

How to Ask for a Scholarship Letter of Recommendation

Asking for a Letter of Recommendation

Read the scholarship application to determine the correct person to ask for a Letter of Recommendation. A Recommender should be someone who knows you personally and can speak about your academics, ethics, or accomplishments. When you identify the Recommender, contact them and schedule a time to meet and discuss the scholarship criteria. Be sure to make your request **two to three weeks before** you need to submit the scholarship application.

Prior to meeting with your Recommender, review the **Student Checklist** and gather the necessary documents. Be conscious that instructors, counselors, and administrators are busy people and deal with many students; be considerate of their work schedule and availability. They know how important a scholarship is to you and consider the request seriously. You want to give your Recommender enough time and information to write you a favorable reference letter.

Who should you ask for a Letter of Recommendation?

Before requesting a Letter of Recommendation, review the scholarship application for specifics on who you should ask, for example:

- Tri-City Hospital Auxiliary Nursing Scholarship states: “Recommendation from an **Instructor**”
- The San Diego Foundation Scholarship states: “Ask two people who know you well, but are not related to you: teachers, counselors, religious leaders, coaches, and employers are good choices as they can comment on your overall character, achievement and promise.”

What should be the focus of the Letter of Recommendation?

Refer to the scholarship application to determine the eligibility criteria. Is the scholarship based on academics, a specific major, financial need, a hardship you overcame, etc.? For example:

- Tri-City Hospital Auxiliary Nursing Scholarship states: “minimum 3.0 GPA, and demonstrates motivation, determination and financial need.”
- Jack Kent Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship states: “Academic achievement, critical thinking ability, breadth of interests and activities, will to succeed, and financial need.
- Soroptimist Women’s Scholarship asks, “Does the applicant demonstrate a strong sense of responsibility, strength in character, have clear goals, and would be an inspiration to others?”

Official Letterhead

Letters of Recommendation should be on official letterhead and signed by the Recommender.

Thank You Letter

Always send a handwritten *thank you* note to your Recommender. A “thank you” helps maintain a positive, professional relationship with the Recommender. Also, be sure to let them know if you receive the scholarship, we love to celebrate success.

Recordkeeping

Keep a copy of all the scholarships you apply for as a reference in case you do not receive the scholarship this year, you can reapply the next year.



SCHOLARSHIP LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION STUDENT CHECKLIST

SCHOLARSHIP NAME: _____ DEADLINE DATE: _____

NAME OF RECOMMENDER: _____

RECOMMENDER E-MAIL: _____ PHONE # (____) _____

STUDENT CHECKLIST:

___	Is the person you are asking to write a recommendation letter someone who can speak about your academic merit, accomplishments, or a hardship you had to overcome?
___	Per the scholarship eligibility criteria, are there specific areas the Recommender should focus on, such as: academic merit, financial need, accomplishments, etc. List them here: _____
___	Contact the person you would like to request a letter from and schedule a date and time to meet. Date: _____ Time: _____
___	If the person agrees to write a letter for you, provide them with the following: ___ Your contact information: phone number and e-mail address ___ Copy of the scholarship application with the deadline date highlighted ___ A current, <i>unofficial</i> MiraCosta College transcript (print from <i>Surf</i>) ___ Personal Statement listing your career and education goals, extracurricular activities, and information about yourself you would like to share. ___ Include a picture of yourself, which is helpful particularly if the Recommender deals with many students
___	If you cannot meet with the Recommender in person, send them the above information
___	Arrange a date/time to pick up the recommendation letter: _____ ___ If they are mailing the recommendation letter to you, give them a self-addressed, stamped envelope
___	Present a handwritten Thank You note to the Recommender after you receive the letter. Thanking your Recommender for their time and effort helps to maintain a positive professional relationship, especially if you may be asking for another letter in the future.