

Resume Do's & Don'ts

Overview

Your resume is often the first interaction a recruiter has with you- before any interview, call, or assessment. This document is designed to help you understand what makes a resume effective and what mistakes reduce your chances of getting shortlisted.

The goal is not just to create a resume that looks good, but one that is clear, honest, relevant, ATS-friendly, and interview-ready.

By following these Do's and Don'ts, you will be able to:

- Present your profile professionally
 - Communicate your skills and experience with impact
 - Avoid common mistakes that lead to rejection
 - Increase your chances of shortlisting
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Why Your Resume Matters

Recruiters typically spend 6–10 seconds scanning a resume. In that short time, your resume must answer three questions:

1. Is this candidate relevant for the role?
2. Do they meet the required skills and experience?
3. Are they professional and credible?

A well-structured resume helps recruiters quickly understand your value and makes it easier for Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) to shortlist your profile.

DO's – What You SHOULD Do

1. Tailor and Present Your Resume Professionally

Your resume should be customized for each role you apply for.

- Use keywords from the job description
- Highlight skills and experience relevant to the role
- Follow a clean layout with standard fonts and proper spacing
- Keep it 1 page (freshers) or up to 2 pages (experienced)

Why this matters: Tailored resumes perform better in ATS screening and show recruiters that you understand the role.

2. Start with a Strong Summary

Your summary should clearly communicate:

- Who you are
- What you specialize in
- What value you bring

A good summary is specific, concise, and impact-focused.

Avoid: Generic objectives like “seeking a challenging role.”

3. Describe Work and Projects with Clarity

Instead of vague descriptions, explain:

- What you worked on
- What tools or skills you used
- What actions you took
- What result or outcome you achieved

Why this matters: Recruiters want to understand your actual contribution, not just the task name.

4. Highlight Achievements with Metrics

Wherever possible, use numbers, percentages, or outcomes.

Examples include:

- Time saved
- Performance improvement
- Bugs fixed
- APIs built
- Users impacted

Why this matters: Metrics make your achievements more believable and impressive.

5. Showcase Skills and Learning Clearly

Organize skills into clear sections:

- Technical skills
- Tools & technologies
- Soft skills
- Certifications or learning

Only include skills you can explain confidently in an interview.

6. Keep It Concise, Updated, and Relevant

Your resume should reflect your current skills and recent achievements.

- Remove outdated or irrelevant experience
 - Update certifications and projects regularly
 - Use reverse chronological order
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7. Review Contact Information and Proofread Carefully

Ensure:

- Professional email ID
- Correct phone number
- Working LinkedIn or portfolio link
- No spelling or grammar errors

Why this matters: Small mistakes can create a poor first impression.

DON'Ts – What You Should AVOID

1. Don't Use Unprofessional Contact Details

Avoid:

- Nickname-based email IDs
- Multiple phone numbers
- Parents' contact details
- Broken or outdated links

Your contact section should look clean and trustworthy.

2. Don't Add Personal or Sensitive Information

Do not include:

- Age, gender, religion, caste
- Marital status
- Political views
- Photograph (unless required)

Why this matters: These details are irrelevant and may lead to bias.

3. Don't Use a Generic Objective

Generic objectives add no value and show lack of clarity.

Instead of telling recruiters what *you want*, show what *you offer*.

4. Don't List Responsibilities Without Impact

Avoid statements that only describe duties.

Recruiters want to know:

- What changed because of your work
 - How you contributed to results
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5. Don't Overdo Design or Use Complex Templates

Avoid:

- Too many colors or graphics
- Decorative fonts
- Icons or columns that ATS cannot read

Keep your resume simple, readable, and ATS-friendly.

6. Don't Include Irrelevant or Outdated Experience

Exclude:

- Very old experience (unless relevant)
- Unrelated roles
- Projects that don't support the job you're applying for

Focus only on what strengthens your application.

7. Don't Add Skills You Cannot Explain

If you list a skill, expect questions on it.

Never include:

- Tools you barely used
 - Skills you can't explain practically
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8. Don't Lie or Exaggerate

Avoid:

- Fake certificates
- Inflated responsibilities
- Incorrect employment dates

Honesty is critical- background checks are common.

9. Don't Use Passive, Wordy, or Repetitive Language

Avoid phrases like:

- "Was involved in"
- "Responsible for"

Use strong action verbs and keep sentences direct and impactful.

10. Don't Forget to Update and Customize

Never send the same resume everywhere.

Always:

- Update new skills and achievements
 - Customize for the job role
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11. Don't Include Salary Details or References

Avoid mentioning:

- Current or expected salary
- Reasons for leaving
- "References available upon request"

These are discussed later during HR rounds.

12. Don't Use Informal Language

Avoid:

- Short forms (u, btw, bcoz)
- Emojis
- Casual tone

Your resume should reflect professional communication.

Final Note for Students

Your resume is not just a document, it is a marketing tool for your skills and potential. A clear, honest, and well-structured resume improves shortlisting chances and builds confidence for interviews.

Every great career starts with one strong application. Make yours count.