

UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS



RESUME GUIDE





RESUMES: THE BASICS

What is a resume?

A resume is a summary of your professional and personal qualifications for a job, internship, fellowship, graduate program or professional school. It should provide the reader with a snapshot of your education, skills, work experiences (paid and unpaid), activities, and achievements. Most readers, particularly employers, will only spend 30 to 60 seconds initially reviewing your resume, so first impressions count.

Why is having a good resume important?

If your resume effectively demonstrates how you have used relevant and transferable skills to produce results, it will make the reviewer want to learn more about you as a candidate. Ultimately, the primary purpose of your resume is to convince the reviewer to offer you an interview where you can further demonstrate why you are the right person for the opportunity.

A well-crafted resume will:

- Highlight your experiences as they relate to the position
- Create interest from an employer to offer you an interview
- Communicate your unique brand
- Demonstrate motivation, professionalism and communication skills
- Create a structure to help prepare you and the hiring manager for the interview

Are there other applications where a professional resume is important? Yes!

1. Applications for graduate or professional school, fellowships, scholarships, proposals, grants and other academic merit awards
2. Promotions or other performance-based programs with your current employer
3. Appointments to boards, panels and committees

SAMPLE RESUME

PAUL TEACH

Memphis, TN

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P T E A C H 4 @ M E M P H I S . E D U

EDUCATION Bachelor of Science in Education: Teaching All Learners

University of Memphis, Memphis, TN
Expected: May 2022, Cumulative GPA 3.5

EXPERIENCE Student Teacher, McFarland Elementary

Memphis, TN January 2019- Present

- Observe and interact with teachers, students, and other support personnel in diverse school settings
- Create five lesson plans weekly and conducted assessments that are conducive to learning
- Encourage students' engagement to promote a positive school environment

President, Phi Alpha Service Club

Memphis, TN October 2018-Present

- Increase student participation in afterschool program by 15% over five months
- Guide approximately 12 students in weekly learning activities contributing to an increase in the pass rate of students in general education courses
- Encourage 15-20 mentors to participate in weekly activities, resulting in a 50% increase in mentor activity

Facilitator, Bridges USA

Memphis, Tennessee, May-July 2018

- Instructed and led six cohorts of junior and senior high school students through team-building experiences
- Engaged students in discourse on about diversity, poverty and community action, contributing to 80% of cohort reporting intentional engagement with diversity
- Developed ongoing communications with students and parents following the summer program

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE Receptionist, Jason's Salon and Spa

Memphis, TN, September 2016- December 2017

- Managed communications with 800+ clients
- Operated the register to receive payments from clients with 99% accuracy
- Provided a positive and friendly attitude to enhance client experience

HONORS Dean's List: Fall 2018-Spring 2019

ACTIVITIES St. Jude Radiothon, Volunteer Greeter | March 2018

Youth Services Activities Club, Member | May 2014-October 2017

FIVE STEPS TO WRITING A WINNING RESUME



1

Analyze
the Position
Description

2

Generate a List
of Activities and
Accomplishments

3

Identify
Experiences
to Include on
Your Resume

4

Write Descriptive
Phrases

5

Choose a Format



STEP 1: ANALYZE THE POSITION DESCRIPTION

Read the position descriptions thoroughly, and highlight all the keywords which indicate required and preferred skills, abilities, attributes and qualifications. For example, if an employer is looking for someone who is innovative, punctual and attentive to detail, consider using similar words in your resume. Because there are patterns within certain fields, you may develop a strong resume template for a category of positions. Nevertheless, it is best to have multiple versions of your resume, which may vary in content and structure depending on your target position or opportunity.

STEP 2: GENERATE A LIST OF ACTIVITIES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Create an inventory of activities and accomplishments that you have experienced. Include education and training, volunteer experience, jobs, projects, travel, group or team activities, and skills. Consider using your co-curricular transcript on Tiger Zone to recall past experiences. Since many experiences have skills that are transferable to other settings, try to include everything to give you more options as you develop your resume. Focus on the outcomes of your efforts, including skills you have developed. Don't sell yourself short, but be honest on your resume. Students have lost opportunities due to misrepresenting their past experiences.

Take a moment to think about the experiences, accomplishments and skills that make you the perfect job candidate. List them all here. This document will serve as a list of choices that you can later use as you tailor your resume to an opportunity.

