

A Guide to Acquiring & Maintaining References

REFERENCES

How many?	Plan to identify 6-7 people to use as references and then provide 3-5 for each position applied for, depending on who is the most relevant for each position
Who to ask?	Cooperating teachers, course supervisors, professors, administrators, volunteer and work supervisors (if the jobs were education-related)
What to ask?	Schedule a short meeting or phone call with this person (meeting preferred) and ask them to be a positive reference for you. Talk about the position you want and your qualifications so that you and your reference are on the same page about what information is being presented about you. Make sure to ask this person for their preferred contact information so you can include it on your reference page, and remember to say thank you! Refer to the AAEE Job Search Handbook for related information and tips.
What to provide?	A copy of your current cover letter and resume, and anything else the reference may ask you for

***Note:** Make sure to notify your references when you apply to a new district or different type of position. They will appreciate the heads-up and will serve as a better reference for you if they are informed.

REFERENCE PAGE

- Use the same heading on the top of your reference sheet that you used on the top of your resume – they should match.
- Write “References” as your section heading and format it so it looks the same as the other section headings on your resume. For example, if your resume looks like this:
- List 3-5 references, left-aligned, in order of importance for the specific position being applied to
- Include their name, relation to you (i.e. Cooperating Teacher), their address (at work or school), phone number, and e-mail. [See an example reference sheet here.](#)

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

The **how many, who, and what to provide** for letters of recommendation are the same as what is stated above beneath “References.” Although an in-person meeting is ideal when asking someone to write you a letter of recommendation, an e-mail or phone call will do when time is short. Be sure to give your writers ample time to compose your letter (a few weeks is typical) and a deadline for when you would like it given back to you. Some will send their letter via e-mail, but you should also ask them to send you a hard copy with their signature that you can scan in and send as a PDF to districts you are applying to.

Some districts will only post open positions for 3-5 days, so don’t wait for a specific job to be posted to ask for letters of recommendation! There is no magic date or time for asking for letters of recommendation, but it is a good idea to start asking for them about halfway through the student teaching semester. Districts usually want a letter dated within one year of when it is submitted.

Remember that it is **your** job to maintain contact with your references and acquire letters of recommendation. It is also your responsibility to keep track of your letters, so make copies, put them in a safe place, and save electronic back-up copies! Don’t forget to send a thank you note or e-mail after receiving a letter of recommendation. Let your references know once you have accepted a position!