Who to Ask:

The best recommenders will be professionals who:

1. Have had the opportunity to observe you in the broadest range of contexts (class, club activities, research mentoring, volunteer work, etc.)
2. Have achieved the same level of training for which you are applying in a similar area and can link their observations of you with the necessary skills for grad school
3. Seem personally invested in your success and development
4. Complement your other recommenders somehow, making you as full of a human being on paper as possible

*Not all of your recommenders will meet all 4 criteria. These are just things to remember.

How to Ask:

- Ask for an in-person appointment
- Tell them in person where you're applying and what you intend to do there (clinical and research interests). Help them to envision your journey.
- Ask directly if they can help you write a letter that will help your application to be successful (so they have a way out if they can't)
- Tell them how many schools you are applying to, how many different types of programs you are applying to (which might require different letters), when your first deadline is, and how you would need the letters to be sent (mailed directly from recommender or given to you signed and sealed).

- Follow up quickly (same or next day) with an email:
    - Cover letter including a big "thank you," all the details you told them in person, when/how you will follow up, and an offer to contact you if any questions or issues arise
    - Document with all schools you are applying, contact person (who you send your application to), address (for inclusion in the professionally-formatted letter), who I know or who you want to work with there (if applicable), deadline, and how the letter will be sent (if they are different)*

Document summarizing your contact with the recommender (what you did together, when y'all did it, and what products/activities might have come out of it, any courses you took with them, your grades in those courses, what they should know about you from that experience, etc)

- A copy of your CV
- A copy of your personal statement (or statements, if you are applying to different types of programs)
- A description of any special awards you might be interested in so that the recommender could speak to relevant skills if applicable

*If recommenders are to mail letters themselves, you should also provide them with stamped and addressed envelopes with a post-it indicating deadline on the envelope.

- Follow up again by email or in person one week before your recommendations are due, again with a big “thank you.”