

What Does Committed to A College Really Mean? The 5 Important Steps

Renee Lopez has been an NCAA college coach for 14 years. She has written many articles giving advice to recruits such as questions to ask during your visit, what to do during signing, and steps to take after signing.

[Part 1- Steps Before Signing:](#)

1. Register with the Eligibility Center (formerly called the Clearing House)

To be eligible to swim for an NCAA Division I, II or NAIA level you must register with the Eligibility Center. To do so, just go to their website, [NCAA Eligibility Center](#). It's free to sign up, just be ready with your test scores and transcripts.

2. Make sure you have all of your athletic, academic, location and social environment questions answered.

Come up with a list of important questions that you would like to ask a coach when you go on a recruiting trip. Including what the coach, school, location, and social environment can do for you. All of those things are important when making a decision. If you need help with questions, you can look here at [13 Questions To Ask A College Coach](#).

3. Visit the college unofficially or officially while students are on campus.

When you think you have found a few colleges you are interested in swimming for, it is a good idea to visit them while students are on campus. Go during a weekend or when you have a good amount of time to spend checking out the campus and it's surroundings. You can choose to go on an official or unofficial visit. An official visit is one where the college pays for your trip. On an unofficial visit, the expenses are on you and it is also recommended to go on a guided tour of the campus.

4. Apply and be accepted to the college

Before you sign, it's highly recommended that you complete the application in full by senior year. Most athletic scholarship offers have the right to withdraw their offers if you fail to fully complete the admission process. Do your part early and make sure you have all your required information in as soon as possible.

5. Highly recommend you know EXACTLY how much your academic scholarships, athletic scholarships, and financial aid covers.

Once you have accepted an offer and decided where you want to swim, make sure to have everything in writing. This includes fees other than your tuition. Things like meal plans, room and board, books etc. This conversation with the coach should be initiated by the parents. Colleges and coaches have many recruits and it can be hard to keep track of every applicant and what their situation is. However, this is an important step in the commitment process.