



2008-2009 Resume DOs and DON'Ts

The goal of the resume is to be invited to interview. The goal of the interview is to be offered the position.

To determine what should be included on your resume, ask yourself what the employer would want to know about you to consider you for the position.

- **Use of resume templates is discouraged.** Developing a Word document saves space and is more maneuverable.
- **Unless you have a very common name, consider eliminating your middle name or initial from your resume for easier name recognition.**
- **Only one phone number needs to be listed. Be sure that your voicemail message and email address are professional.**
- **Resumes should be 1-2 pages in length and usually printed on “resume” paper.** If you are just starting out in your field, or if you are seeking corporate employment, your resume should be one page. If you are seeking a nonprofit position, and you have a lot of experience, it can extend to two pages (ideally with your name at the top of the second page).
- **It looks best to have your name in bold, a couple of sizes larger than the body of the resume.** Your address, telephone number and email address do not have to be in bold or larger.
- **Font size is generally .10-.14 and in *Arial* or *Times New Roman* for easier reading.**
- **Margins do not need to be more than .9 inch.**
- **If a cover letter will accompany the resume, an objective is not necessary.** If included, objectives for *internships* may indicate that you wish to enhance your skills; objectives for *employment* should state the skills you will bring to the employer.
- **List everything (jobs, degrees, activities) in reverse chronological order by the ending date.**
- **Include your current degree program and anticipated graduation date, even if you have just begun your studies.** (Freshmen may include their high school.)
- **Be accurate in stating your degree.** If in doubt, look it up.
- **List your degrees by month and year. Use dates of attendance only if you did not earn a degree.**
- **Only the names, cities and states of your colleges and employers should be included.** Details such as address, telephone number and supervisor will be listed on employment applications.
- **List your degrees and job titles, or your colleges and employers, in bold font.**

- **Consider having your section titles in all capital letters and bold font, the same size as the text.**
- **Bullets begin with *action verbs* and should be phrases, not sentences**
- **Use the present tense of verbs to describe duties in your current job, internship or activities. Use the past tense when describing duties from previous jobs, internships or activities.**
- **List your skills and results when possible, not just duties.**
- **Write in the “first person” but do not use personal pronouns such as “I.”** Simply state what it is that you do/did (in your jobs/activities).
- **Do not split names and phrases between lines or split a section between pages.**
- **List other languages in which you are fluent or familiar.** If you have traveled extensively or lived in another country, include that information.
- **Honors and Grade Point Averages (GPAs) are very individualized.** The GPA is assumed to be cumulative, is usually listed if 3.0 or above and should be rounded to one digit following the decimal point. If the GPA in your major is significantly higher than your cumulative GPA, you may list both. If you have graduated with honors (such as *cum Laude*, *Magna* or *Summa cum Laude*), you do not need to list your GPA or note that you were on the Dean’s List.
- **Awards and scholarships are listed on resumes for undergraduate and graduate students, usually toward the bottom of the page.**
- **Be sure that key words, for your field (generally nouns) are used in your resume.**
- **Do not include personal information such as birth date, marital status, social security number or license or certificate number.** Exclude hobbies, interests and religion /ethnic background unless they would be considered relevant to an employer.
- **Include computer skills such systems, languages, programs, spreadsheets and databases.** Do not list basic computer skills such as email and the Internet.
- **If you are applying for positions in social service, your community service activities should be listed and described briefly.** If you are applying to a “for profit” company, you should generally list them without describing them.
- **We no longer note that references are “available upon request.”** Instead, have a page (with the same heading as your resume) that lists 3-5 professional references. Include their names, titles, places of employment, business telephone numbers and email addresses. Take this list with you to interviews or send it *upon request*.
- **Saint Louis University prefers that “Saint” be written out.**
- **Do not rely solely on *Spell Check*.** It will not work on words in all capital letters and it is sometimes inaccurate. Use a dictionary if in doubt.
- **Carry additional copies of your resume to interviews.**