

Scholarship Guide

Scholarships From Scratch

Remember: Scholarships are available for all kinds of reasons - activities, academic performance, grades, athletics and more.

Where should I look?

- **Search** online at www.fastweb.com.
- **Check** the financial aid pages on your colleges' site.
- **Search** your community for organizations offering awards.
- **Contact** your school's financial aid office about private and corporate sponsorship opportunities, as well as your academic department or your parents' employer.

What can I do to prepare?

- **List the scholarships by deadline.** Focus on the ones with earlier deadlines.
- **Financial information.** Prepare family income and tax forms ahead of time to document finances for need-based scholarships or other types of financial aid. You should already be assembling this information for the FAFSA.

How should I prepare the essay?

- **Make an outline.** Pick one main theme based on the essay question and outline a few ideas that support your theme.
- **Show, don't tell.** Use specifics, not generalizations. Help your reader visualize what you're trying to say.
- **Check spelling and grammar.** Have a teacher, parent or counselor read over your essay to provide feedback and catch errors.

* Pick up a FastWeb flyer from your counselor's office for "Top 10 Scholarship Tips."

**Search \$1 billion
in scholarships -
for FREE!
www.fastweb.com**

Keeping Your Scholarship

While not all scholarships can be renewed each year, the ones that can sometimes have ongoing eligibility requirements. Some of these requirements include:

Renewal application. You may have to submit a new application each academic year.

GPA. You may need to maintain a minimum GPA in order to remain eligible (often the same GPA that won you the scholarship).

Satisfactory academic progress. You may also be required to fulfill certain academic requirements, such as completing a certain number of credits, units or specific courses.

Designated field of study. Will you lose the award if you change majors?

Full-time status. Scholarships frequently require a minimum level of enrollment. If you fall below the minimum or fail to enroll, you may lose the award.

If there is any doubt whether your scholarship has provisions or must be renewed, talk to your school or scholarship sponsor.

5 Scholarship Letter Tips

Below are some essential tips for letters associated with scholarships, including the application request letter, cover letter, recommendation letter and thank-you letter.

1. Be brief – you'll have the chance to sell yourself in your application.
2. Request the materials early to leave enough time to prepare a strong application packet.
3. Clearly state when you need the recommendation sent or given back to you. Give no less than three weeks notice, leaving ample time to write the letter.
4. Provide your address and other contact information where you know you can be reached. Include a self-addressed stamped envelope, if applicable.
5. If you win a scholarship, be sure to thank the provider and your recommender for selecting you as a recipient.