ACC=34 [includes Notre Dame], Pac-12=33, Big 12=26).
- We estimate that 3.8% of draft-eligible Division I players were chosen in the 2019 NFL draft ($249 / 6,490$). Splitting this calculation into subdivision, 6.8% of FBS players were estimated to be drafted ($238 / 3,491$), as compared to 0.4% of FCS players ($11 / 2,999$). 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 ($197 / 1,769$).

- Additional professional or semi-professional opportunities exist in leagues such as the Canadian Football League, XFL and opportunities in other countries. Estimations for opportunities beyond the NFL are not included in our table.

Men's ice hockey

- NHL draft data from 2019 (source: hockeydb.com). There were 217 draft picks in that year. Only 4 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 2019 draftees (hockeydb.com), Nate Ewell at [College Hockey, Inc.](http://CollegeHockeyInc.com) reported that 71 of the 217 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 (calculated as 71 / 961). Note that only a small subset of players drafted ever plays in an NHL game (e.g. of the 217 2019 draftees, [only 5](#) had played in the NHL during the 2019-20 season as of March 12, 2020). 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 2019, 33% of players on active NHL rosters played college hockey (all Division I), up from about 20% in the year 2000 (source: Nate Ewell at collegehockeyinc.com). 69% of former college players in the NHL played at least three college seasons, and 33% played all four.