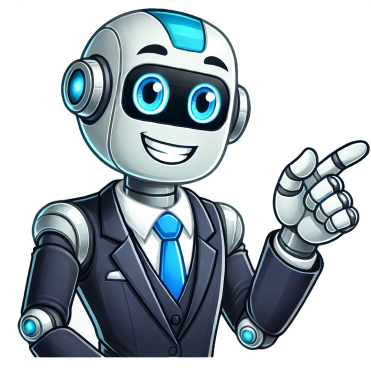


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1957: source: AP How quickly North Carolina wins another championship is more in flux than most other blue bloods (pictured) did take the Tar Heels to the national championship game and blew a huge lead in 1957, but went from AP Preseason No. 1 to missing the tournament completely this year. And Caleb Love is transferring away from Chapel Hill. source: AP Of course, if North Carolina is on this list, Duke cannot be far behind. The Blue Devils are tied with UConn and another school on our countdown (pictured) with five national titles. Duke might be the bluest of blue bloods due to being the first private school on our list and only one of two on the Division I mens side. source: AP Every blue blood has a legendary coach associated with their brand and for Duke, its Jon Scheyer (pictured)! Well, maybe one day. Its obviously Mike Krzyzewski, who left the keys to his kingdom to a former assistant to keep up the traditions at such a prestigious institution. No matter who coaches Duke, with how it recruits, it should be in contention for a national title forever. source: AP The only team to not wear blue among the group of blue bloods are the Hoosiers, tied with UConn and Duke with five national titles. If it feels like its been a while since Indiana has been within striking distance of a championship, its because its last time advancing beyond the Sweet 16 was in 2002 as national runners-up. source: AP Still, the unique environment at Assembly Hall and what Bob Knight (pictured) created in Bloomington is as unique a college basketball brand as there is across America. And that by itself makes them a blue blood because the lack of national success over the last two decades hasnt stopped the Hoosiers from being relevant. source: AP Among the four core blue bloods that have become college basketballs Mount Rushmore for being hated (alongside Kentucky, Duke and North Carolina) the Jayhawks might be the best regular-season team. Theyve also won the fewest national titles of that group (four) but won one more recently than anyone else in that quartet. source: AP Allen Fieldhouse is a toilet, but its Kansas toilet where reporters sitting courtside consistently take Advil before games to avoid headaches from how loud the venue can get. Bill Self (pictured) are two of the legendary coaches to patrol the sidelines in Lawrence to not have the building Kansas plays its home games in not named for them. source: AP Rounding out the group on the Division I mens side is the newest to be considered for the list. Villanova won its first championship in 1985. With the Wildcats pair of championships within the last decade, in 2016 and 2018, their status as a new blood is college basketball purists way of saying they belong. But its all the same thing. Villanova is a blue blood just like the rest. source: AP The prepvy private school on the outskirts of Philadelphia plays in a rinky-dink gym sometimes and Wells Fargo Center for bigger games. How Jay Wright (pictured) transformed the program in the latter years of his tenure truly brought Villanova from the outskirts of college basketball and into the most exclusive club. How the Wildcats can sustain it without him remains to be seen. source: AP Of course, UConn and Tennessee on the womens side are the two most obvious blue bloods. There are two other definite additions to be made with Stanford and Baylor joining the list due to the number of national titles each program has won and how consistent the Cardinal and Bears have been throughout the years. Kim Mulkey winning the national championship with LSU this past weekend only gives credence to how amazing her teams in Waco were. source: AP A few programs just missed the cut of what you could consider a blue blood and to join such an exclusive list, you needed to be decisively on it. If there was doubt, its a no. Louisville and Michigan State are the two biggest culprits of that. The Cardinals have won three national titles well, two that havent been vacated. Yet, their brand doesnt stick as needed in the fraternity like the rest. Tom Izzos (pictured) bunch hasnt won a national title since 2000 and only has two as a program overall. There needs to be a little bit more consistency in East Lansing to cross that threshold. Duke, North Carolina, Kansas, Kentucky, Indiana, and UCLA are the college basketball teams most often associated with the term blue blood. There is, however, an ongoing debate about the most deserving blue bloods and what blue blood actually means. Whats a College Basketball Blue Blood? According to the NCAA, the first reference of a blue blood was in the Brooklyn Times-Union on Jan. 3, 1927. It was used again in other publications throughout the 1940s and 1950s, appearing to reference an undefined elite class of college basketball programs. There is no concrete history for the current application of the term, nor is there a consensus on which teams are blue bloods. Despite periods of national irrelevance over the last two decades, Indiana and UCLA are often considered blue bloods. The Bruins, for example, have three more national championships (11) than the next closest