Education, Student Abroad,
Relevant Coursework, etc.

Work, Internships,
Co-Ops, Part-Time

Honors, Achievements, Awards

Clubs, Organizations, Civic Groups

Volunteer Experience/
Community Service

Skills, Certifications, Languages

STEP 2 (CONTINUED)

CREATE A CAREER PROFILE

The idea of a career profile is to gather as much content as possible for use in crafting your resume.

Don't worry with any format/design concerns and don't focus on your word choice for now. Just work on collecting as much information about yourself as possible. If you used the brainstorming document on the previous page, then you can skip this step.

Name (as it will appear on the resume): _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Email Address (needs to be professional): _____

Phone Number (with voicemail setup): _____

Degree Title: _____

Major(s): _____

Minor(s): _____

Projected Date of Graduation: _____ Cumulative GPA: _____ Major GPA: _____

Achievements (Honors, Awards, Scholarships, Research): _____

Leadership/Activities (Leadership Roles, Activities, Significant Projects): _____

Study Abroad/Fellowship/Internships: _____

Most Relevant Coursework (3-5 courses): _____

Licenses/Certifications/Training: _____

For each position that you have held, think of your duties and responsibilities. From that, consider what you accomplished as a member of a student organization or employee at a company.

POSITION 1

Company Name: _____

Company Location: _____

Job Title and Location: _____

Dates of Employment: _____

Accomplishments: (Skills you used, results you achieved, projects you completed, problems you solved, etc.)

STEP 2 (CONTINUED)

CREATE A CAREER PROFILE (CONTINUED)

POSITION 2

Company Name: _____

Company Location: _____

Job Title and Location: _____

Dates of Employment: _____

Accomplishments: (Skills you used, results you achieved, projects you completed, problems you solved, etc.)

POSITION 3

Company Name: _____

Company Location: _____

Job Title and Location: _____

Dates of Employment: _____

Accomplishments: (Skills you used, results you achieved, projects you completed, problems you solved, etc.)

POSITION 4

Company Name: _____

Company Location: _____

Job Title and Location: _____

Dates of Employment: _____

Accomplishments: (Skills you used, results you achieved, projects you completed, problems you solved, etc.)

POSITION 5

Company Name: _____

Company Location: _____

Job Title and Location: _____

Dates of Employment: _____

Accomplishments: (Skills you used, results you achieved, projects you completed, problems you solved, etc.)

**Repeat this process for each position*

STEP 3: IDENTIFY RELEVANT SKILLS

Choose experiences from your list of activities and accomplishments that focus on transferable skills and achievements that are desirable for that **specific** opportunity. Make sure each accomplishment you list highlights a skill the employer is seeking, which is often listed in the position responsibilities and qualifications.

GAINING EXPERIENCE: CAMPUS LIFE

You may wonder how you will gain relevant work experience as a student. By involving yourself in campus life, you will gain skills that are necessary to be successful in any role. The Student Leadership and Professional Competency Clusters are six categories of skills that employers want students to be able to demonstrate proficiency in when they are hired for jobs and internships.

- **Teamwork & Collaboration:** Students will understand and demonstrate the importance of working with others effectively.
- **Learning & Reasoning:** Students will understand and demonstrate the importance of gathering data to make informed decisions.
- **Professional & Strategic Planning:** Students will be able to project their professional brand, demonstrate effective work habits, and set goals for leadership in college and in their intended career field.
- **Communication & Digital Technology:** Students will be able to communicate in a multitude of ways, including the use of existing and new technologies.
- **Self-Awareness & Personal Behavior:** Students will be able to identify their strengths, weaknesses and ways to develop as a person of integrity.
- **Leadership & Civic Responsibility:** Students will be able to guide a group to reach a common goal and understand their contributions to their community.

To learn more about how to be involved on campus, visit memphis.edu/studentinvolvement

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS: CAMPUS LIFE

Transferable skills are skills that can be used across many fields. You can gain transferable skills in a variety of positions and later utilize those skills in a different job. For example, you can learn how to be an effective communicator as you volunteer or gain a leadership position in a Registered Student Organization and then later utilize those communication skills in an internship or full-time job that is directly related to your major and career goals.

