



GUIDE TO REQUESTING LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

CLASS OF 2025



READ your college application requirements for EACH college you apply to. In addition, you MUST request your letters of recommendation by the stated deadlines below in order for your letters to arrive on time. Each college will have varying requirements and how many letters they require. Use this guide as a resource.

WHICH COLLEGES REQUIRE LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION?

- Private and out of state universities will typically ask for 1-2 teacher recommendations and a counselor recommendation
- UC* and Cal State universities DO NOT require or take letters of recommendations
 - **UC Berkeley MAY ask for a letter AFTER you apply*
- *Do not send a letter of recommendation if it is not an application requirement*

DEADLINES

- **Early Application Deadline (Early Action/Early Decision, etc.) typically Nov. 1, Nov. 15. Deadline**
 - Must request your letters by October 1, 2024
 - *If you are applying to a program that is due even earlier (October deadlines for things like international medicine/vet, VPA, etc. you need to give at least 3 weeks in advance notice)*
- **Regular Decision Deadline**
 - Must request your letters by November 1, 2024



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HOW DO I REQUEST THE LETTERS?

- Ask your recommender in person or via email and then follow the next steps to officially requesting them on your applications by the specified deadlines.
- For your counselor letter, complete the Brag Sheet for Counselors in [Naviance](#) by your specified deadline. The brag sheet is located in [Naviance](#) (About me section under my surveys). Note:
 - *There is also an optional, but encouraged parent brag sheet available in Naviance for your parent/guardian to complete*
 - *The brag sheet must be completed for your counselor letter*
- Ask your teacher what they need to write the letter. A teacher may have their own brag sheet, or utilize the Brag Sheet for Teachers in Naviance.
- After asking in person, officially request each teacher and counselor on your actual college applications. To do this, you'll type their names and emails on your application accounts (Common Application, Coalition Application, or the individual college application's website). They will receive an email invite, and upload the letter on your behalf to be sent to the colleges.
 - *Ensure you have indicated which decision plan you are applying to on your applications so your counselor/teacher knows your earliest due date.*
 - *You can submit your college application before the letter has been written, they do not need to be submitted at the same time.*

HOW MANY LETTERS DO I NEED AND FROM WHO?

Colleges that require/recommend letters of recommendation typically ask for **1-2 teacher recommendations** and **1 counselor recommendation**.

- **Teacher recommendations** typically come from a core academic teacher from your junior year
- **Counselor** recommendations come from your school counselor.



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TIPS AND IMPORTANT FACTORS TO CONSIDER

- Letters are confidential throughout the admission process
- Teacher letters of recommendation do not need to necessarily come from your highest graded class. Think of a teacher who you know and have worked with closely who is able to speak to your drive, your nature in class, how you handle projects, obstacles, work with others, etc.
- Finalize your college list and know exactly how many letters you need
- Overcrowding your application with more letters of recommendations is not necessarily a good strategy. Remember, colleges have limited time to read through an entire application, choose wisely what you want to present to them!
- We do not link Naviance with the Common Application or any others. Use Naviance to update your college list, sign up for college admission representative visits, check admission scattergrams and complete Brag Sheets for letters of recommendation.

[Common Application](#)

[Coalition Application](#)

You may also need to request a recommender directly from the college's website if your application is not on the Common or Coalition application. Check with EACH COLLEGE. Please visit our website below for more in-depth information and resources.

[College Center Website](#)

A letter of recommendation for college is a qualitative piece of information that helps an admission office understand how you work in the classroom, your academic engagement, your character, how you have overcome challenges, who you are as a person and many more factors that help make an admission decision.



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What Colleges Are Considering When Reading Your Letter

Teacher Letters of Recommendation

Letters from teachers provide specifics about the student in the classroom environment. Teacher letters provide context for how a student performed/classroom observations for when students deal with big life circumstances outside of the classroom.

Getting a letter from a core teacher is key, admissions are looking to get more information about them as a scholar, how they helped their peers, how they grew in self-improvement, etc. Are they one propelling class discussion, thoughtfulness, how those scholars are making an impact within the classroom.

Counselor Letters of Recommendation

Counselors offer perspective on you within the school community, and also your personal context such as home life, how you've navigated challenges, how you've advocated for yourself, you within the school setting, etc.

The counselor may know more about families' background, are able to give larger lens of school community and can put the student in the context, and show how they stand out from norm in culture, or help culture in an integral way. Who are the ones that are leading the pack or leaning away from the pack in a significant way?

Think about it this way. A college wants 2400 students. They don't want the SAME 2400 students. Yes they want academic preparation, BUT BEYOND that, what are the different experiences and perspectives that shape the student and what they'll bring to campus?

A college has your transcript, your activities list, your essays, and your teacher LORs, so the counselor can provide more info about you as a community member, any contextual background info about your world, information about why you did or did not take an advanced curriculum, any reason why you didn't take a heavier course load, or how you got into a higher level class as a younger student, etc.