

Resume checklist

1. Choose the proper resume format

Choosing the right resume format is key to presenting your best assets to recruiters.

2. Choose an elegant and readable font

Use one of the respected, classic. Fancy typefaces might be hard for recruiters to read quickly, plus they might make your resume fail the ATS (Applicant Tracking Software) test.

Calibri

Cambria

Helvetica

Trebuchet MS

Garamond

The easiest way to check it is: print out your resume with black ink on white paper and eye it up from a distance so that you don't get to see the actual contents. Does it seem jam-packed? If so, it certainly is.

3. Keep your font size between 10–12 points

Smaller fonts would make your resume read like the Yellow Pages. Larger ones—like seven-and-under children's books. Larger fonts are okay only for your resume header and section headlines.

4. Use the same font throughout your resume

Unless you're really confident about your design skills, pick one font and stick to it across your whole resume.

5. Make your margins consistent on all four sides

All margins should be the same. One-inch preferably, an inch and a half top.

6. Align your content to the left to make it more skimmable

The only exceptions are section headlines and your resume header: these can be centre aligned. Follow F format

7. Consider using a professionally designed resume template

If you find designing a resume by yourself tough going, you can use a pre-designed professional. It will save you a ton of time, and you'll be sure your resume layout is clean and clear.

8. Is there enough white space on your resume to break up the text?

The easiest way to check it is: print out your resume with black ink on white paper and eye it up from a distance so that you don't get to see the actual contents. Does it seem jam-packed? If so, it certainly is.

9. Make strategic use of bolding, caps, and italics

Bolding and going all-caps is okay for your **RESUME HEADER** and **SECTION HEADINGS**. Bold only: **Previous Employers** and **Educational Institutions**. Don't use italics except when listing *Your Publications Titles*.

10. Open with a resume summary or a resume objective

Put a short paragraph at the top of your resume that gives an outline of your career and indicates why you're the perfect candidate for the job. You'll immediately grab every recruiter's attention and make yourself memorable.

11. Put your Work experience section near the top of the page

Your experience is what matters most for employers. Put it right below your resume summary or resume objective. Then, enter your education section.

12. Write an appropriate education section

In your Education section, list the type of degree, your major, your minors, your university, and any honours or awards you received. If you're fresh out of college, include most relevant coursework and extracurricular academic activities. Add your GPA only if it's higher than 3.5 and if you've got less than 6 months of work experience.

13. List your work experience and education in reverse chronological order

Your current or most recent employers or educational institutions go first. Then, you follow them with the ones before them. And then the ones before, and so on.

14. Use bullet points to describe your experience

Bullet points help make your experience section easier to skim so that recruiters will find what interests them in a jiff.

**15. Start all of your bullet points with action verbs
Researched and analysed customer insights”—not**

“Responsible for customer insight researching and analysis.”

**16. Put your most important skills and achievements in the
top third of your resume**

Research has shown that it's the top third of your resume that gets the most eye time from recruiters. If your best wins and strengths aren't there, no one will ever see them.

17. Place your skills section in a highly visible spot

In today's hiring industry, skills are getting more and more important. Make sure the skills section on your resume pops.

18. Tailor your content to match the job description

I can't stress that enough. You *need* a separate resume for each position you're targeting. It's called "tailoring" your resume, and it's the most effective strategy that very few job seekers use.

19. Touch upon the most important requirements

Pay close attention to the section named "Requirements" in the job description. Make sure to refer to as many of them as possible on your resume – but don't lie about your qualifications.

20. Use keywords from the job offer

Remember when I mentioned the Applicant Tracking Software recruiters use for reviewing resumes? If the ATS is going to be

used to scan your resume, you have to include very specific resume keywords to pass the first-round review.

21. Run your resume through a cloud generator to check if you effectively used keywords

If you're not sure your resume's got the right proportions of all the magic keyword ingredients, run it through a free cloud generator and see if this is the impression you're hoping to make. <https://www.jasondavies.com/wordcloud/>

22. Use a professional email address

One from a professional provider: either Gmail or a personal domain. Yahoo and Hotmail will make you seem stuck in the nineties. Your email address should contain only your first and last names (your middle name is optional) or their acronyms.

23. Include URLs to your online Profiles

If you run an industry blog or have an online portfolio of projects, include a link on your resume. In your contact information, include your LinkedIn and, optionally, Twitter.

24. Check if your URLs are live

Self-explanatory, right? Make sure you don't direct recruiters to online voids.

25. Did you update your social media profiles to match your resume?

Almost 9 out of 10 recruiters will research you online as soon as they start reviewing your application. If they don't like what they see on your LinkedIn, Facebook, or Twitter profiles, you

can kiss your future job goodbye (no matter how great your resume might be).