You can track your development across the Student Leadership & Professional Competencies through reflections in the experience feature of Tiger Zone. Tracking competency growth allows you to reflect on how your extracurricular experiences support your co-curricular learning and contribute to your post-collegiate professional life. You can use your co-curricular transcript to identify experiences that have helped you to develop transferable skills over the course of your collegiate experience. Below are examples of how you can translate on-campus experiences to transferable experiences that you can use on your resume, cover letter or interview.

Accomplishment or Outcome Examples



Collaborated with three other group members to plan, write, and delegate tasks to develop a fashion show promoting sustainability



Presented report findings to department manager and founder of company at end of internship



Redeveloped my LinkedIn page to enhance my personal brand



Developed a streamlined volunteer check-in procedure to ensure effective delivery of tutoring
Analyzed criminal offender survey data for group project to produce spreadsheet results in Microsoft Excel



Founded new campus organization focused on building science-based skills in the community through monthly meetings and hosting guest speakers



Participated in Toastmasters sessions to develop speaking skills

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS: TOP FOUR

Here are more examples of skills that you can exemplify through your experiences.

Communication Skills

Relate to the skillful expression, transmission and interpretation of knowledge and ideas.

- Speaking effectively
- Writing concisely
- Providing appropriate feedback
- Negotiating
- Perceiving nonverbal messages
- Persuading
- Reporting Information
- Describing feelings
- Listening attentively
- Expressing ideas
- Facilitating group discussion
- Interviewing
- Proofreading and editing
- Presenting material orally

Research & Planning

Relate to the ability to search for specific knowledge, to conceptualize future needs, and to identify solutions for meeting those needs.

- Forecasting, predicting
- Creating ideas
- Identifying problems
- Solving problems
- Setting goals
- Extracting important information
- Defining needs
- Analyzing
- Developing evaluation strategies
- Imagining alternatives
- Identifying resources
- Gathering information

Interpersonal Skills

Relate to the ability to resolve conflict, relate to and help others.

- Developing rapport
- Being sensitive
- Listening attentively
- Conveying feelings
- Providing support for others
- Motivating
- Counseling
- Collaborating with others
- Working on a team
- Sharing credit
- Cooperating
- Delegating with respect
- Representing others
- Asserting
- Managing conflict with others
- Advocating for self and others

Organization, Management & Leadership Skills

Includes the ability to supervise, direct and guide individuals and/or groups in the completion of tasks and fulfillment of goals.

- Initiating new ideas
- Handling details
- Coordinating tasks
- Promoting change
- Selling ideas or products
- Making decisions with others
- Managing conflict between others
- Planning/arranging events and activities
- Assessing and evaluating others' work
- Managing groups
- Motivating others
- Delegating responsibility
- Training, coaching or teaching others
- Counseling others
- Keeping records
- Handling complaints
- Managing finances
- Identifying and managing ethical issues

MARKETING YOUR PART-TIME WORK

Below are examples of common jobs UofM students might have during college. Note that the descriptions include specific tasks, responsibilities and skills gained. Remember to tailor your resume and highlight transferable skills relevant to the job for which you are applying and focus on your outcomes and accomplishments.

Childcare Provider

- Ensured the safety, health and welfare of ___ children ages ___ to ___.
- Organized safe, fun and educational activities such as ___ and ___.
- Provided daily transportation to and from activities.
- Assisted children with homework and school-related projects.

Bartender

- Checked identification of 75+ customers per night to verify age requirements for purchase of alcohol.
- Attended to bar patrons while simultaneously communicating with servers to fill bar and restaurant drink orders.
- Served as a bartender for private parties and functions.
- Trained eight new bartenders and servers on computerized cash register ordering system.

Cashier

- Completed administrative tasks such as product inventory and answering phones in a fast-paced environment.
- Handled daily revenue average of \$___.
- Communicated extensively with customers.
- Effectively utilized company-specific point-of-sale system.
- Processed returns and purchases of \$2,000+ with cash, credit and gift cards.
- Reconciled cash drawer at the end of each shift.

Lifeguard

- Maintained safety for an average of 100+ swimmers daily.
- Certified to perform emergency techniques for the safety of all guests.
- Participated on a team of six staff members.
- Taught daily hour-long swim lessons to individuals and groups of children ages ___ to ___.
- Obtained Red Cross CPR certification.

