



Requesting recommendation letters

General Tips

- Request recommendation letters well in advance (at least 4-5 weeks before the deadline).
- Decide on an appropriate person(s) to ask (professor, staff member, club mentor, past employer, etc.).
- Before asking someone for a recommendation, consider how well this person knows you. If you are asking a professor, e.g., have you ever spoken to the professor outside of class? How often do you participate in class discussions? What will s/he be able to say about you beyond your grade?
- You can ask for a letter of recommendation either in person (preferred) or through email (see below).
- Provide information to assist the recommender in writing the letter. Include a resume, details about the opportunity to which you are applying, a link to the application form, application deadline, and at times you can also include the key skills you would like to highlight.
- Ask the recommender if s/he would like a follow-up reminder closer to the deadline.
- Be aware of the recommender's timeframe (e.g., try to avoid requests close to the deadline, the end of the semester, or a holiday).
- Be sure to write a thank you letter to your recommender.
- Keep in mind you are making a request and a potential recommender has the right to decline to write on your behalf. You should still thank a potential recommender for taking the time to consider writing for you even if the response was negative.
- Remember to let the recommender know about your application results!

Making a request in person

- Make an appointment to meet with your potential recommender.
- Bring a copy of an updated resume and any other applicable materials (e.g., personal statement).
- Discuss your need for the letter, the deadline, and other necessary information.
- Ask if the potential recommender would be willing to write on your behalf for this opportunity.

Making a request by email

- Be sure to address your email properly.
- Dear Prof./Dr./Ms./Mr. first and last name,
- Use “Recommendation for [your name]” as the subject line.
- Start by explaining why you need a recommendation. Then outline your relationship with the recommender. Ask if s/he would be willing to write on your behalf for this opportunity.
- Provide details on the deadline and other necessary information.
- Attach your updated resume to the email.