

Writing a Professional Resume

A resume is a document that summarizes your education, professional background, skills and accomplishments. Think of it as an advertisement for yourself, showing how your skills match the job you want. Most importantly, it is also your first chance to make a good impression on the person hiring for a job or internship.

Essential Resume Sections

Contact Information:

- Include your name, phone number and a professional email address.
- Optional: Add your LinkedIn profile link if you have one.

Executive Summary:

- Provide a brief overview of what makes you a strong candidate by highlighting your strengths, relevant experience and key qualifications for the job.

Education:

- Include:
 - School name
 - Degree/Major
 - Dates attended
 - Relevant coursework, GPA (if above 3.5), leadership roles, and awards

Work Experience:

- List each job you have had with:
 - Job title
 - Company name
 - Location
 - Dates of employment
- Use two to three bullet points per job describing:
 - Job responsibilities and successes

Skills:

- Soft Skills: Personal qualities (e.g., communication, teamwork)
- Hard Skills: Technical abilities (e.g., software proficiency, languages)
- Tailor this section to the job by focusing on keywords from the job description

Optional Section(s)

Certifications:

- Examples:
 - CPR/First Aid
 - Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)
 - Certified Pharmacy Technician (CPhT)

Volunteer Work:

- Highlight unpaid work that supports a cause or community.
- Examples:
 - Tutoring or mentoring
 - Community service projects
 - Religious or community group involvement

Things to Consider

Action Words:

- Use strong action verbs to describe your achievements (e.g., “led,” “developed”).
- Find examples on websites such as Indeed.com, themuse.com, and careercenter.tamu.edu.

Customization:

- Use keywords from each job description to tailor your resume to match your skills and experience.

Format:

- Use **Chronological Format**, listing experience from most recent to oldest.
- Limit resume to one page, focusing on relevant information.
- Showcase additional experiences on LinkedIn.
- Keep a “brag file” for all achievements that could be useful for future resumes.

Professional tone:

- Keep your resume clear, organized and easy to read.

File Format:

- If not specified, save your resume as a **.pdf** with your first and last name as the file name.

Mistakes to Avoid

- Avoid cliches, repetitive phrases, listing references, over-relying on spellcheck, and providing false information.

Step 1

Font can be Times New Roman, Arial or any professional style.
Font size for your name is between 14-16 points.

Sample Resume

[Your Name]

[Your Phone Number] [Your Professional Email] [Your LinkedIn Profile]

Step 2

Emails like dude@gmail.com may seem fun but an email address should be professional.

Executive Summary

Step 3

Font size is 12 points for headings and 10-11 points for the text.

Organized and detail-oriented student with a strong foundation in [relevant field or major]. Experienced in [mention relevant skills or part-time work, internships, or volunteer experience]. Strong communicator with a passion for [related field or area of interest].

Education

[School Name] - [Location]
Degree/Major (Month/Year-Month/Year)

- GPA: [if above 3.5]
- Relevant Coursework: [list courses]
- Awards: [list relevant details]

Step 4

An executive summary will immediately highlight what makes you a good candidate. It is your "elevator pitch" on paper!

Step 5

Start each work experience bullet point with strong action verbs (e.g., "Managed," "Organized").

Work Experience

Company Name-[Location]
Job Title (Month/Year-Month/Year)

- Led [project/task], improving [specific outcome].
- Increased [metric] through [specific task].

Step 6

For students with little professional experience, listing relevant coursework can show that you are well-prepared for a job, even if you have not worked in the field yet.

Skills

- [Hard Skill #1 from the job description, e.g. proficiency in Excel]
- [Soft Skill #1 from the job description, e.g., strong communication]

Step 7

Do not underestimate the value of **soft skills** like communication and problem-solving. Being able to adapt to new environments can be just as valuable as QuickBooks.

Certifications (Optional)

- [Name of Certification if relevant, e.g., Certified Nursing Assistant, CPR, etc.]

Volunteer Experience (Optional)

Organization Name-[Location]
Volunteer Role (Month/Year)-(Month/Year)

- Assisted with [task], contributing to [outcome].

Step 8

Even if you do not have a lot of work experience, listing certification can show that you are taking initiative to build relevant skills.

Step 9

Volunteer experience is just as valuable as paid work experience when it comes to your resume.

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