26. Limit the jobs in your experience section to the last 15 years

Unless extremely prestigious or competitive, don't include positions you held more than 15 years ago. It would make your resume too long and, let's face it, boring.

27. Keep your list of responsibilities under each job entry under six bullet points

Again, do your best to keep your resume brief and to-the-point. Four-six bullet points are enough to showcase your responsibilities and achievements most relevant to the position you're targeting.

28. Show how your responsibilities benefited your past employers

Here's the thing: recruiters know *what* you did. They want to know *how well* you did it and *what you've achieved*. Highlight the impact you have had on your previous employers' successes.

29. Use the PAR (Problem–Action–Result) formula for writing about your best professional achievements

For example, "Developed and executed a new sales strategy that boosted monthly revenue by 36%."

Problem: Revenue was too low.

Action: New sales strategy.

Result: 36% revenue growth.

30. Tell a narrative about your job history in your Experience and Education sections

Recruiters want to see a clear and logical employment progression on your resume. If it's not visible at first glance, for instance, if you've drastically changed industries or if you've got employment gaps longer than 3 months, provide some context and include a brief explanation.

31. Draw attention to your promotions

This is related to the previous point. Highlight your promotions: they're crucial for presenting your career progression. Always say *why* you got promoted—it's okay to do a little bit of showing off!

32. Include numbers and details in your experience and education sections

Numbers stand-out. Vague adjectives don't. So instead of writing that you've helped "significantly reduce costs," say how much exactly.

33. Include an Additional Achievements section

A lot of candidates lie on their resumes—they re-evaluate their skills or present their past duties as more important and impressive than they actually were. That's why you should include an additional achievements section and show recruiters that you are the real deal: list your certificates, industry awards, publications, conferences attended, and courses taken.

34. Use action verbs wherever possible

Make sure you haven't used passive voice on your resume. If you have—try to change it into active. Remember to skip first person pronouns: no, *me*, *myself*, and *I*.

35. Avoid generic buzzwords

Don't get me wrong. Using industry-specific buzzwords is a must. For instance, if you're writing a digital marketing resume, you've got to mention terms such as PPC, SEM, or CRO. But don't ever use meaningless worn-out phrases such as "teamwork," "go-getter," "synergy," or (this one's the worst) "best of breed" on your resume.

36. Consider adding a hobby and interests' section to your resume

Think it's too corny? Think again. Nowadays, most companies want their prospective employees to be a cultural fit.

37. Save your resume as a PDF

Once you've finished writing your resume, save it in a PDF file. But, before you send it, reread the job description and see if the company you're applying to accepts PDFs. If not—send your resume in good old' .DOC.

38. Name your file "Your-Name-Resume"

For instance, "John-Smith-Resume." No, not just "Resume1," and definitely not "Copy (1)."

39. Have another person proofread your resume

Reach out to someone who knows you professionally and give them your resume to read through. Ask them if you've missed anything significant, or if the impression your resume makes is in line with your professional strengths.

40. Trim any unnecessary fat from your resume

Make every word earn its place on your resume. If a given sentence or phrase doesn't help you present yourself as the best candidate for this particular job—get rid of it. That said, remember that your resume should be as long as it needs to be. Don't obsess over trying to fit everything into one page.

41. Proofread your resume using a tool like Grammarly

Yeah, I know what you're thinking: "I don't need this, I've got my MS Word spell check always on." But [Grammarly](#) does more than just correct typos: it points out awkward syntax, unusual word pairing, and makes sure your wording is diverse enough for you not to sound like a primary school pupil.

42. Write a cover letter

Oh yes, you *do* need one. Why? First of all, it lets you tell a compelling story your resume can't. Secondly—45 out of 100 recruiters won't even get around to reviewing your resume if there's no cover letter attached. So, sending a cover letter basically doubles your chances of getting hired.

43. Make your cover letter consistent with your resume

Make sure your contact information is the same on both documents and double-check if certain pieces of information don't contradict one another.

44. Find the contact details of the hiring manager

Sending your application, the right way directly to the hiring manager is twice more efficient than applying via job boards or submitting your application to an address like jobs@company.com. Do your best to find the hiring manager's contact detail on his or her company's website or on LinkedIn.

45. Check to see if your resume doesn't include anything it shouldn't

Once you've finished making your resume and cover letter, leave them be for 24 hours. Then, give them one final read and ask yourself if you like what it tells about you.

46. Ask yourself if you're happy that it's over

That's right. If you've followed all 45 steps above, your job application is good to go. Keep your phone charged and ready and wait for the interview call-ins!