

Resume Guide – Tips for Designing a Professional Resume

Your resume serves as an important tool for gaining opportunities such as internships, leadership roles, and part/full-time job positions. A resume is a marketing piece that is designed to sell your "best self" and your skill set to an employer. Every resume is *different and tailored to the individual it represents*, and should advertise strengths, education, and accomplishments in a visually appealing, concise format.

LENGTH

A college student's resume should normally be no more than one page (exceptions may be made if you have extensive related experience). **A cover letter and reference page should always be listed on separate pages alongside your resume.**

CONTENT

So, what do you include in your resume?

Header with Identifying Information:

- Include:
 - Name
 - Phone Number
 - LinkedIn personal address (optional)
 - Professional Email (preferred Winthrop email)
 - E-portfolio Website (optional)
- Leave out personal information: age, sex, marital status, etc.

Education:

- Degree type and major/minor areas of concentration
- Institution attended (include city, state, and date degree received or will receive)
- Grade Point Average (if above a 3.0)
- Any scholarships awarded or academic honors received (Dean's List, Winthrop Gold Scholarship Recipient, etc.)

Summary of Skills:

- Use this section instead of an objective statement.
- Highlight information or skills you have learned in the classroom and in the workplace to summarize your resume into a few bullet point statements.
- Include computer and technical skills.
 - If you are a Computer Science or related major, you may benefit from having a separate section to list your more advanced hardware skills.
- Use words such as proficient in, knowledge of, experienced in, familiar with, etc. to describe your skill sets.

Related Experience:

- Related experience can be part-time, full-time, volunteer, experiential education (internships and service-learning projects) and/or class projects as they relate to the position you are seeking.
- What to include:
 - Title of Position
 - Name of Organization
 - Beginning and end dates of employment (month and year)
 - Bullet point accomplishment statements that are descriptive, *specific*, and *action-oriented*

Additional Section Headers:

- Related course work (projects, term papers, etc.)
- Honors and awards
- Certifications and licenses
- Campus and community involvement
- Summary of Skills
- Professional memberships (national organizations)

FORMATTING AND WRITING TIPS

- Keep the resume design consistent. Use **bold** or *italics* for emphasis. Do not use underline as it can be hard to read and does not photocopy well.
- Use standard font styles, such as Calibri, Times New Roman, Arial, etc. Avoid fonts that are too elaborate, **such as script**. Use one font throughout the resume.
- Font sizes 10, 11, and 12 are standard, with some titles and headings in a larger font or ALL CAPS.
- Do not use vertical lines, graphics, charts, tables, or boxes; these features do not transfer well to resume databases and often print out looking funky.
- Bullet statements are preferred over narrative style (paragraphs) when describing your skills, job positions, etc. Do not use the personal pronoun “I” on your resume. Instead, start each bullet point with an action verb.
 - If you’re having trouble with coming up with action verbs, visit our website [Resume and Cover Letters](#).
- As a freshman, high school information can be included, but once you move on to your sophomore year in college, replace your high school experiences with new college experiences.
- Use high quality paper; off-white/ivory or white are preferred. Paper is available and free for students to print their resume in our office.
- Proofread to avoid spelling and grammatical errors, and do not use abbreviations and acronyms. Spell check does not catch everything.
- The most important information goes on the top one-third to half of your resume.
- We read left to right. Use tabs to properly align dates on the right-hand side of the resume to de-emphasize.
- Use a .7 to one-inch margin; use the narrow .5 setting only if you need additional space to maintain a one-page resume.
- Do not use a resume template. They can be tricky to work with and edit, and they are made for the masses, not you as an individual.
- All resumes, cover letters, and reference pages (unless otherwise specifically requested) should be saved as a PDF and sent electronically as a PDF. This will preserve the integrity of your resume layout and design that you worked so hard to get just right.