2019-2020
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN
CHEER & DANCE TRYOUT GUIDE

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www.huskers.com/spiritsquad

Nebraska Spirit Squad
@HuskerCheerSquad @HuskerScarlets @HuskerSpirit
Overview of the Nebraska Spirit Squad

The University of Nebraska Spirit Squad and Husker Spirit Squad are blanket terms for the Cheer Squad, the Scarlets Dance Team and the Mascots. The Spirit Squad is under the direction of the Athletic Department.

The purpose of our program is to serve as leaders of student-driven school spirit, to promote school pride and create an exciting fan experience and home court advantage while unifying students, alumni and fans in support of the University of Nebraska and our athletic teams.

Spirit Squad members serve as public relations ambassadors for the Athletic Department and the University at-large. They reflect the goals and values of the University on and off-campus all season long and take great pride in their contributions to the Huskers. Members appear on behalf of the University at athletic games as well as campus and community events. The Squad operates under the core values of integrity, trust, respect, teamwork, and loyalty. The program is dedicated to excellence in all it pursues.

The Cheer/Yell Squad is made up of 18-24 members and use traditional cheers, signs, jumps and sidelines dances to enhance the fan experience at Husker athletic events. Although they may support any one of our varsity sports, they primarily cheer at home football, volleyball, men’s and women’s basketball games.

The Scarlets Dance Team is made up of 14-18 squad members. Although they may support any one of our varsity sports, the Scarlets perform dance routines to entertain crowds primarily at home football, men’s and women’s basketball and select baseball and softball games.

Our Mascots are Herbie Husker and Lil’ Red. They are always a crowd favorite, appearing at numerous athletic events as well as events across campus and in the community.

Minimum requirements

- Fully admitted to UNL by the first day of their respective tryout.
- Possess and maintain a minimum 2.0 cumulative grade point average.
- Earn a minimum 2.0 semester grade point average.
- Enroll in 12 or more graded hours by census date.
- Have a pre-participation physical exam (also called a sports physical) dated within last 12 months.
- Possess and maintain personal health insurance while on squad.
- Maintain undergraduate status while on squad.
- Fall within the allotted 5 years of eligibility (junior college and transfer college experience included).
General Tryout Information

During our annual team selection process, our program evaluates candidates in five areas:

- Technical ability and performance quality
- Athleticism and collegiate appearance
- Academic performance and time management
- Personality and communication skills
- Ability to contribute to the program and overall impression

We are looking for CHEERLEADERS with the following qualities:

- Athletic movement quality and flexibility
- Coordination and rhythm
- Strong motion technique
- Collegiate, fit appearance and poise
- Crowd appeal
- Vocal quality and ability to project
- Positivity, genuine spirit and enthusiasm
- The ability to positively LEAD and MOTIVATE a crowd!
- Excellent public speaking skills
- Friendly and engaging personality
- Team-player mentality and a sense of commitment to the program
- Dedication and commitment to program goals
- Ability and desire to uphold a standard of excellence in their personal conduct and character
- In-game awareness and crowd management skills
- Potential to contribute and grow with the program

We are looking for DANCERS with the following qualities:

- Elite technical skill and flexibility
- Ability to pick up choreography quickly
- Coordination and rhythm
- Strong motions and attention to detail
- Collegiate, fit appearance and poise
- Crowd appeal
- Dedication and commitment to program goals
- Positivity, genuine spirit and enthusiasm
- Musicality and engaging performance quality
- Good public speaking skills
- Friendly and engaging personality
- Team-player mentality and a sense of commitment to the program
- Ability and desire to uphold a standard of excellence in their personal conduct and character
- Ability to adjust at short notice
- In-game awareness and crowd management skills
- Potential to contribute and grow with the program

Many factors are taken into consideration when choosing the best fit squad for the University. Much of the process is inherently subjective. By participating, applicants understand and accept the subjective nature of tryouts.

TRYOUTS ARE CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC. ALL DECISIONS ARE FINAL.

KEY DATES

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Scarlets Dance Team Audition Information

This year there are two audition options: in-person and video.
No pre-qualifying video is required for this year’s tryout.

All candidates will need to register online by **Tuesday, March 26 at 11:59pm.** No late registrations will be considered.

