

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 prospective colleges' Web sites.
- **Search** your community for organizations offering awards.
- **Ask** your guidance counselor about private and corporate sponsorship opportunities.

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 aid.

How should I prepare the essay?

- **Make an outline.** Pick one main theme and based on the essay question, 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."*

5 Scholarship Letter Tips

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

1. Be brief and to the point in asking for the needed materials - 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. In your application request, tell the provider where you heard about the scholarship and concisely explain why you're eligible.
4. Provide your correct 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.

Scholarship Quiz

Think you know scholarships? Prove it by taking our short quiz:

1. When applying for a scholarship, sponsors are most interested in:

- A. Depends on a variety of possible factors
- B. A high GPA
- C. A quality essay
- D. Extracurricular activities

2. The best place to find scholarships is:

- A. Using an online search such as www.fastweb.com
- B. Clubs, groups or organizations in your community
- C. Your guidance counselor's office
- D. All of the above

3. If I'm asking for a letter of recommendation, I should:

- A. Ask for letter one week before the letter is due
- B. Drop off my request and hope I get it back on time
- C. Give my recommender no less than three weeks to complete the recommendation and provide clear instructions on what is needed and when
- D. Not worry about it - it isn't important

4. Merit scholarships are given based on:

- A. Good looks
- B. Achievements, academic performance and leadership abilities
- C. Financial need
- D. The mood of the scholarship provider

5. The best time to search for scholarships is:

- A. It's always a good idea to be looking for scholarships
- B. Not after the school year starts - it's too late
- C. Only over winter break
- D. Scholarships? Who needs those?

Need Money For College?
Free scholarship search -
www.fastweb.com

Answers: A: 1. A, 2. D, 3. C, 4. B, 5. A
How did you do? 4-5 correct: Scholarship whiz!; 3: Time for review; 1-2: Meet with your counselor!