

Resume Checklist

Construction

What to Include

Although the exact format of your resume is flexible, there are certain expectations of a professional resume. At minimum, you should include:

- Contact information: Full name, phone number, an email address, and include a link to your LinkedIn profile.
- Education: College, Location, Degree, Major, Date of Graduation (month, year), thesis, study abroad.
- Relevant experience: Work, Internships, and Leadership Roles.

Some optional categories:

- Skills: Technical, Language, Certifications, soft skills directly related to the job requirements
- Other Work Experience
- Volunteer or Extra-Curricular Activities
- Honors
- Presentations
- Professional memberships

Formatting

There are some general rules to follow when formatting your resume that will make your document attractive, easy to read, and professional. These are:

- Limit your resume to one page. Don't use full sentences or narrative. Resume information should be presented in phrases.
- Font should be 10-12 point and easy to read (Times New Roman, Calibri, Arial, etc).
- Margins should be between .5" and 1".
- Avoid large empty spaces. White spaces draw the reader's eye away from the content.
- Content should be presented in reverse chronological order (most recent or current at the top) and in past tense (even if you are still doing it).
- Avoid resume templates. They can be dull and show a lack of creativity.
- Convert your resume to a PDF before distributing it to potential employers. This will ensure that it can be read and printed and that your formatting will not be affected by different software versions.

Content

Education

Your academic experiences should be listed in reverse chronological order. If you attended school, abroad, or took part in an educational program outside of Whitman College, you may include those experiences here as well. Here are some items that may or may not appear in the Education section:

- GPA: List your overall GPA or major GPA, whichever is better.
- High School: High school information is generally not included except by underclassmen whose relevant skills have been demonstrated primarily at the high school level. High school experiences become less relevant to an employer considering college graduates for full-time employment. Once past your sophomore year you should not include high school information unless it is highly relevant to the job you are applying for. Once you graduate all high school experience should be deleted.
- Related Courses: You may want to include classes that are relevant to the position desired, especially if they are outside your major field of study. Do not include basic courses in your major; particularly related advanced courses may be listed (more important for graduate school). List course name, not the number. Don't include course descriptions.

□ Experience Section(s)

The experience sections of your resume are the most important. It is through these sections that a prospective employer or graduate program can learn the most about your skills and your potential.

- The Relevant Experience section includes information that is directly related to the job, program, company, or industry to which you are applying.
- Each experience must include certain information: Job Title, Employer, Location (city, state), and Dates of Employment (month, year).
- Each experience or job should be accompanied by 2-5 bullet points outlining what you did for that position. Focus less on tasks, but instead on actions and accomplishments. A good way to approach this part of your resume is to have each different bullet reflect a skill or skill set.
- It is important to remember not to state the skill you have gained, but instead demonstrate that skill through your described actions at the job.
- Data can be used as strong evidence for your success in a previous position. Include this data in your bullet points, using results and outcomes.
- Other Work Experiences can be included on your resume. Think about these positions in terms of transferable skills that might be valuable to a future employer or that set you apart from other candidates.
- Make sure that the content of your Experience Sections is relevant to the position or graduate school you are applying to.

Some final resume tips:

- Create a master resume document with all of your educational information, work experiences, leadership roles, or any other information about your professional abilities. When you find a position that you think may be a good match for you, select the material from your master resume that will demonstrate this good match and format that specific information into a one-page document. This way, you only have to update one document, and you prevent many mistakes, such as sending a resume to the wrong company.
- Proofread! Spelling or grammatical mistakes are a red flag to potential employers. Have friends or family members review your resume, or bring it to the student Engagement Center for a formal review by our career counselor.

Visit the Student Engagement Center

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