



GUIDELINES FOR RESUME WRITING

Format

- **Templates:** Avoid the abstract templates available on the internet. They are difficult to edit and do not allow you to present information in the most effective format. See ATS guidelines below.
- **Length:** College students and recent college graduates should have a one-page resume. Two pages are reasonable if you have extensive work experience; however, limit information to what is pertinent to the job role.
- **Font:** Choose a basic, easy-to-read font such as Times New Roman, Arial or Calibri in 10-12 point size, except for your name (14-18pt. font). Use **black ink**.
- **Paper:** Use 8 1/2" x 11" resume-quality paper in a light color such as white or off-white. Buy envelopes and cover letter paper to match your resume.
- **Spacing:** *Margins of 0.5 to 1 inch* and double-spacing between headings improves readability.
- **Layout:** Leave some white space to create an uncluttered look.
- **Format:** Present information in **reverse chronological order**. Example of typical heading sequence Education, Experience, Skills, Activities, and Awards.
- **Professionalism:** Eliminate all typos and misspellings by asking other people to proofread.
- **References:** List on a separate sheet using the same heading as your resume and the title "References"

Header

- Your name should always be first, at the top of the page.
 - To make your name stand out on the document, the font size for your name should be slightly larger than the rest of the text (14-18 size font).
- Include your active cell phone number. Be sure to have a professional voicemail set up.
- List a professional email address.
 - Your email address should *not* be suggestive, generic, or funny.
 - It should include your name, preferably first name and last name.
- A U.S. resume does NOT include information such as marriage status, gender, etc.
- Do NOT include a picture on your resume. Instead, develop and use a [LinkedIn](#) profile and include a professional headshot picture there. See our [LinkedIn Beginners Guide and LinkedIn Professional Guide](#) for more information on how to customize your profile
- Once you build your [LinkedIn](#) profile, consider listing your [customized URL](#) under your name.

Education

- For current students and recent college graduates, your Education section will be located underneath the Header. **More experienced professionals** can include the Education section closer to the bottom of the page.
- List your most recently obtained degree first and additional degrees in **reverse chronological order**.
 - *Do not list high school information unless you are a freshman.*
- Include the degree you are pursuing, your program, and anticipated graduation date (**Month/Year**).
- ***Make sure your degree information is correct!*** Check out your department's website to ensure you provide the correct information. Additionally, **DO NOT abbreviate** the degree name (Example: Bachelor of Arts, not B.A.).
- In addition, you may choose to include *study abroad, related coursework, Thesis/Dissertation, and GPA* (if above 3.0) information.
 - If you include related coursework, list full course names (not acronyms or course numbers) and choose courses that are relevant to the position for which you are applying.

Experience

The experience you select to use can be anything from general experience e.g. part-time customer service, volunteer work at a non-profit, on-campus organization involvement, or a summer internship. You chose the most relevant form of experience to the targeted position.

See our “Marketing Your Experience” document for examples.

- Within each section, list your experiences and activities in reverse chronological order with the most recent first – it is not limited to paid experience. This section can include work experience, internships, co-ops, job shadowing, volunteering, and leadership roles within student organizations, military experience, sports team participation, and student teaching. **Accomplishments, skills, and context are the main variables that should dictate which experience you highlight.**
- For each experience or activity, include the organization or employer name, your title or role, employer location (city/state), and dates affiliated.
- You do not have to list all of the contact details of the employer, but you should have them on hand or included in your references page.
- Provide concise explanations of your experiences and activities, focusing on your **accomplishments and skills**.
- Begin these descriptive statements with *strong action verbs* and **omit all personal pronouns** (i.e., I, my, we).
 - **Bad example:** Created graphics to post on the company’s social media platforms
 - **Good example:** Created eye-catching graphics using Adobe Photoshop CS5 to raise engagement on social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook.

Additional Sections:

Activities: An Activities section, located near the bottom of the resume, **includes membership in student organizations, clubs, professional associations and fraternities/sororities.**

- While volunteer experience can be formatted under an Activities section, it can instead be included under your Experience section, provided you articulate the experience gained from the activity.
- This section can be beneficial by allowing the reader to see a well-rounded individual.
- Remember, leadership positions (i.e., president, vice-president, board committee, secretary, etc.) within organizations can be included in the *Experience section*. (see example in Experience tab)

Awards/Honors: Can include scholarships, awards for specific activities or subjects.

Certifications/Licenses: Write each certification in reverse chronological order, beginning with the most recently achieved or any that are in progress.

- Do not include less important or irrelevant certifications or licenses that you have that do not relate to the job opening.

Course Projects/Research

- This section can be beneficial for students that have not experienced roles specific to the industry in which they are applying, but have taken courses that display specific knowledge within that field.
- Can include: group and/or individual class project(s), Capstone project(s), research paper/project(s)

Presentations

- Presentations you add should be ones that took place outside of your workplace or institution, such as one held at a conference, not a presentation as part of your coursework.
- Format: Start with the title of your conference talk, followed by the name of the institution or conference at which you presented the information.

Publications: More pertinent to a Curriculum Vitae (applying for a PhD or position in academia)

- Format: Include each publication in a new bullet point.
 - List the year and title.
 - Add the name of the magazine, website, or journals

Skills: This section defines a list of technical skills including languages, programming languages, software, industry-related, etc. and is *most effective when placed near the bottom of the resume.*

- Using this section to add one-word soft skills (i.e., organized, dependable, efficient, fast learner, etc.) is not ideal.
- **Hard skills** are related to specific technical knowledge and training while **soft skills** are personality traits such as leadership, communication or time management.
- We recommend focusing on soft skills in the ‘Experience’ section, and hard skills in the ‘Skills’ section.
- You want your resume to have credibility. Anyone can say, ‘I have leadership skills’, but can you prove it? (see Skills Summary examples below)

Summary

- The summary is placed *at the top of a resume* and is most effective when it includes **2-5 sentences or bullet points.**
- Embed soft skills into **your summary section** where it’s appropriate and can be backed up with proof in the experience section
- **When can adding this section be beneficial?** For more experienced professionals with years of experience that tie together a common theme to create a brand.
 - Additionally, this section can integrate eclectic experiences with a set of key transferable skills. (Example: a marketing student who has experience in customer service, radio presenting, and social media account management.
 - In addition, it is important that your skills summary is specific to the role for which you are applying and includes **keywords from the job description.**
 - Highlight the most important attributes you think will catch the recruiter’s attention.

Modified from with permission from Southeastern Louisiana Office of Career Services

- **Be careful!** This section can be redundant if not used properly. Adding this section can take up valuable space on your document, **it should not repeat what is under your experience section.**

Tips:

- Research your company, role, and employees.
 - What experiences and skill-sets are they looking for? (check their webpage)
- Integrate information into the appropriate sections.