Restaurant Server

- Enhanced ability to multitask by working in a fast-paced environment.
- Managed guest relation issues such as complaints, recommendations, and accommodation requests.

- Handled a daily revenue averaging \$___.
- Provided excellent customer service by promptly greeting and seating customers upon arrival.
- Recommended nightly specials to customers and enhanced sales by 10%.
- Maintained approximately ___ hours per week while enrolled as a full-time student.

Retail Sales Associate

- Trained 10 new employees on procedures and store policies.
- Exhibited excellent attention to detail by accurately implementing weekly inventory and submitting product orders.
- Ensured floor displays were properly assembled according to organization charts.
- Increased product knowledge by working in different areas of the store.
- Engaged customers with friendly services and helpful attitude when providing product recommendations.

Tutor

- Tutored undergraduate students in ___, ___, ___ & ___.
- Monitored student progress and provided candid feedback.
- Incorporated simple and straightforward language to effectively convey complex concepts.
- Developed detailed examples and tutorial exercises to increase student understanding and retention of material.

Volunteer

- Provided 15 hours of service per semester to elderly residents through Meals on Wheels program.
- Designed and distributed program brochures to 100+ residents in the community.
- Trained 15 new volunteers in the proper care of animals, including grooming and exercising techniques.

Student Worker/Intern/Part-Time Worker

Try not use this as your job title. Instead, consider something more descriptive like **Office Assistant** or **Accounting Intern**.



STEP 4: WRITE DESCRIPTIVE PHRASES

Write short phrases that begin with action verbs to demonstrate your relevant skills. The accomplishments on your resume should ultimately be targeted to address an employer's needs. Do your best to place them in order of relevance with the most relevant information as close as possible to the top. Quantify, or add numbers, to your experiences if possible.

EXPERIENCE

After you have determined which experiences align with your intended position, write short, descriptive phrases to add to the experience section(s) of your resume. Resume bullets should describe your skills and accomplishments, reflecting the order or priority that the employer has stated in their position description and requirements. The best resumes do not simply list duties, but instead provide action-oriented **outcomes and accomplishment statements**. Consider things you started, completed, worked on, created, developed or made possible because you were there on the job.

What: What task did you perform? Use action verbs. It is most important that you use a strong action verb with the correct verb tense. For past experiences, use the past tense. Your current experience should be formatted for the present tense.

Why: Why did you perform this task? To fulfill a goal, serve a need or make your organization/company better?

How: Specifically, how did you perform this task?

Result: What was the positive result you achieved or impact you made by performing this task?

Add adjectives: Adjectives help to provide greater context to the experience. Determine what aspects of your experiences can be enhanced by adding descriptive words.

Example #1:

- **What:** Tutored students.
- **What and How:** Tutored students using a variety of methods to adjust to different learning styles.
- **What and Why:** Tutored students to help them retain information and improve both grades and overall performance in math and English.
- **What, Why and Result:** Tutored students to help them improve grades and overall performance; saw marked improvement over a three-month period in 100% of students.

Adding Adjectives:

- Tutored 12 students at risk of failing sixth grade math and English.
- Assessed learning styles of each student and creatively adjusted tutoring style based on results.
- Affected information retention and overall grade improvement in 100% of students tutored over a three-month period.

Example #2:

- **Original:** Won second place in Hackathon.
- **Enhanced:** Won second place out of 50 teams in Hackathon with standout productivity tool.
- **Why it will get noticed:** Specifying the large number of entrants provides context and makes it clear how you stand out in a competitive crowd.

Other Examples:

- Grew email subscriber list from 300 to 2,000 in eight months without expanding the monthly budget.
- Reduced time spent on inventory by 20% by reorganizing physical storage of supplies.
- Organized quarterly volunteer projects with upwards of 50 volunteers per event.

EXPERIENCE FORMAT

Position Title

Position Start Date (Month Year)- End Date (Month Year)

Company, City, State

- Accomplishment/Outcome
- Accomplishment/Outcome
- Accomplishment/Outcome

Example:

Rapid Application Developer Intern, June 2019-Present
International Paper, Memphis, TN

- Create and sustain a console-based application responsible for error detection among servers, resulting in 20% decrease in system failures.
- Design and sustain a .Net dash boarding application for use by more than 100 developers.
- Collaborates with three clients to design an application to decrease the application development time by two weeks.

