How to write a resume

A well-written resume should summarise your qualifications, skills and qualities and help you get a job interview.

Tailor your resume to the job. Create different resumes for jobs that are academic, casual, graduate, postgraduate, voluntary, vacation, industry-based learning or in the creative industry.

What to include

Personal details

- First and last names
- Current address (and postal address if different)
- Home and mobile phone numbers (recorded messages should be business-like)
- Email address (avoid using unprofessional email addresses)
- Citizenship or residency status (only if requested by the employer)

Don't include personal information such as your date of birth.

Career objective

This section is optional and should be a short, targeted statement that is specific to the job.

Education

- Educational institute
- Full course name
- Course dates (eg 2009 - current)
- Subjects that are relevant to the job (use no more than 3)
- Achievements and awards

Employment history

- Business Name
- Job Title
- Period of work
- Key responsibilities (in a dot point list)
- Achievements

It is usual to list your jobs starting with the most recent. However, if you have course-related jobs you can include these first. Include jobs from the past five to six years that demonstrate the skills the employer is looking for.

Voluntary and community work (If available)

- Period of work
- Title
- Association name
- Key responsibilities

- Achievements

Include participation in community work, clubs, sport associations or youth groups. This shows initiative, leadership and interpersonal skills.

Skills and qualities

You should list skills specific to the job, include any technical, generic or transferable skills (eg team work, problem solving). Write these as a dot point summary and provide an example of each.

Professional development and further training

- Period of training
- Title
- Training provider, organisation or association name

Achievements

- Awards and prizes
- Scholarships

Professional memberships

- Period of membership
- Level (eg student member)
- Association name

Interests and hobbies

Write a dot point summary of your personal interests such as community, sporting or cultural activities.

Referees

List two or three people who have seen what you are able to do in an employment or academic environment. Always get permission from referees before including their details on your resume. For each referee, include:

- Name
- Job title
- Organisation
- Phone number
- Email address

Otherwise, write 'referees are available on request' and have their details ready to provide to an employer when asked.

Layout

Format

- Use 10-12 point standard fonts (eg Times New Roman, Arial)
- Write in plain business English (avoid SMS language, abbreviations, jargon and slang)
- Use sub-headings and bulleted lists to draw attention to important information
- Ensure plenty of white space between paragraphs and margins that are not too narrow
- Write in the third person, don't use I, me or my
- The layout (including indent alignments) must be consistent throughout the resume

Length

- 2 - 3 pages for a graduate with little professional work experience
- 3 - 4 pages for a graduate with a considerable work history

Styles - there are 3 main types

- Chronological - information is listed in reverse date order
- Functional - highlights your skills and achievements
- Hybrid - this is the most suitable for graduates as it combines the best features of the chronological and functional styles

Check the document

- Use spelling and grammar checks
- Get a proof reader with strong English skills to check it
- [Get feedback on your application](#) from our team

Resources

- [Sample resumes](#)
- [Resume checklist (pdf 140kb)](#)
- [Attend a career seminar](#)

Online resources

- [Build your resume (Career Gateway login)](#)
- [How to write your resume (pdf 216kb)](#)
- [Your resume - will it open doors for you? (quicktime 57mb)](#) [(transcript)](#)