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HOW TO

Ask for a letter of recommendation



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Make sure to ask someone who knows you & your work.

Try to participate in your classes and go to office hours to develop connections with your faculty.

Best method of asking someone for a letter of recommendation is face-to-face.

Schedule an appointment or make sure you have enough time to discuss the request with the person who will be writing the letter. Don't ask when you are in a rush!

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Be prepared to explain why you need the letter of recommendation. Applying to graduate school, a job, or another program? Make sure you have all the details and feel comfortable talking about it.

Know when the deadlines are and ask early! Make sure that the person you are asking has enough time to write the recommendation for you.

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Have your resume updated and be prepared to talk about your goals/achievements! The writer may ask for these so they can write a good letter of recommendation. Think about personal characteristics and accomplishments you would like the recommender to highlight in their letter and make sure to communicate those to them.

Most likely you will not be able to see what the recommender wrote because they will have to submit it directly to the place you are applying to.

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If they don't agree to write you a letter of recommendation, it's ok! Don't take it personally, it is very likely that the recommender is busy or they don't feel comfortable writing one for you because they don't know you very well.

- Have a list of potential references ready so that if someone denies your request for a recommendation, you don't have to scramble to find someone else.
- Remember, former colleagues, supervisors, or professors are not obligated to give you a letter of recommendation. Make sure to give the recommender an easy way to decline.

Always send thank-you notes to all your references who write you a letter of recommendation.

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If you can't meet with the person face-to-face or through a video conference call. You can ask through email.

- Be polite – remember, they are not obligate to write a recommendation but you would really like them to
- Be specific – important to include why you are asking, the deadlines & any personal qualities/achievements you would like them to include
- Send it early!

Email formula

**Greeting + reason for the email
+ your experience of working
with the person + details
+ thank you + closing**

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***Interested in more tips
and tricks about how to
ask for a letter of
recommendation? Head
to "Student Success in a
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learn more!***

tinyurl.com/studentsuccessvirtualenvt

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