

Resume Tips

Structure

- Use the active rather than passive voice.
- Begin with a strong, active verb that best represents what you contributed.
- Use present tense for current activities and past tense for past activities.
- Avoid the phrases “responsible for” or “duties include.”
- Prioritize sections based on most relevant information first.
- Write section headings based on tailoring them to the position. For example, “Work Experience” becomes “Research Experience,” while another section could be “Additional Employment Experience.”
- Within your bullets, organize these descriptors so that the most relevant appear first.

Formatting

- Maintain sufficient white space to make it easily readable and uncluttered, while still including thorough descriptions of your experiences.
- Be consistent with styling and formatting throughout all sections of the resume as you use **bold**, CAPS, *italics*, and underlining.
- Place important information toward the top of the document, because HR managers often scan resumes quickly. These sections include Education, Relevant Experience, and/or Leadership Experience.
- Each section should be organized in reverse chronological order.
- Use readable font, such as Cambria, Calibri, Times New Roman, Garamond, or Arial.
- Font should be size 10, 11, or 12 point and easy to read.
- Your name should be 16+ font size, in **bold**, and NOT in caps.
- Margins should be in the range of .5” to 1” on all four sides.
- Use numbers instead of writing them out, for example, use 5 instead of five.
- Use black ink.
- Don’t include tables to organize the document.
- Avoid personal pronouns in the resume.
- Don’t use full sentences or paragraphs to describe your experiences.

General Tips

- Keep your resume to 1 page in length.
- Proofread to avoid spelling or grammatical errors.
- Coursework must be relevant to the position. Irrelevant courses or standard courses expected of a student with the stated major should not be listed.
- Evaluate your language skills honestly, using words such as “beginner,” “intermediate,” “advanced,” or “native proficiency.” You can separate your experience between written and conversational aptitude.
- Technical skills should include your level of proficiency with language such as “proficient in” and “familiar with.”
- A photo is not recommended on a resume. For LinkedIn profiles, a photo of you in professional attire is common.
- If printing the document, use white or ivory resume paper.
- References should be on a separate page, so don’t make them a part of the resume. Do repeat your contact information at the top of the reference page.

Improving Your Active Verbs

Good	Better	Best
Worked	Contributed	Improved
Did	Performed	Produced
Responsible for	Managed	Spearheaded
Attended	Participated	Orchestrated
Saw	Observed	Analyzed
Learned	Gained Experience	Implemented
Tried	Tested	Developed