

Letters of Recommendation Tip Sheet

- 1. Make sure you ask the right person.** The person you ask for a letter of recommendation from should be a non-relative who knows you well as a person. This can be a teacher, coach, or community leader. This person should be able to tell a good story about you and be able to write about your academic and/or personal achievements, and potential.
- 2. Ask early.** You can ask as early as your Junior year. It is best to ask for your letters of recommendation well before the deadline so that the person writing your recommendation has a lot of time to write a good letter. Remember to provide a clear deadline to your recommender.
- 3. Provide some direction.** It is a good idea to provide a resume for your recommender to look at when writing your recommendation. Also, double check the letter of recommendation guidelines for each application. Here's some useful information to share with your recommender:

A. Short background of yourself: Write a few sentences about your personal qualities, plans after high school, educational and career goals, etc.
B. SAT and/or ACT scores.
C. Grade Point Average.
D. Advanced Placement/Honors courses: Listing courses like these shows your interest in challenging yourself by taking more rigorous coursework than what is required.
E. Strengths/skills: Listing your strengths and skills gives committees an idea of what you are good at.
F. Extracurricular Activities: College admission and scholarship committees are interested in students who are well-rounded individuals. Besides having a good academic background, it is also important to be involved in other activities inside and outside of school. These activities could include joining clubs, participating in community service activities, playing sports, being involved with music and arts, and taking on leadership roles.
G. Clubs and community service activities: Participating in clubs and community service activities shows your interest in being involved with your school and community.
H. Sports: Playing a high school sport shows dedication and hard work, as well as your ability to balance school, sports, and any other competing priorities simultaneously.
I. Music and Arts: Being involved in activities in the field of music and arts (band, orchestra, choir, drama, art, photography, design, etc.) showcases your creative talents.
J. Leadership: Taking on leadership roles (in student council, clubs, etc.) shows responsibility, your ability to lead and motivate others, and your interest in being involved.
K. Awards/Accomplishments: This may include awards or accomplishments from academics, athletics or extracurricular activities.

more tips on the back



4. Give clear instructions on where your recommender should submit his/her letter.

Does your letter of recommendation need to be uploaded to the school or scholarship provider's website? Can it be sent as a hard copy? Does it need to come directly from the recommender? If the school or scholarship provider requires letters of recommendation to be sent via postal mail, please make sure to give your recommender a pre-addressed, stamped envelope to use to send your letter.

5. Thank the person that wrote your letter of recommendation. Let the recommender know that you appreciate the time they took to write your letter of recommendation. Send a thank you note or thank them in person a week or two after the deadline.