ACTION VERB EXAMPLES

You Led a Project

If you oversaw a project or initiative from start to finish, skip “led” and instead try: activated, assigned, chaired, controlled, coordinated, executed, headed, operated, orchestrated, organized planned, presided, produced, programmed, represented or steered.

You Envisioned and Brought Life to a Project

If you developed, created or introduced that project into your company, try: activated, administered, built, charted, constructed, created, designed, developed, devised, engineered, established, formalized, formed, formulated, founded, implemented, initiated, instituted, introduced, pioneered or spearheaded.

You Saved the Organization Time or Money

Hiring managers love candidates who’ve helped a team operate more efficiently or cost-effectively. To show just how much you saved, try: budgeted, conserved, consolidated, decreased, deducted, detected, diagnosed, eliminated, estimated, identified, reconciled, reduced, tightened, uncovered, yielded, increased efficiency, sales, revenue or customer satisfaction.

If you can show that your work boosted the company’s numbers in some way, you’re bound to impress. Use: accelerated, achieved, advanced, amplified, boosted, capitalized, delivered, enhanced, expanded, expedited, gained, generated, improved, increased, lifted, maximized, outpaced, sold, surpassed, sustained, utilized or validated.

You Changed or Improved Something

If you saw an issue and took initiative and ownership try: balanced, centralized, clarified, converted, customized, fostered, increased, influenced, increased, installed, integrated, merged, modified, overhauled, raised, redesigned, refined, refocused, rehabilitated, remodeled, reorganized, repaired, replaced, restructured, repaired, revamped, revitalized, solved, standardized, streamlined, strengthened, transformed, updated, upgraded or utilized.

You Managed a Team

Instead of reciting your management duties, like “Led a team” or “Managed employees,” show what an inspirational leader you were with terms like: aligned, cultivated, directed, enabled, facilitated, fostered, guided, hired, inspired, mediated, mentored, mobilized, motivated, recruited, regulated, taught, shaped, solved, supervised, trained, troubleshoot, unified or united.

You Brought in Partners, Funding or Resources

Were you responsible for a great new partner, sponsor or source of funding? Try: acquired, arranged, extended, forged, hosted, marketed, navigated, negotiated, obtained, partnered or secured.

You Supported Customers

Answering calls really means you’re advising customers and meeting their needs. Use: addressed, advised, advocated, aided, arbitrated, assisted, coached, consulted, educated, expressed, fielded, fulfilled, helped, informed, pinpointed, resolved or validated.

You Were a Research Machine

Did your job include research, analysis, or fact-finding? Mix up your verbiage with these words: analyzed, assembled, assessed, audited, calculated, compiled, discovered, evaluated, examined, explored, forecasted, gathered, identified, interpreted, investigated, mapped, measured, qualified, quantified, researched, surveyed, tested, tracked or uncovered.

You Wrote or Communicated

Was writing, speaking, lobbying or otherwise communicating part of your job? Explain just how compelling you were with words like: authored, briefed, campaigned, co-authored, composed, conveyed, convinced, corresponded, counseled, critiqued, defined, documented, drafted, edited, expressed, illustrated, lobbied, mediated, persuaded, presented promoted, publicized, reviewed, transcribed or translated.

You Oversaw or Regulated

Whether you enforced protocol or managed your department's requests, describe what you really did better using: accomplished, allocated, approved, authorized, blocked, conducted, delegated, designated, determined, dispatched, enforced, ensured, inspected, itemized, managed, monitored, projected, referred, screened, scrutinized or verified.

You Achieved Something

Did you hit your goals? Win a coveted department award? Include that on your resume, with words like: attained, awarded, balanced, captured, completed, displayed, demonstrated, earned, exceeded, finalized, heightened, identified, invented, outperformed, overcame, performed, proved, purchased, reached, received, restored, showcased, solved, succeeded, surpassed or targeted.