**Option 1: In-Person**

Tryouts will be held on UNL City Campus on March 30-31, 2019

Candidates will be assessed on:

- Technical Skill
- Fight Song*
- Pom Combo
- Jazz Routine
- Hip Hop Routine
- Eight 8-counts of solo choreography**
- Interview**
- Sports Information Quiz**

*A link to the fight song choreography will be emailed to candidates on 3/27 after registration closes. You are expected to learn and perfect this choreography prior to Saturday. **For those invited to callbacks on Sunday

Specific skills include but are not limited to:

- Triple and quad right/left pirouettes, front attitude and coupe turns
- A la seconde turns and variations (box turns, floats, arm placement)
- Headsprings, kip-ups, rubberbands
- Switch arabesque, calypso, turning disc and toe touch

Saturday Attire:

- Midriff baring top in BLACK and black boy shorts or leggings; hair secured in a low bun. Tennis shoes and black joggers or sweatpants for hip hop routine. One pair of stud earrings only. All other body jewelry must be removed and tattoos must be covered.

Sunday Attire:

- Midriff baring top in color of choice with color of choice boy shorts or leggings. Down or half-up game day ready hair. Game-day ready makeup. Tennis shoes and color of choice joggers or sweatpants for hip hop routine. One pair of stud earrings only. All other body jewelry must be removed and tattoos must be covered.
- Interviews are conducted in business casual attire.

Please bring the following items to check-in on Saturday. You CANNOT tryout if documentation is incomplete.

- Signed participant agreement
- OFFICIAL copy of your academic transcript
- Copy of most recent pre-participation (sports) physical
- Signed medical release form
- Copy of your insurance card front and back
- Letter of recommendation from your most recent dance instructor or coach
- $35 application fee (check or money order only made payable to the *University of Nebraska*)
Option 2: Video Audition

Video candidates must first register online by **Tuesday, March 26 at 11:59pm**.

Links to tryout choreography (fight song, routines and turn combo) will be sent to the email used to register on **Monday, April 1**. Instructions on how to return your video will be included in that email. **Videos must be received by Thursday, April 4 at 11:59pm**.

Please record the sections below in this order. Each section must be a single take. If you have never done any of the skills listed above, no worries! We simply ask you to attempt them to your comfort level in a safe environment. If you need clarification or have other questions, please email me at ebutzke@huskers.com.

Section 1: Introduction
- Name
- Hometown
- Name of HS or transfer institution
- Year in school as of Fall 2019
- Why you want to be a Scarlet for the 2019-20 season
- Right and left leap in second- Execute these across the floor, at least 2 on each side.
- Switch Arabesque- best side, record two from a side view.
- Toe touch- record two from front and center view
- Calypso (leap with back leg in attitude): Record two on the right and two on the left.
- Right or left aerial (OPTIONAL)

Section 2: Turns
- Right triple and quad pirouettes
- Left triple pirouette
- Two 8-counts of turns in second- First 8-count spot front open on odd counts. Second 8-count add variations of your choice. Highlight control, proper placement and creativity.
- Leg grab turns – best side, as many rotations as you can cleanly execute.
- Tryout turn combination

Section 3: Leaps
- Right and left turning disc- Execute in the center of the floor, one on each side.
- Right and left leap in second- Execute these across the floor, at least 2 on each side.
- Switch Arabesque- best side, record two from a side view.
- Toe touch- record two from front and center view
- Calypso (leap with back leg in attitude): Record two on the right and two on the left.
- Right or left aerial (OPTIONAL)

Section 4: Hip Hop Skills
- Headspring- record from the side
- Kip Up- record from the side
- Rubberband- record from the side

Section 4: Fight Song

Section 5: Jazz Routine

Section 6: Hip Hop Routine

Section 7: Solo Choreography - this can be pre-recorded solo footage or recorded specifically for this audition. If pre-recorded, must be within the last six months. No more than 2 minutes, please.