team (Kentucky) but they havent won a title since 1995. There seems to be wider agreement on the other four teams: Duke, North Carolina, Kansas, and Kentucky. UConn is increasingly considered a blue blood of the sport, as the Huskies have won five national championships since 1999. No one else has won more than three over that same stretch. College Basketball Blue Bloods Team NCAA Bids Since 1985 Last Championship Total Men's NCAA Championships UCLA 28 1995 11 Kentucky 31 2012 8 UConn 22 2024 6 UNC 34 201 76 Duke 36 201 55 Indiana 27 1987 5 Kansas 36 202 24 Related Articles BetMGM is the premier destination for college basketball odds all season. Whether youre a first-time bettor, casual fan, or seasoned pro, theres something for everyone with college basketball betting at the sportsbook. If you dont have a sportsbook account, sign up for the BetMGM welcome offer, one of many sportsbook offers at BetMGM. Michigan State Spartans go for a loose ball against Indiana Hoosiers. (Photo by Rey Del Rio/Getty Images) In college basketball, the term blue bloods is used in reference to Division I basketball programs considered to be among the most elite, either contemporaneously or historically. There is no official definition of what constitutes a blue blood, but the term is generally applied to programs that have a long history of success, a strong fan base, and a national reputation. These are the nine most commonly cited Blue Bloods in mens college basketball. They are in alphabetical order: Connecticut (UConn) Huskies Duke Blue Devils Indiana Hoosiers Kansas Jayhawks Kentucky Wildcats North Carolina Tar Heels Michigan State Spartans UCLA Bruins Villanova Wildcats These programs have all won multiple national championships, and they have consistently been ranked among the top teams in the country. They also have large and passionate fan bases, and they are often featured often in national media coverage. There is some debate about which other programs should be considered blue blood programs. UConn, for example, has won five national championships since 1999, but it has not been as consistently ranked as the other six programs on a yearly basis. However, UConn with its five national championships has earned the right to be called a Blue Blood program. Then there are programs considered to be traditional Blue Blood programs like Indiana, UCLA, Kentucky, and North Carolina and then there are the new blue blood programs like Villanova, Michigan State, and UConn. No matter if the program is considered a traditional or new blue blood program, these nine programs deserve the title of being called a blue blood program. Here is a brief summary of the blue blood college basketball programs: History: These programs have a long history of success, with some dating back to the early days of college basketball. Fan base: These teams have large and passionate fan bases that follow the team closely. National reputation: These programs are known throughout the country, and they are often featured in national media coverage. NCAA Tournament: These teams have, for the most part, made multiple deep runs in the tournament and continue to be strong contenders to make it to Elite Eight and Final Four appearances. National championships: These programs have won multiple national championships. The blue blood college basketball programs are the most elite programs in the country. They have a long history of success, a strong fan base, and a national reputation. These programs are always contenders for the national championship, and they are always exciting to watch every season with few exceptions. Below is the criteria and scoring breakdown to determine the ranking of the top Blue Bloods in division one basketball programs of all time. Criteria and Scoring Breakdown 50 points for National Championships since 1960 30 points for National Championships prior to 1960 30 points for Final Four Appearances since 1960 25 points for Final Four Appearances prior to 1960 25 points for Regular Season Conference Championships since 1950 15 points for Conference Tournament Championships since 1990 10 points for Elite Eight Appearances 6 points for Sweet Sixteen Appearances 5 points for every season with 30 or more wins since 1970 4 points for every season with 20 or more wins since 1970 2 points for every NCAA Tournament berth The nine teams total scores are tallied and ranked from number nine to number one in this ranking of college basketball blood programs. When fans, sports on-air personalities, podcasters, writers, and people alike put together sports ranking lists such as ranking collegiate programs in football and basketball, for example, it is most likely highly subjective and or somewhat biased in a good portion of cases. Though this list is not perfect by any stretch of the imagination and the point system used in this ranking of blue blood programs is not flawless, it provides math-based analysis and analytical in a valid attempt to eliminate the subjective factors that many lists are comprised of. While college basketball upsets are the talk of March, by the time April brings the Final Four, the traditional powers of the sport usually hold sway. The 2023-24 season was no different. While