



2025 Information Package

most of this information can also be found on our website at www.niagaraspears.ca

What ages do Niagara Spears accommodate?

Coach Brian Duguay for U18+: Athletes born in 2006, 2007 & 2008 (we are allowed to have 10 athletes born in 2006 on a game day roster each game for the 2025 season)

Coach Brad Martin for U16: Athletes born in 2009 & 2010

Coach Troy Herbert for U14: Athletes born in 2011 & 2012

What is the commitment level for the 2025 Season?

**Potentially end of January, February and March- one day a week, dates and times TBA

April 1- Mid May (until the 1st game): 3 practices a week, teams to announce which days practices are, usually 6:30pm- 9pm depending on weather and daylight.

Mid May (once games start) until the first weekend in August (depending on how the season goes) : 2 to 3 practices a week with games on the weekend. teams to announce which days practices are, usually 6:30pm- 9pm depending on weather and daylight. Games can be Friday nights, any time Saturday or any times Sunday (home games get to decide game times and which day off the weekend)

Is Niagara Spears Football fair play?

No, Niagara Spears teams are elite teams representing the best the Niagara Region has to offer. Expectations of “equal playing time” or the presumption that all players will participate in a given game are unrealistic. That being said, the coaching staff will, in the interest of developing fundamentally sound players, make every reasonable effort to ensure that all players see the field depending on game situations and player safety.

Where are tryouts/practices held and how far would we travel in a season?

January-April TBD

April to mid May: outdoor sessions at

Kiwanis Field 240 ST. Paul St W, St. Catharines, ON L2S 4B8

mid May to end of season: outdoor sessions alternate between Kiwanis Field listed above and West Park Field (behind DSBN Academy) 130 Louth St, St. Catharines, ON L2S 2T8

Games: Will depend on our schedule but can play anywhere from Windsor to Ottawa and as far up north as Sault Ste Marie. Coach Busses are provided for all athletes and should be taken to all games. Alternate arrangements can be made for athletes to go home from games with their parents. Games can be played on either Friday's, Saturday's or Sunday's.

Do I need to have my own equipment?

You only need your own cleats and mouth guard. Helmet, shoulder pads, practice pants, game day jerseys (2: home and away) and game day pants are the property of Niagara Spears and athletes borrow them from us.

A \$550 deposit in the form of a post dated cheque for Sept 1 2025 OR credit card information is required prior to athlete receiving equipment and held onto for the season (not cashed, just held). Once our equipment is returned then your cheque or information is destroyed/returned.

Equipment will be picked up from our clubhouse at 76 Ridley Rd W, St. Catharines, and your team manager will tell you when and how to pick up and return the equipment.

Athletes are permitted to use their own equipment but must get it checked with one of our head coaches first and a waiver must be signed. Once teams are made only Niagara Spears cardinal colour helmets are permitted at practices and games, and only Niagara Spears practice jerseys are to be worn at practices. FULL equipment is mandatory at all tryouts and practices (including practice pants with knee pads) unless otherwise advised by the head coach and team manager.

How do we register?

The league mandates that registration can not open until January 1 2025, once you register with a team you can NOT register with another unless you are cut or a release is granted upon request.

Head to our website or attend one of our in person registration days.

In person registration days will be posted on our website and social media.

Registration is a 3 part process so please be sure to complete all steps.

1. OFA National Registry
2. Niagara Spears Registration
3. Payment

If you need assistance please contact our Registrar Stephanie at registrar@niagaraspears.ca

How much does it cost to play Spears?

National Registry with OFA: this is paid to Ontario Football and Football Canada is mandatory. This is the athletes insurance. Please ensure you follow the prompts listed on our website. If you have questions please ask our Registrar Stephanie at registrar@niagaraspears.ca

Season Fees:

Tryout Fee- \$300

Team Fee-\$650 **additional to the \$300 tryout fee for a total of \$950 for the entire Season which is approximately 5-6 months in length total.

what's included in the fees:

- indoor and outdoor rentals
- athletic therapists at all contact sessions
- equipment to borrow
- equipment upkeep and recertification (safety)
- practice jersey (yours to keep)
- game day uniforms to borrow (tee shirt to upkeep)
- bus to all away games
- ticket to end of year banquet
- team picture

Mandatory Participation Bond: \$250- Volunteers are the lifeblood of our football organization. An extremely dedicated group of coaches and executives give their time to ensure a positive

experience for our young athletes to play this great sport. Participating gives you a deeper understanding and appreciation for just how much work goes on behind the scenes executing a successful game day and season as well as helps keep costs low for you. When you or someone in your family completes 4 hours of approved time you will receive your \$250 bond back at the end of the season. Once the season schedule is provided the schedule for participating will be released.

Possible Positions include but are not limited to:

Team Stats- this is a full season commitment as the person(s) will be added to our roster, if there's no volunteers for this players will not have stats to look back at or use for recruiting purposes. This position is coordinated with the Team Manager

Team Photographer- this is a full season commitment as the person will be added to our roster, players and family love looking back at game pics. This position is coordinated with the Team Manager

Game Day Set Up- meet our Game Day Coordinator in the morning and set up the field, tents, set up BBQ, and whatever else that may need to be set up.

Cash- collecting payment for concession orders.

BBQ- cooking hot dogs, hamburgers and sausages.

Handing out Food/Drinks- handing out orders once orders are ready.

Gate- collecting payment from fans entering the game.

50/50- selling 50/50 tickets at the gate and in the stands

Teardown- help clean up the field after the last game, take down tents, clean up concession, and anything else that needs to be cleaned up at the end of the day

*****please note, food and drinks are not to be taken for free during working hours towards the participation bond. Any complimentary items are at the discretion of the Game Day Coordinator and should never be assumed.***

Money is a little tight, is there help?

YES! Money should never be the reason an athlete doesn't play!

Programs like Jump Start, KidSport Ontario, Ontario Growing Up Through Sports, Niagara Kids Benefit help with funding, applications can be done through them. We also offer payment plans, fundraisers, or sponsorships to offset the costs to play. If you still need help, reach out to our registrar Stephanie at registrar@niagaraspears.ca, all conversations remain confidential.