Please mail the documents below to: **2019-20 Scarlets Auditions**
**One Memorial Stadium**
**Lincoln, Nebraska 68588**

- 5x7 color headshot (these will not be returned)
- Signed participant agreement
- OFFICIAL copy of your academic transcript
- Copy of most recent pre-participation (sports) physical
- Signed medical release form
- Letter of recommendation from your most recent dance instructor or coach
- $35 application fee (check or money order only made payable to the University of Nebraska

Video candidates selected for callbacks will be notified via email and we’ll schedule a Zoom meeting interview. All documentation above must be received before an interview will be scheduled.
Husker Cheer Squad Tryout Information

Tryouts ON-CAMPUS and IN-PERSON are HIGHLY recommended. Please contact Coach Erynn at ebutzke@huskers.com if you have any questions or concerns with the tryout dates. No pre-qualifying video is required for this year’s tryout.

All candidates will need to register online by Tuesday, April 2 at 11:59pm. No late registrations will be considered.

Tryouts will be held on UNL City Campus on April 6-7, 2019

Candidates will be assessed on:

- Motion technique and precision
- Fight song*
- Sideline routine
- Offense, defense and general cheers
- Jumps
- Timed one mile run (9:00 goal)**
- Interview**
- Sports Information Quiz**

*A link to the fight song choreography will be emailed to candidates on 4/4 after registration closes. You are expected to learn and perfect this choreography prior to Saturday. **For those invited to callbacks on Sunday

Specific skills include but are not limited to:

- Toe touch, right side hurdler, left side hurdler, right front hurdler, double toe touch and triple jump
- Right and left high kicks

Saturday Attire:

- Midriff baring top in BLACK and BLACK shorts. Hair styled half up. Cheer bow in color of choice may be worn. Game day ready makeup. One pair of stud earrings only. All other body jewelry must be removed and tattoos must be covered.

Sunday Attire:

- Midriff baring top and shorts in color of choice. Hair styled half up. Cheer bow in color of choice may be worn. Game-day ready makeup. One pair of stud earrings only. All other body jewelry must be removed and tattoos must be covered.
- Interviews are conducted in business casual attire.

Please bring the following items to check-in on Saturday. You CANNOT tryout if documentation is incomplete.

- Signed participant agreement
- OFFICIAL copy of your academic transcript
- Copy of most recent pre-participation (sports) physical
- Signed medical release form
- Copy of your medical insurance card front and back
- Letter of recommendation from your most recent cheer coach
- $35 application fee (check or money order only made payable to the University of Nebraska)
Interview Guidelines & Sports Information Quiz Practice Questions

Interviews will be assigned to those invited to callbacks on Sunday. Requested attire is business casual. The purpose of the interview is to get to know your personality as well as assess how you will interact with our fans.

A good interview consists of:

- Thoughtful, clearly articulated responses
- Engaging eye contact, confidence and poise
- Elimination of filler words such as “like” and “um”
- HONEST and AUTHENTIC representation of yourself and your values

The sports information quiz is designed to determine your working knowledge of college sports, Husker Athletics and school traditions. The questions will be general knowledge and similar to questions one might receive during an appearance or other fan interaction. Practice questions are below:

1. What conferences make up the “Power 5” in NCAA football?
2. Name the other 13 schools in the Big Ten Conference as of Fall 2018.
3. Where are the Big Ten schools located (city and state)?
4. What are the nicknames of each Big Ten school (ex. Nebraska Cornhuskers)?
5. Name the head coaches for each of Nebraska’s varsity sports.
6. How many Heisman trophy winners has Nebraska had?
7. In what years did Nebraska football win the National Championship?
8. Who won the NCAA Division 1A football National Championship in January 2019?
9. What other sports at Nebraska have won National Championships since 2000?
10. What are the official school colors for the University of Nebraska Lincoln?
11. Who is Tom Osborne?
12. What are the words to our fight song “There Is No Place Like Nebraska”?
13. What does “In the deed, the glory” mean?
14. What is the hand signal an official makes to indicate a football player has scored a touchdown?
15. How many points is a touchdown worth?
16. How many points is a safety worth?
17. What is the line of scrimmage?
18. Name a position on a football team other than quarterback. What is the role of said position?
19. Who are the University’s mascots?
20. What does “GBR” mean?
Summary of Rules and Expectations for the 2019-20 Nebraska Spirit Squad

Purpose and Selection Process

This summary is intended to inform prospective members, their parents and other interested parties of the various policies and expectations of the University of Nebraska Spirit Squad Program. In all policy and program matters, members of the Spirit Squad shall first be law-abiding citizens and outstanding representatives of the University.

