

RESUME GUIDE



What is a Resume and Why Do You Need One?

A resume is a concise summary of your skills, experiences, and education. It's your first impression on a potential employer and a *critical* tool in your job search.

Purpose of a Resume:

- **Highlight Your Qualifications:** Showcase your relevant skills and experience for the desired role.
- **Secure an Interview:** Get your foot in the door by demonstrating you're a strong candidate.
- **Serve as a Reference:** Provide a quick overview of your background during interviews.
- **Networking:** A resume can be useful when networking with people as it allows them to quickly understand your background.

Choosing the Right Resume Format

The format of your resume determines how your information is presented. Select a format that best emphasizes your strengths and relevant experience.

Here are three common resume formats:

Chronological

This format highlights your career trajectory. It's ideal if you've held similar roles and want to show your growth over time. However, it may not be suitable if you have gaps in your employment history or are changing careers.

- Focuses on your work history.
- Lists experience in reverse chronological order (most recent first).
- Best for those with a consistent work history and clear career progression.

Functional

This format focuses on what you *can* do rather than where you've *been*. It allows you to highlight transferable skills.

- Emphasizes your skills and abilities.
- De-emphasizes work history.
- Best for career changers, those with employment gaps, or those with limited experience.

Combination

This format offers a balanced approach. It allows you to showcase your skills while still providing a clear picture of your work history. It can be a good choice if you want to emphasize specific skills relevant to the job while also demonstrating your experience.

- Blends chronological and functional formats.
- Highlights both skills and work history.
- A versatile option for many job seekers.

Essential Resume Sections

Every strong resume includes these core sections:

Contact Information

- Full Name
- Phone Number
- Email Address
- LinkedIn Profile (Optional)
- Location (City, State)

This section should be at the very top of your resume. Ensure your contact information is accurate and professional. Use a professional-sounding email address (e.g.,).

Summary/Objective

- A brief overview of your skills and experience (Summary).
- A statement of your career goals (Objective).
- *Choose one, Summary is preferred.*

A summary is a concise snapshot of your qualifications, highlighting your key skills and experiences. An objective states your career goals. A summary is generally preferred, especially for experienced professionals. Tailor this section to each job you apply for.

Experience

- Job Title
- Company Name
- Dates of Employment
- Responsibilities and Achievements (use bullet points)

List your work experience in reverse chronological order. Use action verbs to describe your responsibilities and achievements. Quantify your accomplishments whenever possible (e.g., "Increased sales by 15%").

Education

- Degree Name
- Major
- University Name
- Graduation Date (or Expected Graduation Date)
- GPA (optional, include if above 3.5)

List your education in reverse chronological order. Include any relevant coursework, honors, or awards. If you have limited work experience, you can place this section before your experience section.

Skills

- List both hard skills (technical skills) and soft skills (interpersonal skills).
- Tailor your skills to the job requirements.

Create a separate skills section to showcase your abilities. Include relevant keywords that employers are looking for. Group skills into categories (e.g., Technical Skills, Communication Skills).

Extras (Optional)

- Volunteer Experience
- Projects
- Certifications
- Awards
- Languages

Include these sections if they are relevant to the job and add value to your resume. For example, if you're applying for a marketing role, highlight any marketing-related projects you've worked on.

Tips for Writing Each Section

- **Use Action Verbs:** Start your bullet points with strong action verbs (e.g., managed, developed, implemented).
- **Quantify Your Achievements:** Use numbers and data to demonstrate your impact.
- **Tailor Your Resume:** Customize your resume for each job you apply for.
- **Use Keywords:** Incorporate keywords from the job description into your resume.
- **Proofread Carefully:** Check for typos and grammatical errors.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

- **Typos and Grammatical Errors:** These can make you look unprofessional.
- **Generic Resume:** A resume that isn't tailored to the job.
- **Lying or Exaggerating:** Always be honest in your resume.
- **Too Long:** Keep your resume to one or two pages.
- **Poor Formatting:** Use a clean and easy-to-read format.

Key Takeaways

This guide has provided a thorough overview of how to craft a resume that stands out. Remember to tailor your resume to each job, highlight your achievements, and proofread carefully.