GREAT ACTION VERBS FOR YOUR RESUME

Communication Skills

Advertised
Authored
Clarified
Composed
Contacted
Corresponded
Demonstrated
Drafted
Edited
Facilitated
Informed
Interpreted
Mediated
Negotiated
Notified
Presented
Persuaded
Promoted
Proofread
Publicized
Published
Translated
Wrote

Creative Skills

Built
Composed
Conceptualized
Constructed
Created
Designed
Developed
Directed
Established
Founded
Generated
Initiated
Invented
Launched
Originated
Performed
Piloted

Helping Skills

Advised
Advocated
Aided
Assessed
Assisted
Coached
Collaborated
Counseled
Diagnosed
Directed
Encouraged
Guided
Inspired
Led
Mentored
Represented
Served
Supported

Leadership Skills

Achieved
Clarified
Decided
Delegated
Effected
Enhanced
Exceeded
Excelled
Headed
Improved
Inspired
Instigated
Led
Marketed
Motivated
Participated
Presided
Recommended
Succeeded

Management/ Organization Skills

Administered
Arranged
Assembled
Completed
Conducted
Controlled
Correlated
Determined
Directed
Eliminated
Engineered
Evaluated
Executed
Expanded
Implemented
Increased
Maintained
Managed
Planned
Prepared
Procured
Provided
Scheduled
Solved
Supervised

Research Skills

Analyzed
Clarified
Coded
Compared
Contrasted
Evaluated
Examined
Experimented
Explored
Inquired
Interpreted
Interviewed
Investigated
Reported

Teaching Skills

Advised
Assessed
Clarified
Coached
Conducted
Demonstrated
Developed
Educated
Evaluated
Explained
Facilitated
Guided
Illustrated
Informed
Instructed
Led
Mentored
Planned
Trained
Tutored

Technical Skills

Analyzed
Budgeted
Built
Calculated
Computed
Correlated
Developed
Financed
Handled
Maintained
Operated
Programmed
Repaired



STEP 5: CHOOSE A FORMAT

Aim to develop a focused, one- to two-page document that clearly communicates your value and relevant experience and skills. Use our examples under the “resume” section of our website for examples that are specific to your field.

TYPES OF RESUMES

There are a variety of resume formats that serve different purposes. The most common are chronological resumes and functional resumes.

Chronological Resume

- List experiences with details separately.
- List in reverse chronological order, starting with the most recent and moving backward through time.
- Most commonly used type for college students with work experience.

Functional Resume

- List experiences by skill categories
- Can be used by students with limited work experience to position themselves with work-related, transferable skills gained from non-work related experiences.

DESIGN ELEMENTS

Select your margins

Career Services suggests that you define your document margins $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch all around the document with even borders. You will need plenty of space to add content that is specific enough to be meaningful and not feel too crowded or text-heavy.

Choose a font and font size

For the main body of your resume, you may want to use a sanserif font. These fonts are easier to read on a computer monitor or tablet device where your resume will likely be read first. Start with a font size of 11 point for your main body and 16-24 point for your name. Be careful not to use too many font sizes, which will give your resume a cluttered look.

If neither of these resumes seem to fit your needs, choose one of the following:

Combination Resume

- A combination of both the chronological resume and the functional resume. You both highlight your skills and give a chronological listing of your experience.

Federal Resume

- Used when you are applying for positions in the government. It tends to be more detailed; for example, experience is described in a paragraph format instead of bulleted points. The average length of federal resumes is four to five pages.

SUGGESTED FONTS

Calibri	Arial	Lucida sans
Trebuchet	Tahoma	Myriad pro
Garamond	Georgia	Book antiqua
Century schoolbook	Palatino	Minion pro.

Graphic Design and Art majors are encouraged to demonstrate their creativity on their resumes.



DESIGN ELEMENTS (CONTINUED)

Use color effectively

When deciding on whether to use color or not, you should first think about the position, company and industry. Most positions prefer conservative colors, so black font works well. If you are applying for a job that requires creativity or visual art, consider using color. Think about using color for your name, headings and bullet symbols as a subtle way to add visual interest without overwhelming the content. Here are some color schemes to consider:

BLUE

Conservative, Calming, Stability

GREEN

Growth, Environment, Freshness

RED

Energy, Excitement, Risk

SECTIONS AND HEADINGS

Although there are a multitude of headings from which to choose, a resume must have your contact information, education, experience (work, volunteer, internship, etc.).

