

## / Resume Checklist

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### Every Employer is Different

Take the time to customize your resume for your future employer's requirements. Every company has a standard set of criteria recruiters must use when screening applicants – they might be GPA minimums, proficiency in certain software, degrees from programs with specific accreditations, etc. – but most recruiters also have their own set of preferences that help them differentiate between candidates with similar academic and professional experiences. How you format your resume, how far in the past does the experience section go, and how you format your sections are evaluated subjectively. Preferences can also vary from industry to industry. The following checklist provides general guidelines, but it is up to you to ensure your resume reflects the standards and nuances expected in your target industry.

### First Steps

- Explore the “Build a Resume” section on [careerservices.wvu.edu](https://careerservices.wvu.edu) to find one that works for you.
  - Utilize the samples by downloading them as a Word document.
  - Compare your resume to the checklist below to ensure that it meets the criteria for an effective resume.
  - After completing your resume, have it reviewed by a career development specialist through an in-person appointment by calling 304-293-2221 or by emailing it to [careerservices@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:careerservices@mail.wvu.edu).
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## Checklist

### / General Resume Guidelines

- A resume is a marketing tool, not a complete job history. Include **only** the items that will help you get the job you want. Leave off unnecessary information. Try to **target** your resume to a specific position or industry.
- Your resume should be **one to two full pages** in length, but preferably one full page.
- Your document should look **balanced**, pleasing to the eye, and **easy to read**.
- Your resume format (bolding, italics, etc.) **must be consistent** throughout your document.
- The body text font size should be **between 10pt and 12pt**.
- Use consistent and **proper punctuation**.
- It is unnecessary to include a list of professional references or the statement, “References Available Upon Request.” Instead, your reference list should be a **separate** document.
- Run a **spell check AND proofread** carefully. Have at least two additional people review your resume.

### / Contact Information

- **Name:** Make it the largest font on your resume so your name stands out. Your contact information should be smaller than your name.
- **Address:** Different scenarios dictate which address (or addresses) you should include: current, permanent, both, or none. If your address is close to the job location, include it. On the other hand, suppose the address is far away, and you want to have your address – in that case, it can be beneficial to indicate that you are “mobile” or “excited to relocate” since some companies find that they better retain talent who already live nearby.

- **Phone number:** List the one phone number where you are most easily reached. Be sure your voicemail is professional.
- **Email address:** Use a professional email address, such as **firstname.lastname@gmail.com**. Avoid inappropriate prefixes, such as mountaineer.cutie@gmail.com.
- Only include the URL of your website if the content is relevant and appropriate for employer viewing.
- Remove automatic hyperlinks on your email address and URL.
- You may want to include a statement at the bottom of your contact information that lets the reader know you have a professional portfolio or LinkedIn profile for review/to share.

## / Education

- List degrees in reverse chronological order (most recent listed first).
- **Spell out** names of degrees (i.e., “Bachelor of Science,” not “BS”).
- Emphasize your university by placing it **before** your degree and in **bold**.
- Include the **city and state** after the institution name (there is no need to include the zip code).
- List the month and year of your graduation. (i.e., if you are graduating in May XXXX, write “Expected: May XXXX”).
- Include your GPA if it is 3.0 or above or if specified in the job posting, and use “GPA” (not “G.P.A.”). Round the number up (i.e., 3.25, not 3.249). If your GPA is between 2.7 and 2.9, you might want to include it depending on the requirements of your target job.
- If you have completed a study abroad experience, include it in the education section.
- If you financed your education, indicate so. For example, “Maintained a 3.5 GPA while working part-time to pay 75% of college expenses.”

## / Experience

- List your experiences beginning with the most recent position (reverse chronological order).
- Include full-time and part-time jobs, paid/unpaid internships or practicums, and volunteer work and leadership roles, especially if they relate to your desired position.
- Use bold print or italics to highlight your *job title* and **company/organization name**. These should remain consistent throughout the resume.
- Include **city and state** for employer location, not the complete address.
- When listing dates, include the **month and year, semester and year, or just the year** of employment, but be consistent throughout the format. It is not necessary to have exact dates.
- Do **not** include salary, supervisor’s name, etc. UNLESS the job application specifically asks for this information on the resume (example, federal positions).
- List job descriptions/duties using **bullet points** instead of writing them in paragraph form.
- Use **strong action words (i.e., coordinated, managed, and cultivated)** to describe your work experience. Avoid passive phrases such as “responsible for” and “duties included.” **Eliminate personal pronouns** (I, me, we) and articles (a, an, the).
- Use appropriate **verb tense**. For example, use present tense action words to describe recent employment experience and past tense action words to describe past employment experience.
- Include numbers to **quantify** experience where possible. For example, # of employees supervised, \$ amount of budget managed, # of workshops taught or projects coordinated, \$ amount saved by your efforts.
- Focus on your accomplishments/results and how you were valuable to past employers instead of your responsibilities. For example, instead of “*Responsibilities included implementing policies and procedures, training new employees, interfacing with subordinates and vendors,*” try “*Worked with staff and vendors to increase product turnover by 15% and sales by 23%. Trained*”

*18 new employees, 11 of whom were rapidly promoted.”*

- When crafting your job summary bullets, utilize keywords from the job description to increase your chances of being passed through the applicant tracking system.

## / Skills

- Examples of **hard skills** include a foreign language or an industry-specific software program. **Soft skills** include communication, problem-solving, and creativity. One type isn't more important than the other—employers are looking for soft and hard skills in potential job candidates.
- Your skills should show how you're a good fit for the roles you're applying for. If you have skills that are mentioned in the job description, list them
- Include **relevant** computer and programming skills and name the software programs in which you are proficient.
- Include language skills if applicable. (Non-native English speakers should not include English, it is assumed).

## / Additional Categories

You may also include some of the following categories if it will make your resume more marketable to potential employers:

- Honors/Awards
- Relevant Experience
- Leadership Experience
- Intercollegiate Sports Experience
- Extracurricular Activities
- Volunteer Work/Community Service
- Certifications/Licenses
- Course Projects
- Research
- Publications
- Presentations

## / Alternative Sections

### Objective

*An objective is optional but can be used if you are applying to a position where you have little experience or where you want a recruiter to know why you want a job that may not obviously align with your experience.*

- Keep your objective **short and concise**.
- **Avoid** phrases that give the impression that you are only interested in the role to benefit your career, for example, “to find a job that will help me grow as a professional.”
- **Eliminate personal pronouns** such as “I” and “my” from your objective and your resume.

### Professional Highlights/ Qualifications

*The highlight section, also known as a resume summary, lists notable achievements, expertise, and experience relevant to the job position. It is intended to grab the reader's attention, especially if you are very qualified*

- To catch the employer's attention, this section should be prominent at the top.
- Form a short, bulleted list to showcase your specific experience as to why you are the right candidate for the job. Use the job description to guide these bullets.