

**CAREER  
TIPS**

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# How to format your resume and avoid common mistakes?

*Career Tips by Opportunity Cell*

**Opportunity Cell**, one of world's largest opportunities aggregator with 5Mn+ users

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# Introduction

- **Out of 100 applications** that were received by companies, **more than 85% of the resumes get rejected**, just because of incorrect formatting.
- Through this series, we will try to share with you every minute details on **How you can correctly format your resume and increase the chances of your success.**



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# Layout and Design

- **Font size** between 10-12 points
- **Type of Font:** Standard, easy-to-read font (e.g. Times New Roman, Helvetica, Garamond).
- **Margins** no smaller than 0.5inch
- **Length:** Résumé to fit on one page
- Resumes can be 1-2 pages **for Master's students,** and 2-3 pages maximum **for PhDs and postdocs.**
- Longer resumes may be relevant if you are applying to research positions or within the performing arts.



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# Layout and Design

- **Color of the Resume:** Black and white unless you are sure the prospective employer has a color printer
- Bold, italics, bullets to be used in moderation
- **Be consistent** with: font size, underlining, spacing, indents, emboldening, date formatting, spelling
- **Check** spelling and grammar; avoid contractions, abbreviations, and slang.
- Do not use pronouns.
- Use reverse chronological order where appropriate.



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# Formatting the Header Section of the Resume

**Firstname Lastname**

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Home or Campus Street Address • City, State Zip • youremail@gmail.com • phone number



# Header Section of the Resume

- Include your **name**, a **professional email address** (first.last@gmail.com, or another webmail system) and **phone number**. It is not necessary to include your street address.
- Once you build your **LinkedIn Profile**, consider listing your personal URL under your name.
- The **font size** on your name should be slightly larger than the rest of the text (12-14pt).



# Header Section of the Resume

- If your **hometown or current location**(or both) would be relevant to your job search, feel free to include the city and state without the associated zip code as follows: Navi Mumbai, Mumbai | Maharashtra , India| email@gmail.com | XXX-XXX-XXXX | LinkedIn URL or website URL (optional)
- **Create a professional looking email address.**It's important to choose a name that reflects your business or personal name in a clear and credible manner.



# Formatting the Education Section of the Resume

## Education

### Tata Institute of Social Sciences

Degree, Concentration. GPA [Note: GPA is Optional]

Relevant Coursework: [Note: Optional. Awards and honors can also be listed here.]

Mumbai, MH

Graduation Date Thesis [Note: Optional]

### Study Abroad [Note: If Applicable]

Study abroad coursework in\_\_\_\_\_.

City, Country

Month Year – Month Year

### High School Name

[Note: May include GPA, SAT/ACT scores, or academic honors an employer may want to know]

City, State

Graduation Date





# Education Section of the Resume

- List your **most recent degree first** and other degrees in reverse chronological order.
- **Include** the degree, your program, and anticipated graduation date.
- Study abroad, related coursework, dissertation, thesis project, CGPA/ %, academic honors and awards may also be included in this section.
- While some companies will request that you include your CGPA/ % on your resume, it is otherwise **up to you whether to include it.**
- **Tip:** If you have got below average score, you can avoid putting your scores, until it has been asked by the organisation.



# Formatting the Experience Section of the Resume

## Experience

**Organization**

City, State (or Remote)

**Position Title**

Month Year – Month Year

- Beginning with your most recent position, describe your experience, skills, and resulting outcomes in bullet or paragraph form.
- Begin each line with an action verb and include details that will help the reader understand your accomplishments, skills, knowledge, abilities, or achievements.
- Quantify where possible.
- Do not use personal pronouns; each line should be a phrase rather than a full sentence.



# Experience Section of the Resume

- You may include a general experience headings or specific headings such as Research Experience or Industry Experience.
- Within each section, list your experiences and activities **in reverse chronological order.**
- Work Experience does not have to be paid experience and **it can be internship experiences.**
- For each experience or activity, **include** the organization name, your title or role, location, and dates.



# Experience Section of the Resume

- Provide concise explanations of your experiences and activities, **focusing on writing impactful bullets** by creating accomplishment statements and **quantifying results**.
- Begin these descriptive statements with strong **action verbs**, that highlight your transferrable skills; when possible, those skills should align with those listed in the job description.

<b>ACTION VERB</b>	+	<b>PROJECT</b>	+	<b>RESULT</b>	=	<b>ACCOMPLISHMENT</b>
Launched		publication's first mobile application		increasing user growth by +15% s/s and reaching +1,000 downloads in less than 2 weeks		Launched publication's 1st mobile app, increasing user growth by +15% s/s and reaching +1,000 downloads in <2 weeks



# Experience Section of the Resume

- **For past experiences**, use action verbs in the past tense (e.g. conducted or developed).
- **For present experiences**, use present simple tense (e.g. create) – do not use present continuous tense (e.g. creating).
- Each work experience should include no more than 3-4 bullets; the **length** of each bulleted sentence should be no more than 1-2 lines.



# Formatting the Leadership & Skill Section of the Resume

## Leadership & Activities

**Organization**

City, State

**Role**

Month Year – Month Year

- This section can be formatted similarly to the Experience section, or you can omit descriptions for activities.
- If this section is more relevant to the opportunity you are applying for, consider moving this above your Experience section.

## Skills & Interests [Note: Optional]

**Technical:** List computer software and programming languages

**Language:** List foreign languages and your level of fluency

**Laboratory:** List scientific / research lab techniques or tools [If Applicable]

**Interests:** List activities you enjoy that may spark interview conversation



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# Leadership Section of the Resume

- **Leadership & Community Involvement:** In the descriptions under each experience, highlight the skills you attained, the duties you fulfilled, and your results (quantify these when possible). Utilize the same style formatting from your work experience section.
- **Publications & Presentations (optional):** This section is more commonly found in graduate student and postdoc resumes. List only the most relevant to the position or employer. *There is no need to include for non-academic positions.*



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# Skill Section of the Resume

- Depending on your targeted field, you may add computer, language, laboratory skills, or performances.
- **For languages:** put your level of fluency (e.g. proficient, advanced, fluent, native).
- **For Technical Skills:** Include specific software you've used (e.g. Adobe/MS etc).
- **Licenses and certifications:** If you hold a license and/or certification related to your industry, utilize this section to showcase these. List the name of the license/certification and the expiration date (if available).





# How Many Resume Versions Do I Need?

If you are applying across different functions/roles or different industries, you should **tailor your resume to best match the skills for that position.**

For example, a consulting firm will value transferable skills such as project management, leadership, and analytical skills, while a research position will emphasize your technical knowledge and research experience.

**Your resume should be organized to best market your background and skills to the specific position.**



# Common Resume Errors to Avoid

- Don't use passive language instead of **action verbs**.
- Don't use full sentences and narrative style, instead of **action-driven bullet points**.
- Don't include a **picture or personal information** such as marital status, sex, age, or religious affiliation.
- Don't List all positions and activities, instead of **selecting those relevant** to the position.
- Don't make it visually cluttered: **be aware** of white space, and make it concise and quickly readable.
- Don't forget to demonstrate results – **quantify these results** where possible.

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