

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Stepping Up to the Plate: How to Become a Professional Softball Player

### Open-Ended Response Answer Key

1. Two key skills that aspiring professional softball players should work on are hitting and fielding. Hitting involves the ability to make successful contact with the ball, while fielding focuses on defensive plays, such as catching, throwing, and positioning on the field.
2. Maintaining good academic standing is important for athletes because it can lead to scholarships, provide a backup plan for after their playing careers, and open doors to academic opportunities. Strong academics are valued by colleges and can enhance an athlete's overall prospects.
3. Playing on travel teams is significant for young softball players because it allows them to compete against top-level competition and gain exposure to college coaches and scouts. Travel teams often participate in high-profile tournaments and showcases, providing valuable opportunities for player development and recognition.
4. Showcases can help aspiring professional softball players by offering opportunities to showcase their skills in front of college and professional scouts. These events provide a stage for players to demonstrate their abilities, potentially leading to invitations for further evaluation or opportunities to join professional teams.

