



# NIL READY

## 10 Tips for Building Your Brand & Protecting Your Future in High School Sports

### A MESSAGE FROM YOUR ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

Welcome to another exciting year of high school athletics at [Your School Name]! As your Athletic Director, my priority is not just your success on the field, but your holistic development as a student, a leader, and a person ready for life's opportunities.

The world of Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) has opened new doors for high school athletes. While it might seem complex, our goal is to empower you and your family with the knowledge to navigate NIL responsibly, build a positive personal brand, and secure a strong future.

This guide provides essential tips to help you get NIL Ready for the season ahead and beyond. We are here to support you every step of the way.

Sincerely,  
[Your Athletic Director's Name]  
Athletic Director  
[Your School Name]





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# UNDERSTANDING NIL & YOUR OPPORTUNITY

### What is NIL, and Why Does It Matter to You?

*More than just money, it's about your personal brand and future.*

#### 1. Think Like a Business of ONE

- Your Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) is your personal brand – it's how you represent yourself, your values, and your impact. Think of yourself as a 'business of one.' This means being mindful of what you post, what you stand for, and how you present yourself, because businesses might want to partner with you.
- Why it Matters: This mindset helps you build a strong, authentic brand that attracts positive opportunities and prepares you for success in college and any future career.

#### 2. Learn from Other Athletes

- Many college athletes are already engaging in NIL deals. Research how they're doing it, what kinds of businesses they're working with, and the types of content they create. Look for examples of athletes who use their platform for good and build a lasting legacy.
- Why it Matters: Learning from others helps you understand what's possible, what to look for, and what to avoid, ensuring you make smart decisions.

#### 3. Identify Smart Partnerships

- As you build your brand, think about businesses that genuinely align with your values and interests (e.g., a local restaurant if you love food, a fitness brand if you're passionate about training). Authentic partnerships are more sustainable and fulfilling.
- Why it Matters: Working with brands you believe in builds credibility and protects your image. It's about finding a long-term fit, not just chasing quick cash.





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# BUILDING YOUR BRAND & INFLUENCE RESPONSIBLY

**Your Online Presence: Building a Positive & Powerful Brand**  
*What you put out there matters.*

### 4. Create Your Own Brand Plan.

- Don't wait for opportunities to come to you – build your own roadmap! Decide what your purpose is, what values you want to represent, and what story you want to tell. A clear plan guides your online activity and decision-making.
- **Why it Matters:** A strong plan ensures your NIL activities align with your goals and helps you stand out for the right reasons.

### 5. Curate Your Online Platforms.

- Your social media and online presence are your public profile. Ensure your profiles are professional, clean, and reflect the positive image you want to portray. This means checking old posts, being mindful of your interactions, and thinking before you share.
- **Why it Matters:** Potential partners (and college recruiters!) will review your online activity. A professional presence opens doors and protects your reputation.

### 6. Develop Your Content Skills.

- Whether it's creating engaging videos, capturing great photos, or writing compelling captions, strong content helps you connect with your audience. Invest time in improving these skills – they're valuable for NIL and any future career.
- **Why it Matters:** High-quality, authentic content attracts more positive attention and showcases your creativity and unique personality.







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### 7. Focus on Meaningful Content.

- Share what you're genuinely passionate about, beyond just your sport. This could be your academic interests, community service, hobbies, or insights into training. Authentic content builds a stronger connection than generic posts.
- **Why it Matters:** Your brand is more than just your athletic performance; it's about who you are as a whole person. This attracts partners who value your full identity and purpose.

### 8. Plan Your Content Calendar.

- Consistency is key! Plan your content around your athletic seasons and academic schedule. A simple content calendar helps you stay organized and ensures a steady flow of engaging posts without adding stress.
- **Why it Matters:** Regular, thoughtful content keeps your audience engaged and shows commitment, which brands appreciate. It also helps manage your time effectively.





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# FINANCIAL SMARTS & STAYING SAFE

**Protecting Your Future: Financial Literacy & Smart Decisions**  
*What parents and athletes need to know about NIL earnings.*

### 9. Involve Your Parents/Guardians in EVERYTHING.

- If you are under 18, your parents or guardians must be involved in every conversation and decision related to NIL. They can help you understand contracts, manage earnings, and protect your best interests. Even if you're 18 or older, their wisdom and support are invaluable.
- **Why it Matters:** NIL contracts can be complex, and there are legal and tax implications for any earnings. Parents/guardians are your primary protectors and advocates, ensuring long-term well-being.

### 10. Prioritize Planning BEFORE Earning.

- Before you chase deals, focus on building your brand and understanding the financial responsibilities. Learn about budgeting, basic tax implications for income, and long-term financial goals. Even small earnings can have tax consequences.
- **Why it Matters:** This proactive approach protects you from common financial pitfalls, ensuring any NIL income truly contributes to your future success, rather than creating problems.





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### YOUR ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT: HERE TO HELP YOU LEAD IN NIL

*Empowering Champions Beyond the Game*

Navigating NIL is a team effort. Your Athletic Department at [Your School Name] is committed to providing you with the best possible guidance and resources. We believe that by understanding and embracing the principles of personal branding and financial responsibility, every athlete can truly become a 'Champion Beyond the Game' – not just in sports, but in life.

To support you on this journey, we've partnered with leading experts in athlete branding and financial literacy: Athlualient (for building your brand and influence) and Pro Athlete Wealth (for smart financial planning). We encourage you to explore the resources they offer.

To access additional guides, checklists, and recommended resources, please visit our school's athletic website/resource portal: [Insert your school's specific website/resource portal link here, e.g., [www.yourschoolathletics.org/NIL](http://www.yourschoolathletics.org/NIL)]

**For specific questions or concerns, please contact our Athletic Department:**

Email:

Contact Number:

