



## What Athletes Need to Know About the Ivy League Academic Index

If you're interested in playing your sport for one of the Ivy League schools, you need to understand the Academic Index. I'm assuming that you already know that the Ivy League does not provide athletic scholarships and that you're hoping to use your athletic abilities to help you get admitted. After all, recruited athletes have approximately a [30 percentage advantage](#) in being admitted compared to non-athletes with no legacy status.

The Academic Index (AI) is used by Ivy League schools to ensure that athletes are not admitted with significantly lower academic qualifications than the general student population. The index is based on GPA, tests scores, and SAT Subject test scores. All athletes must have at least a 176 to play at any of the "Ancient Eight" schools.

The following resources will get you up to speed about the Ivy League Academic Index.

### [Tier One Athletics: Academic Index](#)

If you only visit one website to learn about the AI, this is the website. It includes seven articles on the Ivy League Academic Index and an AI calculator that is updated annually. It explains how the AI is calculated and how to interpret your AI. According to the website:

You could potentially go through the entire Ivy League recruiting process and never hear a coach mention the Academic Index. But from the coach's perspective, it's a make-or-break number. It's a little like an academic credit rating - three different coaches could calculate yours and everyone would end up with slightly different number.

### [Before Recruiting in Ivy League, Applying Some Math](#)

This is probably one of the most referred to articles on the Ivy League Academic Index for recruiting. It was published by the New York Times in December of 2011 and receive a lot of attention. The reporter, Bill Pennington, explains some of the overlooked nuances of how the AI works. He also points out that

The overall athletic A.I. can also be balanced by recruits with considerably higher A.I.'s who play other, lower-profile sports, or by recruits with exceedingly high A.I.'s who are stacked at the top end of a team's roster.

### [The Rise of Harvard Basketball](#)

This in-depth article by the Harvard Crimson gives you a feel for the pressures on athletic recruiting in the Ivy League, including the AI. For many coaches, the lack of athletic scholarships is a bigger hurdle than the AI:

"I think the biggest hurdle still is financial"□ said Donahue of the Ivy League's lack of athletic scholarships. "It's way more difficult to find kids that can afford this education and turn down scholarships than it is to find kids that are academically qualified. There are a lot of kids that are academically qualified."□

### [Getting in: Athletes' road to admission](#)

This is an article by the Daily Princetonian on athletic admissions. It doesn't focus just on the AI but does explain why one team in particular at an Ivy may be doing better than others at recruiting:

the average Academic Index score for recruited athletes falls within one standard of deviation of the student body's mean - is applied at the University level, rather than for each team. This is particularly important for sports with recruiting classes that can be as small as a few students per year. For example, if two golf recruits are slightly below the overall athletic program's target for a given year, this can be offset by recruiting academic stars in tennis.

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