



The College Softball Recruiting Timeline

A Year-by-Year Roadmap — 9th Grade Through Decision Day

Recruiting is a four-year build. Each year has its own job — foundation, refinement, communication, and finally decisions.

BELIEVE. BUILD. BECOME.

One Job Per Year



9TH

Freshman Year

FOUNDATION &
EXPLORATION

Grades first, build the profile,
start outreach.

10TH

Sophomore Year

SKILL BUILDING &
LIST REFINEMENT

Film everything, build the
30-40 school list, stay in
contact.

11TH

Junior Year

DIRECT COMMUNICATION
& EVALUATION

September 1 opens the door
— be ready with transcripts
and questions.

12TH

Senior Year

VISITS, OFFERS
& DECISIONS

Official visits, compare aid,
ask hard questions, decide.



Foundation & Exploration

Prioritize academics early. Establish a strong cumulative GPA right away — academics are the primary filter coaches use to screen prospects.

Focus on athletic development. Core mechanics, arm strength, and conditioning. Multi-sport participation builds athleticism and prevents burnout — coaches encourage it.

Establish digital profiles. Set up a clean, central recruiting profile and a softball-dedicated X (Twitter) handle.

Begin proactive outreach. Introductory emails to a wide range of schools with your bio, academics, and video links. Note: D1 coaches can't send personalized replies until September 1 of junior year.

Attend local camps. Stick to local skill camps and nearby campus visits instead of spending heavily on distant national showcase tours.



Skill Building & List Refinement

Maintain grades & test prep. Keep taking challenging courses and prepare for standardized tests (PSAT, SAT, ACT).

Gather video footage. Concise, unedited 10–30 second skill clips — hitting off live arms/machines, defensive reps, throwing and exit velocity — posted to social and linked on your profile.

Build a targeted school list. 30–40 programs across all divisions (D1, D2, D3, NAIA, JUCO), based on majors, location, and an independent third-party evaluation of athletic fit.

Maintain periodic contact. Email target coaches every 4–6 weeks with academic updates, game clips, and upcoming tournament schedules.

Target specific prospect camps. Attend on-campus prospect camps at target schools to get evaluated before September 1.

Direct Communication & Evaluation

September 1st contact date. From September 1, D1 coaches can initiate direct phone, text, email, and DM contact. Keep a notepad ready for coach calls.

Manage September 1st expectations. No calls on Sept 1 is common — not failure. Recruiting runs through junior and senior year, especially at high-academic, D2, D3, NAIA, and JUCO schools. Don't compare yourself to peers on social media.

Complete the 3-year transcript. High-academic and selective schools often require a full 3-year transcript and test scores before roster or admissions commitments.

Increase cadence — ask directly. Email updates every 2 weeks, and ask coaches straight out whether you're a viable recruit for their positional needs.

Schedule campus visits. Winter and summer prospect camps plus unofficial visits to evaluate campus culture.



Official Visits, Offers & Decisions

Official visits & applications. Take official visits, spend uncoached time with current players to judge team culture, and submit formal college applications.

Evaluate offers & financial aid. Review formal roster offers and explore stacking merit-based academic scholarships with athletic aid.

Ask critical program questions. Team GPA, player graduation rates, transfer portal history, and coaching contract stability — the long-term fit checks.

Explore all final pathways. Uncommitted entering senior year? Stay persistent — many D2, D3, NAIA, and JUCO programs finalize rosters late into spring. JUCO is a strong development path to a four-year program.

The Bottom Line

- ✓ Grades are the first filter — in every year, not just freshman year.
- ✓ The list gets narrower and the contact gets closer, year by year.
- ✓ September 1 of junior year is a milestone, not a deadline.
- ✓ Uncommitted senior year is not the end — rosters finalize late.
- ✓ JUCO is a pathway, not a consolation prize.



BELIEVE. BUILD. BECOME.

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