

# HOW TO WRITE A RESUME

## Lesson Objective

In this lesson, you will learn how to write a resume in English. Your resume represents your achievements and qualifications. It speaks for you until you meet your potential employer. You'll learn the important parts to include in a resume as well as the parts to leave out.

### Did you know...

The word "curriculum vitae" is another word for resume. This is usually shortened to CV.

Resume is sometimes spelled with one or two accents: *résumé*, *resumé*, *résumé*.

## Warm-Up

### A. Writing

Choose one of the following three topics. Write for five minutes in your notebook or on the back of your paper.

1. My greatest achievements
2. My educational background
3. My work and volunteer experience
4. My top skills

### B. Vocabulary Preview

Match these words to their correct definitions.

- |                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| ___ 1. curriculum vitae | a) an occupation that one has for a long period of time                    |
| ___ 2. qualification    | b) a document that summarizes one's skills and qualifications, a.k.a. CV   |
| ___ 3. career           | c) describes a type of resume that highlights abilities over experience    |
| ___ 4. keyword          | d) a word (usually a noun) related to a specific field or topic            |
| ___ 5. objective        | e) overused and outdated, a word or expression to avoid using              |
| ___ 6. bullet point     | f) long and detailed   |
| ___ 7. functional       | g) describes a type of resume that highlights job experience in a timeline |
| ___ 8. chronological    | h) one of a series of short form notes placed under a heading              |
| ___ 9. potential        | i) a person who is seeking someone to hire                                 |
| ___ 10. recruiter       | j) possible in the future  |
| ___ 11. cliché          | k) an ability or skill that one has earned or learned                      |
| ___ 12. extensive       | l) the main purpose  |

## Planning a Resume

### A. Keywords

Before you write or edit your existing resume, make sure you know what type of job you are applying for. Identify at least 10 nouns that are related to this job. Keywords include industry words, technology words, and product names. The keywords in the job description should be in your resume. This makes it searchable by recruiters and job search engines.

### Task 1

Identify a career or job that you are interested in.  
Write 10 keywords (nouns) that are related to this career or job.

**Job:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Keywords:**

- |          |           |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____  |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____  |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____  |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____  |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |

### B. Header

At the top of your resume, include the following contact information:

- full name
- email address
- mailing address
- phone number

### Task 2

Write down all of the contact information that you want to include in the profile section (header) of your resume.

<b>Full Name</b>	_____
<b>Email Address</b>	_____
<b>Mailing Address</b>	_____
<b>Phone (or Mobile) Number</b>	_____
<b>Social Media Accounts</b>	_____

**Note:**

You may also want to include one or two social media accounts, such *LinkedIn* and *Twitter*.

## Planning a Resume cont.

### C. Summary

Beneath your contact information, add a career summary. This includes a sentence about your career objective. It may also include a few bullet points about your top qualifications and skills. Keep it short and use keywords. Here is an example of a career summary.\*

**Example:**

Trained chef with three years catering experience seeking full-time position in a fine-dining establishment in the Muskoka region.

- graduate from Best Chefs Cooking School
- specializes in French cuisine and desserts
- patient, thorough, good-natured, energetic

**\*Note:**

A career summary takes the place of an “objective statement,” which many recruiters consider outdated.

### Task 3

Now write your own career summary for the career or job you identified in Task 1.

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## Planning a Resume cont.

### D. Format

There are two standard resume formats to choose from. Think about which one makes more sense for you at this point in your life. Each type of resume includes a summary at the beginning.

#### **Functional:**

This type of resume is also called a *skill-based resume*. It highlights your abilities first and then your job experience.

A functional resume is ideal for students as well as people who are ready to change careers or who have wide gaps in their work experience.

#### **Chronological:**

This type of resume lists your work experience first. Education and other skills come after work experience.

List your work experience in point form from most to least recent (reverse-chronological). If your work experience is extensive, do not include every job and position.

### Task 4

Fill in the blanks with the information that you will need to include in either type of resume. You will decide which type of resume is best for you later in this lesson.

#### **Skills**

*include personal and job-related skills*

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Education and Achievements**

*include honours and awards*

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Experience**

*include work and volunteer experience*

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## Planning a Resume cont.

### E. References

It is unnecessary to include your references in a resume. It is necessary to have a reference page ready in case a potential employer asks you for it. Adding the note "References available upon request" to your resume is considered cliché by some recruiters.

Prepare a list of references on a separate page from your resume, and bring it to every interview. Double-check the phone numbers and email addresses.

**Note:**

Don't forget to ask permission from the people you want to use as references. It's also a good idea to give them a copy of your resume in case a potential employer calls for a reference.

### Task 5

Who can provide a good personal or professional reference for you? Typical references include former bosses, teachers, coaches, and colleagues. Prepare a typed list of three or four people. Include contact names, workplaces, titles, and contact information (email and phone number). Use the space below to come up with ideas.

**Example:** *Reference for Mark King*

Kate Stone  
Human Resources Manager  
NY Tutoring Service Inc.  
katehr@nytutoringinc.com  
c: (220) 449-8901

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Resume Dos and Don'ts

### A. Resume Don'ts

#### CLICHÉS ETC.

##### Do not...

- list every job you've ever had if you have a lot of work experience
- list your secondary school(s) if you also have post-secondary education
- use an inappropriate email address
- use the first person (I, my, me)
- add a picture of yourself
- use a fancy font or formatting
- attach your resume to an email
- forget to spell-check
- include a list of hobbies\*

#### \*Note:

It's okay to add one or two interesting facts about yourself to make your resume stand out. For example, you might include your golf handicap in your achievements. Don't add a list of hobbies or include childhood experiences.

