

Resume Critique Checklist

Boxes with an need your attention

General Considerations

- Resume should appear clean and not crowded, well-balanced and pleasing to the eye
 - Avoid using personal pronouns like I, my or me
 - Proofread your resume to make sure it is free of grammatical and spelling errors
 - Do not, under any circumstances, include anything that is not true
 - Spell out any acronyms that are not commonly used and understandable to the reader
 - List dates consistently throughout the resume
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Formatting

- Keep resume to one page in length. Resumes should be two pages only if you have enough closely related experience to have two full pages (several years' worth); more than two pages only for professional level jobs.
 - Keep spacing and formatting consistent throughout the document
 - Choose a conservative font; use it throughout the document, size 10-12 for text, 10-16 for headings, 14-22 for name
 - Do not include pictures and/or graphics unless applying for a position in the arts industry
 - Margins should be between .5 and 1.2 inches on all sides
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Name/Address

- Your name should be on the top line of the resume
 - Use a professional email address that includes your name, no nicknames or dates
 - Include one phone number with area code (be sure it is a number where you can be reached)
 - Do not include protected information (age, race, marital status, etc.)
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Objective Statement or Skills Summary

- Include one or the other, not both
 - Focus on the most relevant skills for the job for which you are applying, using the job posting as a guide, such as technical skills, certifications, licensures, and language skills
 - Tailor for each job
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Education

- List all schools from which you obtained a degree, in order of most recent (usually the most advanced) degree first; high school is optional and is usually not included if completion occurred more than two years ago
 - List the full name of the institution, city and state (do not include street address or phone number)
 - Include the official name of your major (check your DARS or Saint Paul College website); if you are working on "generals" your major is most likely Liberal Arts or Associate in Arts
 - Include the month and year of graduation or expected graduation; alternatively, include a date range of attendance (such as August 2015 – Present)
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Experience

- List most recent employer first; follow reverse chronological order
 - Include the position title, company name, city, state, and dates of employment (month and year or year only), using consistent formatting
 - Use bullet points and begin with an action verb when describing experience. Sentence fragments are preferred over complete sentences
 - Verb tense should be consistent with dates: use past tense verbs for former positions, present tense verbs for current positions. Avoid leading with passive verbs, such as those ending with "ing"
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References

- Do not include names and contact information for references on resume; list on a separate document
- Do not add "References available upon request" at the end of the resume

Advanced Considerations to Fine-Tune Your Resume

Formatting

- If resume is two pages, include your name and Page 2 on second page.
 - Emphasize section headings using capital letters, underlining and/or bold
 - Make sure your information fills the page without looking crowded
 - Use bullet points, bold, italics, underlining and indenting appropriately
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Name/Address

- Include mailing address if resume will be sent directly to an employer, uploaded on their website or on CAPS. It is okay to omit address if posting your resume on an insecure website such as CareerBuilder or Monster.com.
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Objective or Skills Summary

- Keep it concise and specific, focusing on what you have to offer the company
 - Eliminate vague terms (such as “use my experience to promote the company”); replace with action verbs that demonstrate your skills and qualifications
 - Include ability level if listing languages (fluent, conversant, near-native, native, etc.)
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Education

- Include GPA if it is 3.0 or higher
 - List or describe related coursework, projects, clinical experience, service learning or internship experiences to illustrate your skills and accomplishments (may be listed in Experience section instead)
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Honors

- List only relevant honors that you’ve earned since high school
 - List merit-based scholarships, honor societies, presidents’ Lists, and awards
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Experience

- Include internship, co-op experience, practicum, clinical experience, relevant paid work, and relevant volunteer work from the last 10 years if not included in Education section
 - If you have very similar experiences, do not repeat experience or skills word-for-word; instead explain what was different about them, such as the clientele you served or the type of service provided
 - Focus descriptions on accomplishments, not tasks
 - Quantify and qualify descriptions to give employers a good sense of the depth and breadth of your experience (how many, how much or how often, e.g. Increased sales by 30%)
 - Each bullet should be at least 5 words but no more than 3 lines long; no more than 6 bullets per experience
 - In some cases, Experience should be divided into two categories, according to their relevance.
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Leadership & Activities

- List campus and community activities
 - Highlight leadership positions and describe accomplishments using bulleted points
 - Include position title, name of the organization, location (city and state), and dates of participation
 - Generally, leave off high school activities if it has been more than 2 years since high school
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Additional Considerations

- Use additional categories if relevant to the individual and the job being sought. Examples of additional categories include but are not limited to: Professional Associations, Certifications, Licenses, and Community Involvement
- Headings should be relevant for the job
- If printing your resume, use white or ivory paper, preferably 24-lb, using one side of the paper, no staples or paper clips
- If “pasting” your resume into an electronic application, convert to plain text with no bold, italics, underlining, tabs, indents, bullets (use hyphens instead), templates or tables

