

Read this before asking someone to write you a letter of recommendation

Letter of Recommendation Etiquette

There are a couple of things you will want to think about before asking someone to be a Reference for you or write a Letter of Recommendation.

- **Ask for permission**
You never want to have someone be your reference or write you a letter who doesn't really want to do it, does not know you well enough, or feels that they can't do it justice. To be sure, you should ask them if they feel they can provide you with a good reference.
- **Give them time**
It's very important that you provide your references enough time to complete the task you have given them. Typically, three weeks to a month is an appropriate amount of time to write a letter of recommendation, but remember, your teachers and counselors have busier times of the year, just like you. Please note that teachers and counselors are off during holidays, do not check their emails, and therefore, it is not appropriate to ask them to write letters over break.
- **Make it as easy as possible**
If someone is offering to write you a letter of recommendation, they are doing you a favor. You should make it as easy as possible for them to complete the task. Give them a copy of your student profile or resume. If there is a scholarship program summary, include a copy. When appropriate, provide a pre-addressed stamped envelope to the institution/organization. Lastly, you may want to send a reminder email to your teachers or counselors regarding impending deadlines because they are often working with multiple student letter requests at one time.
- **Thank them**
It's very important for your reference to know that you appreciate the work they have done for you. It is not a requirement or entitlement for your reference to write you a letter. Often teachers and counselors write letters of recommendations on their own time – a job that often takes a few hours. Thank them after they have agreed to write the letter, and consider sending them a handwritten note afterwards.

Reference: www.morningside.edu/student_life/careers/joblisting/referencesetiquette.htm