- Contact Information (email and phone)
- Work Experience/Student Leadership
- Education
- Internships
- Skills
- Projects
- Research

- Publications
- Honors & Awards
- Languages
- Additional Experience
- Volunteer Experience
- Memberships
- Volunteer Activities
- Community Activities

- Leadership Activities
- Class Projects
- Study Abroad
- Certifications
- Licensure
- Professional Development
- Additional Experience

EDUCATION SECTION

The education section should be the first section of your resume. Only include schools where you have earned a degree if you have transferred from another school. Include the following sections:

- Name of university
- Location
- Degree attained (or expected degree) with date
- Major, Minor, Concentration
- (Optional) GPA:
 - Include your GPA if it is 3.0 or higher

Example:

Bachelor of Science in Education: Teaching All Learners
 University of Memphis, Memphis, TN
 Expected: May 2022, Cumulative GPA 3.5

STUDENT RESUME CHECKLIST

FORMATTING:

- Keep resume to no more than two pages
- Emphasize major headings in bold,
- Use 12-point, standard font for text and 14-16-point font for headings in black ink
- List beginning and end dates throughout the resume
- No pictures, graphics or personal information (age, weight, children, etc.)
- 1-inch margins
- Experience and Education listed in reverse chronological order (most recent experience first)

NAME SECTION:

- Add your full name to the top line of your resume
- Include your phone number
- Add a professional email address (firstname.lastname@email.com)
- Add a link to your portfolio (optional)

EDUCATION:

- List the highest degree first
- Write the full name of the degree and major, using no abbreviations
- List the full name of the institution that granted the degree, including the city and state
- Include the month and year of your graduation or expected graduation date
- Include the GPA if it is 3.0 or higher

EXPERIENCE:

- Include jobs, internships, practicums, residency experiences, relevant volunteer experience and paid work experience
- If some of your experience is not applicable to the job, but you can demonstrate transferable skills, then create an additional experience section called "Additional Experience"
- Include the position title, the organization name, city, state, and the months and dates of employment or service (Example: Communications Intern, ALSAC, Memphis, TN, January 2019-May 2019)

- Each job description should have at least two short bullet-point statements that begin with an action verb
- Explain exactly what you accomplished there. Do not simply list tasks
- Quantify and qualify descriptions whenever possible (Example: Increased new release sneaker sales by 30%)

LEADERSHIP:

- List campus and community activities
- List leadership positions; if the experience is applicable to the intended job, then move it to the Experience section
- Generally, do not include political affiliation, religious background or other information that may be open to the reviewer's unconscious bias

Optional Sections: You may also include military experience, presentations, publications, study abroad experience, etc.

HONORS:

- List only honors earned after high school
- List any scholarships, assistantships, grants, honor societies, dean's lists and awards

SKILLS AND CERTIFICATIONS:

- List any relevant technical skills (Example: Microsoft, Bannerweb, Adobe InDesign, Six Sigma Certified, CPR Certified)
- Reflect your skill level accurately (advanced, proficient, working knowledge)
- Include language skills and your level (fluent, conversant, etc.)
- Avoid listing soft skills (great communicator, good with children, friendly, attentive, etc.)

RELEVANT COURSES:

- Only include the courses that are relevant to the intended job
- Write the full course names; do not use course numbers

REFERENCES

Some positions may ask for you to provide a reference page. Your reference page should be formatted like your resume. It is generally acceptable to provide three to five references. Choose individuals who can directly discuss your skills and abilities — supervisors, professors, work colleagues, community leaders, etc. Avoid using family members as a reference.

Important note: Be sure to formally ask your intended reference if they are comfortable with providing you a reference. Visit thebalancecareers.com for an example that can be adapted for asking for references and reference letter.

EXAMPLE REFERENCE LETTER

YOUR NAME

Street Address, City, ST ZIP Code

Phone

Email

Website

REFERENCES:

- Reference's Name 1**
Title
Company Name
Street Address
City, ST ZIP Code
Phone
Email
Relationship: **Relationship with reference 1 at Company Name from dates of employment**
- Reference's Name 2**
Title
Company Name
Street Address
City, ST ZIP Code
Phone
Email
Relationship: **Relationship with reference 2 at Company Name from dates of employment**
- Reference's Name 3**
Title
Company Name
Street Address
City, ST ZIP Code
Phone
Email
Relationship: **Relationship with reference 3 at Company Name from dates of employment**
- Reference's Name 4**
Title
Company Name
Street Address
City, ST ZIP Code
Phone
Email
Relationship: **Relationship with reference 4 at Company Name from dates of employment**
- Reference's Name 5**
Title
Company Name
Street Address
City, ST ZIP Code
Phone
Email
Relationship: **Relationship with reference 5 at Company Name from dates of employment**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Should I add an “objective” statement at the top of my resume?

