

## 5.1: How to Build a Resume in 10 Steps



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### How to Build a Resume in 10 Steps

Constructing a compelling and visually appealing resume can be challenging, but a few strategies can help you use your resume as a showcase of what makes you the best candidate for a job. Learning what to include in a resume can help you build a resume that will impress hiring managers.

In this article, we describe 10 practical steps for building a resume that can show employers that you are the best fit for their position.

#### 1. Add your contact information

The first item on your resume should be your first and last name, a phone number and an email address. Consider also including additional contact information so potential employers have several ways to reach you. You may, for example, include your professional networking platform page or an online portfolio link. You can also include your address, whether it's the full mailing address or just your city and state. Many companies prefer to hire local employees to reduce relocation time and expenses.

#### 2. Include a professional summary

Since employers may only spend a short time reviewing your resume, you want to display your positive qualities clearly and concisely. These statements should illustrate the qualities that make you an attractive candidate while also describing the engaging yet professional personality you bring to work. Your summary statement should include a concise overview of your work experience. Try to focus on your experience as it relates to the role you are seeking to stand out to hiring managers. If you have less experience, you can provide a resume objective, which is a brief display of your skills and qualifications as they relate to the specific position you're seeking. As with anything on your resume, these skills and qualities should be concrete and, where possible, quantifiable. **Related:** [Writing a Resume With No Experience \(opens in new window\)](#)

#### 3. Add your work experience

The work experience section of your resume should be more than a simple list of your previous positions. It should also effectively describe your work experience to enhance your candidacy. Some of the information you provide in this section is self-explanatory, such as job title, company location and dates employed. Where you can distinguish yourself in this section is with the descriptions of your previous positions. In each description, explain your previous responsibilities, noteworthy achievements and keywords that will make you appear the right fit for the job. List both your responsibilities and accomplishments and emphasize items that are relevant to the prospective employer. Rather than saying that you “worked on a team,” describe how you “coordinated with team members to develop over 30 software updates tailored to consumer needs.” Many companies use software to sort through large numbers of resumes and identify more promising applicants using keyword algorithms. You can supplement your resume with keywords in the job description. If a company is looking for someone who can develop products that guarantee a high return on investment (ROI), you could mention in a previous job summary that you “consistently increased ROI by guaranteeing high productivity on my team.” How much work experience you include will depend on your prospective position. If you are seeking your first job, for example, you may not have any previous professional experience to include, but you can include relevant internships or volunteer work. If you are a mid-level applicant, you may have a mixture of experience both related and unrelated to the open position.

#### 4. Include your education

Most jobs require at least some education, and employers seek this information on your resume. List your highest level of education completed first, then subsequent degrees and diplomas. You may also choose to include any active licenses or certifications. When entering a degree or diploma you are currently completing, add the date you began pursuing it and leave the end date blank. If you are in high school or just graduated, include this information. If you have completed a university degree, however, it is not necessary to include information about high school. In addition to listing degrees, include information about dean's lists, honors recognition or academic awards. If you tailored your coursework to a certain specialty, you may include some of the coursework relevant to this prospective position. Typically, you don't add your GPA unless an employer specifically requests it or you were top of your class. **Related:** [How To Include Relevant Coursework On a Student Resume \(opens in new window\)](#)

#### 5. List relevant skills

Near the end of your resume, you should include a section for [any skills \(opens in new window\)](#) that may be relevant and can enhance your appeal as a candidate. When including your skills, choose both hard and soft skills that relate to the role. Soft skills may be abilities such as communication or leadership while hard skills could be computer programs or technical knowledge. To further enhance your image, you can add your aptitude to your description of a skill such as "proficient" or "intermediate."

#### 6. Explain your achievements and awards

Employers may be more impressed if you can prove that your abilities have been tested and that you have found success despite challenges. You can emphasize your victories by including a brief section in your resume that outlines your relevant achievements and awards. Maybe you received "Employee of the Month" three times in your previous job or received an award for generating the most sales on your team in one quarter. These awards can set you apart from other candidates with similar experience.

#### 7. Use a business format

The format of your resume quickly tells an employer if you can follow directions and communicate effectively and concisely. In a way, your resume format is the first test of your experience before a potential employer even reviews your document. As with any writing genre, your resume's format should reflect the expectations of your audience. For example, most employers will expect that your resume is one page. A professional resume format also generally includes a header with your name in a font larger than surrounding text and the rest of your contact information nearby. You should use an easy-to-read font, like Times New Roman, and space content so employers can clearly and quickly scan each section. Remember that when potential employers review your resume, they frequently scan through it quickly, which means you should make important information stand out. Consider using bold text for job positions and section headers.

#### 8. Include keywords

Use words that directly relate to the position in which you're applying. Consider reviewing the job description for keywords and incorporating them in your resume. For example, if the posting states the need for "excellent [time management \(opens in new window\)](#) skills," you can list time management in the skills and work history sections of your resume. Using keywords can help you relate directly to the hiring manager, making it more likely they will review the rest of your application materials.

#### 9. Review samples

Reviewing other successful resumes can help you become familiar with the format, language and sections of a professional resume. When looking for samples, take two different approaches. First, look at samples to learn the general qualities most resumes share, such as format and standard sections. Then, find samples of resumes in your specific field. These examples may feature optional sections that other resumes omit, or they may use certain language or include similar skills that you would like to include in your own document.

#### 10. Select a template

While you can certainly draft your own resume using a [word processor \(opens in new window\)](#), you can also simplify the resume-building process by using a resume template. These templates allow you to fill in blanks with relevant information, offering a complete, professionally formatted document. For example, Indeed provides a series of [professional resume templates \(opens in new window\)](#) you can personalize to your industry and the expectations of your potential employer. If you need help writing a resume, you can [hire a professional resume writer \(opens in new window\)](#) from Indeed. You can also improve your odds of finding better work by using resources like [Indeed profile \(opens in new window\)](#), which centralizes your resume, job preferences and qualifications.

Source: "[How To Write a Resume in 10 Steps](#)", Indeed Editorial Team, May 31, 2024.

NOTE: A printable PDF is attached below.

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