

How to write a Letter of Recommendation for a College Applicant

Introduction

Start with “To Whom It May Concern.” The first line should include the first and last name of the person you are recommending. Next, state the length of time you have known or been associated with the person and in what context.

Body

Within the body, refer to the student by their first name and alternate with other words, such as: this applicant, this fine student, this young man or woman. Admissions counselors and scholarship committees want to hear specific examples of personal qualities, leadership abilities, drive, ambitions, and community contributions. They want to know why this student would be a good fit for their school or cause. Sometimes it is good to start with two or three words that describe the person and then expand with specifics.

Conclusion

A standard statement will do here – nothing fancy. *If you have any questions about this individual, please don't hesitate to contact me at (XXX) xxx-xxxx or by email@XXX.xxx.* Get someone to spell check before you submit, as poor grammar and misspellings reflect on your credibility as a recommendation.

Example:

To Whom it May Concern:

I am pleased to recommend Janice L. Kidd, who has been a student in my Biology class for the past three years. During that time, I have come to know her as a strong student and role model for her peers.

Janice is the type of student every teacher wants; she is eager to learn, self directed and has high ambitions. This bright young woman regularly shows up to class ready to participate with materials in hand and assigned homework complete. She shows a spectacular curiosity for living beings – spiders, squirrels, dogs, mushrooms and even molds. She is constantly challenging herself to go above and beyond the minimum expectations. Furthermore, Janice shows enthusiasm to help her peers and readily volunteers for outside-of-class activities, particularly with younger students. She is a member of 4H and Honor Roll Society, and has admirably represented our school at the Tri-County Science Fair, all while participating on the tennis and volleyball teams. Although she may change her goals, as many students do, Janice seeks to pursue a career in health sciences. It would not surprise me if one day I am calling her Dr. Kidd.

Janice would make an excellent candidate for early admissions and the XYZ Scholarship. I recommend her without reservation. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Leana Smith, Biology Instructor

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