



Official and Unofficial Visits

Question: *I am a senior and have been invited on an Official Visit to a University, what does that exactly mean?*

Answer: Let's first start by looking at the NCAA's definition of what an Official and Unofficial Visit are, as taken from the *Guide for the College-Bound Student-Athlete*:

Official Visit: Any visit to a college campus by you and your parents paid for by the college. The college may pay for all or some of the following expenses:

- your transportation to and from the college
- room and means (three per day) while you are visit the college; and
- reasonable entertainment expenses, including three complimentary admissions to a home athletics contest.

Unofficial Visit: Any visit by you and your parents to a college campus paid for by you and your parents. The only expense you may receive from the college is three complimentary admissions to a home athletics contest. You may make as many unofficial visits as you like and may take those visits at any time. The only time you cannot talk with a coach during an unofficial visit is during a dead period.

The biggest difference between the two visits, is who pays for it. In the case of an official visit, the college pays for most all of it, and for an unofficial visit, you pay for the expenses. As stated above, you can take as many unofficial visits to schools as you would like, and at anytime during your high school career. The same is not true of official visits.

Before a college may invite you on an official visit, you will have to provide the college with a copy of your high school transcript (Division 1 only) and SAT, ACT or PLAN score and register with the Eligibility Center.

How many official visits can you take? You are limited to a total of five (5) official visits, and you may not take more than one official visit to any one college. You can take official visits beginning on September 1 of your senior year of high school.

Institutions handle official visits in different manners, in terms of what they will have you do on a visit. However, there are also some things that institutions may not do, per NCAA rules. For example, don't expect to see your name flash in big lights on the jumbo-tron at a football game while are in attendance. Although that would be very cool, it's not okay for them to do. Why not? Well, for one reason, some institutions may not have a football team or may not have as fancy of a jumbo-tron, therefore the NCAA tries not to give those schools that do have the extra financial capabilities, an unfair advantage.