- It is not necessary, but a matter of personal preference; sometimes an objective can be helpful if you are submitting a resume as a standalone document without a cover letter.
- If you choose to write an objective, keep it clear, concise and focused. Use this formula: Seeking a [name of position or type of position] to utilize [2-3 skills] and contribute to [items from company/ organization’s mission/goals].
- Keep in mind that you need to change your objective for different types of jobs; this is one more thing to keep track of and can lead to mistakes. It could be detrimental to have an objective saying you want to be a teacher on a resume submitted to a consulting firm.
- In general, Career Services recommends that you do not include an objective. Instead, use a summary.

Does it really matter if my formatting isn’t perfect or if I have one little spelling error?

- Often, yes. There is a LOT of competition for jobs or spots in graduate programs, so many reviewers will eliminate applicants based on very small mistakes
- From the reviewer’s perspective, if you can’t pay attention to detail and represent yourself well in the application process, you may not be their type of candidate.
- An error is not always fatal, but don’t press your luck. Have more than one set of eyes review your resume and other application materials. You can submit your resume to Career Services on TigerLink before you apply for a position.

Should I list my high school or high school activities on my resume?

- This is usually acceptable if you are a freshman who may need to include some high school activities to help fill out a resume.
- As you progress, your high school experiences will become less relevant and you should choose to replace them with more recent experiences and activities.

How can I highlight the skills and achievements I gained at a basic-level job?

- You don’t have to exaggerate to make basic jobs sound better. For example, if you flipped burgers last summer, don’t call yourself a “Bovine Protein Preparation Technician.”
- However, don’t overlook skills you have developed or possible achievements or certifications you earned in your basic jobs (e.g., customer service skills, food handling/preparation training, winning the Employee of the Month award for your hard work, etc.)
- Spend more time and space showing how you are results-oriented for your more meaningful experiences.

Can I use a resume template in Microsoft Word?

- Career Services recommends avoiding them. These templates can be very rigid, with preset formatting that can make your resume appear cluttered.
- You may think you can start with a template and adjust your settings from there, but this can be a frustrating experience.
- You should write your resume from scratch, creating your own personal, clean, flexible template.

Can I add my own style to the resume format?

- Career Services wants you to put your best foot forward in achieving your career goals, and the resume is often a foundational document in your career planning process.
- There is plenty of room for you to make your own stylistic and content decisions within the framework of this guide.

What is the difference between a resume and a CV?

- A resume is what is used when applying for jobs and internships.
- The curriculum vitae, also known as a CV or vita, is a comprehensive statement of your educational background, teaching and research experience. It is the standard representation of credentials in

the academic setting and for jobs outside of the United States.

- While the length and sections vary for a CV, the purpose of the document is to articulate what you have done and take advantage of the opportunity to describe your research and teaching experiences—do more than simply list them.
- Avoid the bland phrase “responsibilities included.” Instead, use bullets to describe your activities, accomplishments and successes.

What are soft skills? Where should they go on my resume?

- Soft skills are people skills, or interpersonal skills, in contrast to hard skills, or quantifiable job-specific skills.
- While soft skills like listening, creative thinking and positivity are important, they should not be listed on the resume. Instead, your experiences should demonstrate these skills.
- Soft skills can also be highlighted on your cover letter and eventually in your interview.

Where do my references go?

- References should be added to a separate page.
- You can use the references template in Microsoft Word to create a reference page.
- Choose your references carefully. While you love mom, she is not a strong reference for a job. Instead, choose professors, supervisors and mentors who you know will give you a strong recommendation.

Do I really have to fit all my experiences on one page?

- It depends. If you have extensive work experience or you are on the graduate level (Master’s, PhD), then two pages should be enough.
- Career Services generally recommends that you try to keep your resume to one page.



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