### Task 6

Below are some examples of what NOT to do on a resume. Identify the problem with each example.

1. Please find my resume attached to this email.
2. I am a hardworking sales clerk.
3. oversaw lemonade stands
4. cuteguytony@yahoo.com
5. gradutate of Millford College
6. **enthusiastic team player**

#### Resume Clichés

Here are a few overused words and phrases to avoid using on a resume.

- team player
- go-to person
- problem solver
- strong track record
- good communicator
- good organizational skills

### B. Resume Dos

#### POWER WORDS

You have already learned the importance of keywords (nouns). These are the most important words in your resume. You should also use powerful verbs and adjectives. Some of your power words will be job-dependent.

#### 10 Powerful Verbs

- advanced
- coordinated
- collaborated
- maximized
- implemented
- launched
- pioneered
- represented
- secured
- spearheaded

#### 10 Powerful Adjectives

- amicable
- attentive
- diligent
- disciplined
- enthusiastic
- flexible
- thorough
- productive
- prompt
- resilient

# Sample Resume

**Maria Montague**  
 eslmaria@teachermail.com  
 c: 646-555-9098  
 2-191 51st Street  
 New York, NY 10021  
 @mariamoesl

Enthusiastic CELTA-trained English language teacher with five years of overseas teaching experience seeking full-time position in an English language school in Manhattan.

**Teaching Experience:**

Moscow ELL Inc., Russia (May 2013–January 2015)  
 IELTS teacher and private tutor

- taught low- and high-intermediate classes of 4–20 students
- tailored lessons according to student needs
- used English Experts 2, Communicate Now, and Business English Professionals
- supervised a team of three ESL teachers
- launched a homework help room for special needs students

Tokyo School of Languages, Japan (June 2011–February 2013)  
 English language teacher

- taught private TOEIC lessons to business workers
- taught TOEFL, essay writing, public speaking to high school students
- coordinated and launched a school newsletter

The English School (December 2010–April 2011)  
 English language teacher and social events coordinator

- taught private lessons to elderly learners
- coached young English learners in pronunciation using IPA
- spearheaded an extracurricular program for teens

**Skills:**

- confident teacher of English grammar, speaking, reading, writing, listening, and pronunciation
- amicable and approachable (“Maria the Singing Teacher”)
- thorough in lesson planning and whiteboard work
- experienced in classroom and 1–1 settings
- fluent in English and Russian
- competent in supervising and training new recruits

**Education:**

Bachelor of English 2006–2009  
 New York University, New York, NY

CELTA Summer 2009  
 ESL Teacher Training Institute, New York, NY

**Achievements:**

Teacher of the Year 2014 – Moscow ELL Inc.  
 Comedy fiction writing contest winner 2011 – Expat News Japan

**Contact Info**  
 Name  
 Email Address  
 Cell and/or Phone Number  
 Home Address  
 Social Media

**Career Summary**

**Heading**

**Details**  
 bulleted list with details in short form (most recent first)

**Note:**

There are many styles of resumes to choose from. You can find templates and samples online. Use a basic font and a simple style. Your name should appear in large, bold text at the top of the page.

**Heading**

**Details**  
 bulleted list with details in short form (most important first)

**Heading**

**Details**  
 bulleted list with details in short form (most recent first)

**Heading**

**Details**  
 bulleted list with details in short form (most recent first)

## Sample Resume cont.

Is the resume on page 7 functional or chronological?  
Why do you think Maria chose this type of resume?  
How would you change it into the other format?

## Comprehension Questions

What have you learned so far?  
Answer and discuss these questions in pairs or as a class.

1. Why is it important to use keywords in a resume?
2. What goes directly beneath the contact information on a resume?
3. What is the difference between a *functional* resume and a *chronological* resume?
4. What are two things you should NOT do on a resume?
5. Name two powerful verbs and adjectives to use on a resume.

## Vocabulary Review

Complete the sentence in the chart with a word or phrase from page 1.  
In the last column, indicate the part of speech.

#	Sentence	Part of Speech
1	I don't have the necessary _____ for that job.	
2	Under each heading, list a few _____ .	
3	Please list your job experience in reverse-_____ order.	
4	I sent my resume to a _____ employer.	
5	Don't use the word "team player." It's a _____ .	



## Write Your Own Resume

### A. Writing

Find a job ad that interests you and write a resume with this job in mind. Plan your keywords, summary, and format before you type your resume. Refer to the sample on page 7 as well as other samples that you can find online. Prepare a page of references to go with your resume.

### B. Proofreading

After you write your resume, save it as a “draft.” Don’t send or deliver it yet. Come back a few days later and read the document out loud to yourself. Fix any mistakes you see and run a spell-check program through it.

Review the resume checklist and make any necessary changes. Then ask a classmate or teacher to proofread your document.

## Resume Checklist

- Did I include all keywords that employers or search engines will look for?
- Did I include a header with necessary contact information, and is it correct?
- Did I add a career summary beneath my header?
- Did I choose a format (chronological/functional)?
- Did I include skills, work experience, education, and achievements?
- Is there something that stands out about me?
- Do I have a page of references available?
- Did I use a simple, clean format?
- Did I proofread and check spelling?
- Did I ask a friend or teacher to proofread my resume?

*Are you ready to start applying for jobs?  
Print your resume and page of references.  
You may also need a cover letter.*