

RÉSUMÉ CHECKLIST

Your résumé is a tool to present your qualifications and credentials, to obtain the prospective employer's attention and to secure an interview. It should be a clear, directed, and persuasive document that presents to the employer that you have the **substantive background** and **hands-on experience** to perform the duties of the potential job as well as that you are a good fit for the position. As your career unfolds, you will have more relevant professional experience to highlight and your academic background will become less important.

Here are some basics to get you started.

General Layout: Each résumé section should address your preparation and fit for the position.

- **Contact line:** Bolded at top; center/header should include Name, Address, Phone/email; LinkedIn Profile, etc.
- **Academic section:** at the top for recent grads, lower down upon gaining experience
 - List: institution name, city and state, and date the degree was conferred
 - Do not include your secondary school unless you think it will help you get hired
 - List GPA, class rank if they help you, e.g., top third or 3.5 and higher (although there can be exceptions) as well as any academic honors or awards, and certificates.
 - List journals, institutes, significant writing, research assistant and academic mentor positions, and any other co-curricular activity
 - List relevant classes, particularly if you are applying for a position where specialized knowledge is required, e.g., env'l, criminal, international
- **Experience section:** middle section, until you have been out of school for 5 years or more
 - Include employer name, city and state, position title, date of experience
 - Provide 2-3 lines describing your duties/responsibilities; don't worry if you do not yet have experience that is directly relevant to the position you are seeking; instead include experience that communicates that you are someone with a strong work ethic who has had jobs that require judgment and responsibility
- **Professional Affiliations, Volunteer Work, Skills, and Interests section:** the remaining space
 - Include volunteer involvement and professional engagement in the community

General Rules

- Be **Focused and Selective:** each item should support your career direction.
- **Descriptive but concise is best:** Brevity, Brevity, Brevity!
- Try to limit to **one page (front and back)**
- **Reverse chronological order for all information** (i.e., most recent at the top)
- **No Typos or Spelling Errors!**
- **Writing Style:** Use **active verbs** and **descriptive terms**; **avoid personal pronouns**
- **Formatting:** Use **bullets** to demarcate descriptions into easy-to-read snippets; Choose **one simple font**, such as Garamond or Times New Roman; Aspire to **margins of one inch** with even spacing