



# How to Find a SURF Mentor

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# Overview

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HINTS FOR  
FINDING A  
MENTOR.



TIPS FOR  
MAKING  
CONTACT.



TIMELINE.

Hints for finding  
a mentor

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AT CALTECH

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AT JPL

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OFF-CAMPUS

# Finding a mentor at Caltech



Six [academic divisions](#)



Twenty-seven [undergraduate options](#) and 31 [graduate school options](#)



50 [research centers and institutes](#)

# Finding a mentor at Caltech

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01

Spend time looking at faculty websites and identifying faculty/research of interest

02

Peruse SFP/SURF [Seminar Day 2021](#) abstract book

03

Use your network: other students, your advisor, your professors, RAs

04

Review SURF Announcements of Opportunity (AOs)

05

Attend pizza courses

# Finding a mentor at JPL

01

Review  
Announcements  
of Opportunity  
(AOs)

02

Attend Explore JPL  
series (starting  
10/25)

03

Peruse SFP/SURF  
Seminar Day [2021  
abstract book](#)

04

Use your network:  
other students,  
your advisor, your  
professors

# Additional Help Finding a mentor for CMS Students

01

View On-Campus  
and Off-Campus  
CMS Mentors.

02

Create your account  
with a CS Interest  
Sheet by November  
1.

03

After November 1,  
we will share your  
info with mentors  
and they will reach  
out.

04

If there is an  
agreement to work  
together, you start  
your SURF Proposal  
and submit Feb 22.

# Finding an off-campus



Use your network: other students, your advisor, your professors, friends at other schools



Browse websites of schools you are interested in going to



Check-out [option seminars](#)



Peruse SFP/SURF Seminar Day [2021 abstract book](#)



Talk with the SFP office



Check-out Announcements of Opportunity (AOs)

# Tips for making contact

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- Start a list and keep track
- Don't spam
- Have a resume

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- Send an email, follow-up
- Ask the administrative assistant for help in setting up a meeting
- Contact a graduate student or postdoc in group

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- Be professional
- Have confidence that you have something to offer, but don't act entitled
- Provide information about yourself
- Clearly state why you are interested in the research
- Request a meeting
- Review interview guidelines on SFP website

# Timeline

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Now: start exploring

Thanksgiving: make a plan

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Winter break: get serious

January: get really serious

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January: attend information sessions;  
reach out to the SFP office for help

February 22: applications due



Questions

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