



LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION CHECKLIST

Information to Provide
Your Recommenders

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As you take your tests, draft your essays, and prepare to gather all of your documents to fill out the Common App, it's important to make sure you don't forget one of the few components of the process that is not in your hands—the letter of recommendation. These notes from your teachers can help provide colleges with an idea of what you're like as a student in the classroom, how you've contributed to your high school's academic environment, and why colleges would be lucky to have you.

These letters need to be as specific as possible, so you must provide your teachers with the information they need. Use our checklist to make sure you're covering your basis when it comes to letting them know what's necessary to provide you with a glowing recommendation.

	Make sure you've chosen teachers who know you well. Your recommendations should speak to your presence inside the classroom, so consider teachers whose classes are relevant to your choice of major for one of the letters.
	Write a cover letter once your teachers say yes, thanking them for their time and outlining what you hope they can highlight in their letters.
	Start with the context of your mentorship—if you've had them for multiple classes, which one do you want them to focus on more?
	If they're your teacher and a faculty mentor for an extracurricular you're a part of, how can they incorporate their experience guiding you in both contexts?
	Mention how you may have stood out from the rest of the students when you worked under them. A good recommendation letter should frame you as an individual who stands out among their peers.
	If you had any specific projects they supervised you with, don't forget to mention that.
	Let them know what kind of programs you're applying to. If they taught you a relevant subject, they should be able to highlight why you're a strong academic fit for the subject matter.
	On a similar note, let them know if you have any specific career goals that you want them to highlight.

	Provide them with a brag sheet . Teachers aren't always aware of exactly what clubs you're a part of or how you've succeeded outside their classroom. Adding more information can help them elaborate on your impact.
	Admissions officers won't take your teachers' praise at their word if they don't add specific anecdotes or examples to support their compliments. When drafting a cover letter to your recommenders, remind them of a time they saw your leadership skills or a moment they appreciated your hard work.
	Include any initiatives you've taken outside the classroom that can support the academic material you might have learned in their class.
	Don't pester them more than necessary. Teachers have a lot of letters to write, so trust that they will get to yours.
	Add the deadline for the application so that your recommenders know by when colleges expect their letter.

Go over this list before sending your teacher the cover letter. The more specific the information they have, the better they're recommendations will be. Get these to them early too, so that they have plenty of time to work on them. Good luck!