

Tips for Writing Your Resume

Writing a resume can be stressful. Here are a few tips to help. You should also talk with a parent, teacher, librarian, coach, or any adult in your life about your resume.

Have you volunteered at events? Played sports? Have you started a club at school? Do you have a job? Do you play the French horn? Code for fun? Exhibit paintings or dance with a group? Think of your resume as a summary of your academic-extracurricular-work story. Most importantly, there is no need to lie or pad your resume. You have accomplished more than you realize. Your resume readers want to know what you've done and above all, WHO you are!

Formatting. Make your resume concise and easy to read. Bullet points and a consistent font help. Keep it to 1-2 pages. Use clear headings and organize the content within your topic sections chronologically, starting with the most recent experience. Your resume sections might include:

- Heading with your name, address, e-mail, phone, and any other contact information
- Education and high school information with your graduation date, GPA, class rank, test scores
- Academic awards, research, publications, honors, and other achievements
- Coursework that does not appear on your high school transcript, like summer programs
- Community service or volunteer work
- Extracurricular activities
- Work experience
- Interests and hobbies
- Special skills, such as language fluency, computer experience, etc.

Key aspects. While you want to keep your resume concise and organized, you also want to include key details. Questions you should ask yourself include:

- What was your role or title in this activity/event/job/experience?
- How many years did you participate? How many hours per week did you dedicate?
- What were your specific contributions? What were your leadership roles?
- What else was unique about a given activity/event/job/experience?
- What can you show in your resume that the rest of your application might not cover?

Proofread. Mistakes and typos on your resume stand out. Put your resume down, go do something else, and read it again with fresh eyes. Reading it aloud also helps you identify mistakes. Ask a trusted adult to proofread your resume before submitting it.

Honesty. Don't lie on your resume. Application reviewers, whether for a scholarship or college admissions, want you to be honest. Reviewers often call your references, teachers, and guidance counselors to follow up on applications and it is easy to detect inconsistencies in a resume. It is important to be yourself and only include the items that most represent how you spend your time and energy, and what you have gained and achieved in doing so.

Other helpful resources

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/job_search_writing/resumes_and_vitas/introduction.html

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/job_search_writing/resumes_and_vitas/resume_sections/index.html