

## Odds of Becoming a Professional Athlete

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%	--

Beginning with the hard stats compiled in 2017 by the National College Athletic Association (NCAA), here are the odds of your kid or anyone's kid making it to the pros. Just to keep it real, anyone who didn't play a sport in high-school has been eliminated:

- **high-school basketball to college (male): 3.3 percent**
- **high-school basketball to pros (male): 0.03 percent**
- **high-school basketball to college (female): 3.9 percent**
- **high-school basketball to pros (female): 0.03 percent**

Overall, the average professional football player's career in the NFL lasts 3.3 years.

Baseball: 11.6% of college players play professionally, 0.6% of high school players do



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**High school players: 471,025**

**College players: 31,264**

**Draftees: 806**

Football: 1.7% of college players play professionally, 0.08% of high school players do



Streeter Lecka/Getty Images

**High school players: 1,108,441**

**College players: 67,887**

**Draftees: 255**

Men's ice hockey: 1.3% of college players play professionally, 0.1% of high school players do



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**High school players: 36,912**

**College players: 3,944**

**Draftees: 11**

**Source: [NCAA](#)**

Men's basketball: 1.2% of college players play professionally, 0.03% of high school players do



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**High school players: 545,844**

**College players: 17,500**

**Draftees: 48**



Men's soccer: 1.0% of college players play professionally, 0.04% of high school players do



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**High school players: 398,351**

**College players: 22,573**

**Draftees: 49**

Women's basketball: 0.9% of college players play professionally, 0.03% of high school players do



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**High school players: 438,933**

**College players: 15,708**

**Draftees: 32**

Basketball and football, the most visible of high school and college sports, have a very low percentage of athletes who play in high school and then eventually move up to the professional ranks. In men's basketball, for example, there is only a 0.03% chance of a pro career. This means that of the almost 156,000 male, high school senior basketball players only 44 will be drafted to play in the NBA after college, and only 32 women (0.02%) out of just over 127,000 female, high school senior players will eventually be drafted. In football the odds are slightly better, with 0.08% or 250 of just over 317,000 high school senior players being drafted.

The sport with the most professional opportunities is baseball, with high school players having a 0.4% chance of playing professionally. Though still far less than 1%, the number of opportunities within baseball's professional development system helps to increase this percentage. Baseball drafts about 600 NCAA athletes from the 6700 college seniors each year, a number that is far higher than any other professional sport and which represents a need to feed its large farm system.