

Letters of Recommendation

Who to ask: Letters of recommendation should come from professors who are familiar with your work in the field. The recommender should be able to speak to your work ethic, work quality, research abilities, and professional goals. Try to choose a variety of recommenders who can illustrate different aspects of your qualifications.

What to ask: Make sure that the recommender knows your education and career goals and let him or her know what you would like the letter to address. If you would like one to speak specifically about your teaching experience, for example, let him or her know that's what you need. If you have been actively involved in relevant organizations, you should ask the recommender to highlight those as well.

What to give the recommender: You should make the recommendation process as easy for the recommender as possible to ensure that your letter is strong and submitted on time. Make sure that the recommender has all of the information needed. If you are applying to multiple schools, consider providing the recommender with a binder of materials.

Materials:

- Program description and requirements: if the recommender can read what is expected in the program to which you are applying, he or she can highlight your skills in those areas.
- Rationale: explain why you are applying to each program and what you hope to gain from it.
- Your resume, curriculum vitae, or description of qualifications.
- Submission requirements: deadlines, electronic, form, letter, etc.
- Mailing materials: if the letter needs to be mailed, provide a stamped, addressed envelope for each school.



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