

# DO'S and DON'TS

of

## Applying to Graduate School



DO

Research graduate programs/advisors

Many programs require a student to have secured a faculty member before admittance. Research graduate programs of interest and identify potential advisors matching your research interests. Visit the school and determine if funding is available.



DO

Apply early

Allows you to spend time on organizing required documents and complete Graduate Record Examination (GRE) testing. Demonstrates drive and motivation. Allows for any issues that arise in the application process to be addressed.



DO

Carefully consider letters of recommendation

Establish a relationship with your professors and professionals in your field (e.g. visit office hours, have good class attendance, be engaged, volunteer, internships). Ask people who know you and your work well so they can write something meaningful and personalized.



DO

Put effort into a personal statement/cover letter

Your personal statement is an important part of your application. It allows you to showcase who you are and why you should be accepted into the program. Start your personal statement early and have family and friends proofread it.

DON'T

Mass apply to graduate programs



Learn key details of a program, such as faculty research interests and specific courses offered, before you apply. Send professional emails to potential advisors stating your interest in their research and program, carefully proofread.

DON'T

Fail to communicate clearly



Applications that are unclear, disorganized or contain spelling or grammatical mistakes convey applicants' inability to clearly communicate their thoughts.

DON'T

Procrastinate requests



Give at least 4 weeks notice since asking early allows the person writing the letter plenty of time before the application deadline. Keep in touch and follow up to remind them of the deadline and make sure it is completed.

DON'T

Assume one qualification will get you accepted/rejected



Admissions is holistic. Specific fields of study may focus more on one area over the other but graduate programs usually don't solely look at a test score, GPA, or exceptional experience.