

Two Sports - One Season

Coaches, athletic directors and parents involved with student-athletes interested in playing two sports at the same time should consider the following questions when examining this decision:

- Is the student-athlete mature and responsible enough to handle this increased level of commitment? Keep in mind only being able to play part-time in both sports might actually lead to bigger problems, especially with respect to playing time fairness and team dynamics.
- Does the student-athlete fully understand the complications and consequences that might be involved with this decision, especially as it applies to other potential missed opportunities and potential struggles to keep up with studies?
- Are the parents of the student-athlete cognizant of the harsh realities of the limited number of “full-ride” athletic scholarships – even when kids play more sports?
- Is the student-athlete aware of the increased chances for physical injuries and sports burnout because of playing more than one sport at the same time?

Playing one sport per season can be a challenging enough proposition for most student-athletes, so they must be made aware of the challenges of this new, two-sports, same-season prototype that is emerging.

(<https://www.nfhs.org/articles/new-student-athlete-prototype-two-sports-in-the-same-season/>)

Elite athletes often specialized between the ages of 14 and 15 compared with their non-elite or semi-elite peers who typically specialized prior to 13 years. In addition, neuromuscular control, anterior reach asymmetry and physical task outcomes did not differ by specialization status.

(<https://bjsm.bmj.com/content/54/4/221.full>)

For most kids though, Jayanthi says, parents should not consider letting their kids specialize in a sport before they're fourteen years old, even if a coach encourages it, and even if a kid begs to quit their other sports. By mid- or late-adolescence, it's safe to reconsider. “You have to do what you know in your heart is best for the kid,” he says.

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Ultimately, parents and their kids should keep in mind the point of youth-sports: to have fun, Matzkin says. “When we look at all our youth athletes, less than one percent are going to make it to an elite level,” she says, “so finding more enjoyment in the game in the sport is probably way more important than striving to be elite.”

[\(https://www.popsci.com/science/kids-sports-best-practices/\)](https://www.popsci.com/science/kids-sports-best-practices/)