



Brag Sheet: Your Tool for Getting the Best Recommendation Letters

And for making it easy on your counselor and teachers

What are brag sheets?

These are informational sheets about you to help your counselor, teachers, coaches, and anyone else who you want to ask to write you a recommendation letter. You fill in these sheets with information about your interests, goals, activities, etc. to give your recommenders more insight into who you are outside of school.

Who should you ask for a recommendation letter?

Choose people who have worked with you and supported you in life. A good recommender can speak to who you are as a person beyond what grades you get. They can be in school – like counselors or teachers – or they can also be related to your extracurricular activities – like coaches or employers.

Counselor

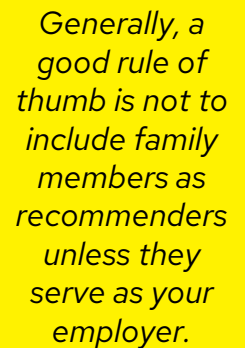
When applying to college, counselors are a good choice as they can share information about you in the context of your class and the whole school community and a look into your academic history.

Teacher

Your teacher can give good context about you in their classroom. They'll be able to speak to your intellectual curiosity, creativity, writing quality, as well as your class behavior and work habits.

Other Recommenders

These are people who know you outside of school. They can speak to your hobbies, passions, and the other responsibilities you have in your life. Some examples of other recommenders are: clergy, club or organization leader, coach, employer, or peer.



Generally, a good rule of thumb is not to include family members as recommenders unless they serve as your employer.

When should you ask for a recommendation letter?

Don't forget to check with your recommender first that they are willing to provide a letter! You can ask in-person – always best – but email works too.

Ask for your recommendation letter at least 3 weeks before it's due. The more time you give them, the more likely you'll receive a well-written and effective recommendation letter.

What should you put on a brag sheet?

Any information that a recommender needs to know to craft a well-written and thorough recommendation letter. You don't want to assume that any recommender knows everything about you – or trust their memory about all the things that you've told them you're interested in or that is going on in your life. Brag sheets are most effective when they provide one place for everything someone needs to know what to write about you. On the back side of this handout, we'll layout what to include in your brag sheet.



The
road
from
rural to
college-
ready!

Program
supported by:



About You

- ✓ Your preferred name and pronouns to be used in the letter
- ✓ Contact information: cell phone and email
- ✓ What 3 adjectives would you use to describe yourself?
- ✓ What events, experiences and/or people in your life have had the greatest influence on making you the person you are today?
- ✓ What are you most passionate about?

School-Related Information

- ✓ List your major activities in school and what grade/s you participated in those activities (including leadership positions, honors, and/or awards you've received)
- ✓ What are your academic strengths?

Outside of School Activities

- ✓ List your major activities outside of school and what grade/s you participated in those activities – such as clubs, sports, work, volunteering, hobbies, and family responsibilities (don't forget to include leadership positions, honors, and/or awards you've received)

College-Going Information

- ✓ What major/s or career/s are you interested in?
- ✓ What colleges or universities are you considering?
- ✓ What colleges or universities have you visited (in-person or virtually) and what did you think of them?
- ✓ What characteristics of a college or university do you prefer? (ex. size, location, student life, etc.)
- ✓ What about going to college are you most excited about?

Fun Facts & Other Information

- ✓ What do you like to do for fun?
- ✓ What does the recommender not know about you?
- ✓ What other information would help your recommender write a great recommendation letter?

Type up all this information – keep it organized and clean! – and share with your recommender when you ask them for the recommendation letter.

Your recommender will thank you!

Source: Common App, commonapp.org, 2023.