All UNL undergraduate students as of fall 2019 (including incoming freshmen) may apply and must maintain undergraduate status while on squad. The squad is selected by the Spirit Squad coaching staff with input from a panel composed of individuals chosen for their experience and expertise in the areas of cheer, dance and/or leadership. Those chosen for the team must also pass a criminal background check before making the official roster.

Scholarships and Benefits

Eligible Squad members who receive a 2.5 or better SEMESTER grade point average may receive an academic scholarship ranging from $500-$600 per semester in the fall and spring. Spirit Squad scholarships are not available for summer sessions. Squad members must have a 2.5 or better CUMULATIVE grade point average for travel privileges. Athletics provides Adidas training gear, some meals at the Lewis Training Table, access to strength and conditioning as well as performance nutrition coaches, uniforms and team travel expenses among other perks.

Practices and Attendance

Practice schedules will be determined by availability of facilities and class schedules. Cheer Squad members should not schedule any Monday night classes for the academic year. Practices, games and scheduled appearances are mandatory. Spirit Squad duties are a priority, second only to academics. Good communication and effective time management are required.

Alcohol, Tobacco and Social Media Policy

Squad members are expected to be outstanding, law-abiding citizens. This expectation is foremost when it comes to the use of alcohol and representation of self through social media. The Spirit Squad is a highly visible group within the community and the behaviors of Squad members are under constant observation in and out of uniform. Squad members are often an easy target for criticism regarding their conduct particularly with regards to social media, alcohol and other controlled substances. With this in mind, the Squad will adhere to the following policies:

- Spirit Squad members of legal drinking age shall not procure alcohol for underage squad members at any time.
- Spirit Squad members may not purchase, possess or consume alcohol during any part of an away trip regardless of age.
- Spirit Squad members shall not consume alcoholic beverages before or during an event or practice, regardless of age.
- Spirit Squad members shall not draw negative attention to the program or University due to inappropriate drinking behavior regardless of age. This includes observations in public, photos, Facebook posts, tweets and other media.
- Squad members may not smoke or use other forms of tobacco/vaping/e-cigarettes while in uniform.
- Squad members should not be depicted using alcohol, drugs, tobacco or vaping/e-cigarette in social media in or out of uniform regardless of age.
- Language, video and images of Squad members on social media should always positively represent Athletics.
- If an illness or injury due to drinking prohibits a Spirit Squad member from participating in any event including practice, games or appearances, that member will be subject to disciplinary actions.
Travel

Traveling is a privilege and reward, not a right of membership on Spirit Squad. Many factors are considered when assigning travel opportunities including, but not limited to, contribution to squad activities, attitude and commitment, work ethic, academic performance and seniority. The number of travel opportunities available is determined at the discretion of the Athletic Department in accordance with budget guidelines, University regulations and the Big Ten Conference.

Winter and Spring Break

All Squad members will have responsibilities over winter and spring break. Squad members may trade games in the winter to accommodate travel plans but all members are responsible for their assigned games. There may also be away travel or practice over winter break. Tardiness or absences in the event of serious illness or inclement weather will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The men’s and women’s NCAA and NIT Basketball Tournaments may fall over spring break. We are expected to participate with a set number of squad members at each event. We ask that all Squad members wait to make plans over spring break until the travel party for each event has been selected.

Communication

Communication regarding Spirit Squad matters will be conducted between the student and coaching staff. This includes requests for feedback after the tryout process. Parents/Guardians will be contacted only in the case of an emergency or immediate need. Questions and concerns directed to any member of the coaching staff from parents or other related parties regarding Spirit Squad matters will be re-directed to the student.

Email and text messaging are common forms of communication used by the coaching staff. All squad members are responsible for reading through email communications and responding to emails and text messages within a reasonable amount of time.

Personal Responsibility

All Squad members must maintain their skills and a healthy, physically fit appearance throughout the year. If, in the opinion of the coaching staff, a squad member is unable to perform skills or remain healthy and physically fit (for reasons other than injury) corrective actions will be taken until improvements are made at the satisfaction of the coaching staff.