UConn isn't generally thought of as a traditional powerhouse, a closer look confirms that it should be. Not that the Huskies are alone. There are six "blue blood" teams: UCLA, Kentucky, North Carolina, Kansas, Duke and UConn. Here's a rundown on the case for each as a perennial power and a brief summation of the top candidates who didn't quite make the field. College basketball blue blood programs Zion Williamson played for a college basketball blue blood program in his season at Duke. UCLA The case for UCLA: The Bruins' 11 national championships is an all-time record. They are one of only five schools to reach 2,000 all-time victories. Their 18 Final Four appearances are the second-most all-time. UCLA gave us John Wooden, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Bill Walton. The case against UCLA: Of the 11 championships, 10 came in a run between 1964 and 1975. Take away one era when John Wooden dominated college basketball with four-year players, and UCLA doesn't match Syracuse as a dynasty. The last UCLA championship was in 1995, and the school has one Final Four in 16 years. Kentucky The case for Kentucky: With 2,398 wins, Kentucky has the most victories in college basketball history. The Wildcats' eight NCAA titles are second best all-time, and their 17 Final Four appearances tie for third. Kentucky has won championships under five different coaches. Among legendary Wildcats are Adolph Rupp, Dan Issel and Anthony Davis. The case against Kentucky: The Wildcats have just one championship in the last 25 years and haven't made the Final Four since 2015. Much of Kentucky's record book was built in early NCAA Tournament days when the tournament had eight or 16 teams. North Carolina The case for North Carolina: UNC's 2,372 all-time victories are the third most. The Tar Heels' 21 Final Four appearances are an all-time record. Six NCAA titles tie with UConn for third all-time. North Carolina has won titles in five different decades, demonstrating staying power. Among the most legendary Tar Heels are Dean Smith, Michael Jordan and Tyler Hansbrough. The case against North Carolina: Coming up empty in 15 Final Fours demonstrates UNC's issue with near misses. This was worse before coach Roy Williams' three titles. North Carolina has probably had more talent than any other program but often shackled its own talent. Michael Jordan, for instance, somehow did not win a championship in two of his three years. Kansas The case for Kansas: The Jayhawks have won 2,393 games, second most all-time. Their 15 Final Four appearances are the fifth most in college history, and their four NCAA titles each came in a different decade. Given the connections to Dr. James Naismith, Kansas is something of the cradle of basketball, and Wilt Chamberlain, Danny Manning and Bill Self are three Jayhawk legends. The case against Kansas: Only four championships? "Wilt the Stilt" didn't pick up a title as a Jayhawk, for instance. Before coach Bill Self, Kansas could have been in danger of falling from the list. With two titles, Self doubled Kansas' all-time total. Duke The case for Duke: With 2,300 wins, Duke is fourth all-time in college basketball victories. It's 17 Final Four tie for third all-time and Duke has five NCAA titles, which is also fifth. Duke had a decent history but went to another like under Mike Krzyzewski, the all-time coaching wins leader. Grant Hill, JJ Reddick and Zion Williamson are some of the most famous Duke players. The case against Duke: Before 1991, Duke had zero NCAA titles. It's fair to wonder if Duke's explosion of college basketball success isn't largely a product of "Coach K." The pressure on coach Jon Scheyer to win continues to grow. UConn The case for UConn: The school's six national titles tie for third-best in college basketball history. While UConn can't match the other programs for longevity, its seven Final Four appearances are 10th all-time, and its 1,836 wins are 23rd best. Among the most famous Huskies ever are Ray Allen, Richard Hamilton and Jim Calhoun. UConn just became the first repeat championships in nearly 20 years. The case against UConn: Before 1999, UConn had never been to a single Final Four. Can this excellence last? As noted above, UConn's all-time standings in many college basketball areas are less than sparkling. The Near Misses Indiana has five NCAA titles but hasn't been to a Final Four since 2002 and largely accrued success under the late Bob Knight. Villanova's three times are impressive, but the Wildcats are 19th in victories and 11th in Final Four appearances. Another title or two would help the Wildcats' situation greatly. Syracuse and Temple are each about to reach 2,000 all-time wins. The Orange have one national title and the Owls have none. Michigan State and Ohio State have each reached 10 Final Fours. But MSU has just two championships, with the last in 2000, and Ohio State has one. Which near-miss should be on the list of college basketball blue bloods? Or what could drag an Indiana or Villanova up to the list? It seems fairly clear that there's a gap between the top six programs in the sport and everyone else. About the author Quick Links Edited by R. Elahi

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