Resume Guide

Your resume is a marketing tool that highlights your experiences and skills to show employers you are the right fit for a role. The goal of a resume is to get you to the next stage of the recruitment process - the interview! Ideally, every resume is tailored towards the specific role you hope to land. However, it is helpful to keep a general resume that documents all of your experiences and skills to pull from in the future as you start to apply for internships or jobs.

1 Download & install Microsoft Word from the Illinois webstore

2 Save a blank document or template as YourName_Resume

3 Add your name, contact information, & education at the top

4 List out potential experiences & skills to include

5 Group related experiences and skills into sections & add descriptions as bullet points

Experiences & Skills to Include:

- Part-time jobs
- Internships
- Volunteering
- Clubs/organizations
- Sports
- Military service
- Course projects
- Awards/honors
- Foreign languages
- Computer programs

Core Sections to Include:

- Education
- Professional Experience
- Activities or Involvement
- Awards or Honors
- Skills

Other Sections to Consider:

- Leadership
- Course Projects
- Volunteer Experience

Fonts to Use:

- Arial
- Calibri
- Garamond
- Georgia
- Helvetica
- Tahoma
- Times New Roman
- Verdana

Pro Tip:

Have your resume reviewed by a career advisor during drop-ins, M-F, 1-4 PM, BIF 1033. Scan the QR code for more info!

Resume Checklist

Use this checklist to make sure you have met the basic requirements for a successful resume!

Formatting	Y/N
Top, bottom, left, & right margins are same size	
Font size is between 11-12 pts	
Experiences are listed most recent to least recent	
Organization, formatting, and spacing is consistent throughout	
Document is one page	
Spelling & Grammar	**Y/N**
All words are spelled correctly	
Verb tenses are consistent (present tense for current and past tense for previous experiences)	
No use of abbreviations or acronyms (unless previously spelled out within document)	
Punctuation is consistent throughout (no periods at end of descriptions)	
Contact Info	**Y/N**
Name is centered at top in larger, bold font	
Illinois email address and phone number is included	

Education	Y/N
Official names of schools and degrees are spelled out	
Graduation dates for previous and current schools are included	
GPA is listed for high school	
Professional Experience	**Y/N**
Organization name, job title, city, state, & dates of employment are included	
Experiences include at least two bullet point descriptions each	
Other Experience	**Y/N**
Involvement in volunteering, clubs, sports, military service, course projects, etc. is included	
Organization name, role, city, state, & dates of involvement are included	
Experiences include at least two bullet point descriptions each	
Awards & Skills	**Y/N**
Awards are listed with full title and date awarded	
Languages or computer programs include level of proficiency	

Frequently Asked Questions

Does my resume really have to be just one page?
- Yes – employers prefer a one-page resume, especially from college students. Every resume should be tailored to the opportunity you are pursuing, so you will only include the experiences and skills most relevant to that opportunity, not everything you have ever done - that's what LinkedIn is for!

Do I need to include my address on my resume?
- Traditionally, including an address on a resume was standard practice as physical mail was the main way employers would respond after a submitted application. Today, most communication about the hiring process takes place online. That said, there are instances when an employer may want to see your address and when you may want to leave it off of your resume - learn more by scanning the QR code below!

Can I use a font color other than black on my resume? What about graphics?
- As more and more companies are using Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) to evaluate resumes when screening applicants, you want to keep your resume formatting as simple as possible to make it easy for the computer software to read. Avoid font colors other than black, tables, columns, text boxes, fancy fonts, and graphics for the most optimal result!

Should I include a summary on my resume?
- A summary statement is best suited for more experienced professionals with years of experience who need to tie them together with a common theme or for professionals who are seeking a significant career change. Save that space on your resume to demonstrate your qualifications with concrete examples of your skills!

How low of a GPA is too low to put on my resume?
- Typically, employers prefer a minimum of a 3.0 out of 4.0 grade point average – anything less should only be listed if the employer requires it. If your major GPA is higher than your cumulative GPA you can list that instead as long as you specify that on your resume.

When do I need to remove my high school experience from my resume?
- Ideally by sophomore year you will replace your high school experience on your resume with the activities you get involved with during your freshman year. Consider which activities will help you learn more about yourself and your career interests, gain relevant skills, and meet new people with similar goals. For example, part-time work experience can be a great place to start building professional skills!

Should You Put Your Address on Your Resume? →