Any Squad member may be dismissed from the team for any of the following reasons:

1. Attitude
2. Lack of ability
3. Poor attendance and/or tardiness
4. Personality conflicts
5. Inability to follow rules and procedures
6. Representation of self through social media inconsistent with team values and expectations
7. Insubordination or other behaviors deemed inappropriate by the coaching staff and/or administration
8. Best interest of the team as determined by the coaching staff and/or administration

Squad members may also be dismissed for other reasons not listed above, as determined by the coaching staff and/or the administration. Failure to comply with Squad rules and expectations or other verbal directions may result in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension and/or dismissal from the Squad, at the discretion of the coaching staff and appropriate administrators. The severity and frequency of the violation(s) will be considered when making final decisions. Full policy will be communicated to selected squad members at team orientation.
2019-20 Spirit Squad Tryout Participant Agreement

The participant agreement form acknowledges that you have read and accept the guidelines presented in the summary above. Applicants (and their parent if the applicant is under age 19) must read and sign the participant agreement form before they are allowed to tryout.

**PLEASE INCLUDE THIS FORM WITH YOUR APPLICATION.**

As an applicant for the University of Nebraska Spirit Squad, I understand that I have chosen to be a candidate and fully understand the rules and expectations of the Spirit Squad program. I also recognize and accept the inherent subjective nature of the audition process. The goal of the audition process is to choose a team that best fits the needs and vision of the program and all decisions are final.

If I am chosen to be a member of the University of Nebraska Spirit Squad, I understand this is a one year commitment. I agree to uphold the guidelines of the program from the moment I am selected throughout the academic year.

In the spirit of excellence, I agree that the needs of the Spirit Squad will take priority second only to academics. I understand that each member is an integral part of the success of the Squad and I choose to put service to the Squad as a whole ahead of myself. I understand that the Spirit Squad is a highly visible representative of the University and it is the responsibility of all members to uphold the standards of the program and the Athletic Department. **Membership on Spirit Squad is a privilege, not a right.** I agree that if the coaching staff and/or administration should determine that I have violated the terms of this Agreement, consequences may include disciplinary action, up to and including suspension from activities and performances, loss of travel privileges, immediate dismissal from the Squad and loss of benefits that accompany membership on the team.

My signature below indicates that I have read, understand and accept the Summary of the Rules and Expectations for 2019-20 Spirit Squad provided to me for the purpose of tryouts. Any interpretation of this summary made by the coaching staff and/or Athletic Department shall be binding as it applies to me.

__________________________________________________________________________
Applicant Printed Name

__________________________________________________________________________
Applicant Signature

__________________________________________________________________________
Parent/Guardian Printed Name (if applicant is under 19)

__________________________________________________________________________
Parent/Guardian Signature
Documentation Checklist

Dance Team In-Person Audition

✓ Signed participant agreement (page 9 of this document)
✓ OFFICIAL copy of your academic transcript
✓ Copy of most recent pre-participation (sports) physical
✓ Signed medical release form (link on website)
✓ Copy of your medical insurance card (front and back)
✓ Letter of recommendation from your most recent dance instructor or coach
✓ $35 application fee (check or money order ONLY; made payable to the University of Nebraska)

Dance Team Video Audition

✓ 5x7 color headshot (these will not be returned)
✓ Signed participant agreement (page 9 of this document)
✓ OFFICIAL copy of your academic transcript
✓ Copy of most recent pre-participation (sports) physical
✓ Signed medical release form (link on website)
✓ Copy of your medical insurance card (front and back)
✓ Letter of recommendation from your most recent dance instructor or coach
✓ $35 application fee (check or money order ONLY; made payable to the University of Nebraska)

Cheer Squad Tryouts

✓ Signed participant agreement (page 9 of this document)
✓ OFFICIAL copy of your academic transcript
✓ Copy of most recent pre-participation (sports) physical
✓ Signed medical release form (link on website)
✓ Copy of your medical insurance card (front and back)
✓ Letter of recommendation from your most recent dance instructor or coach
✓ $35 application fee (check or money order ONLY; made payable to the University of Nebraska)

Questions? Email Coach Erynn at ebutzke@huskers.com

Good Luck and GO BIG RED!