Résumé Checklist

This list will help you **construct a professional résumé with relevant content.** Think about the areas and make notes for each section as appropriate. If a category does not have enough space, use additional paper.

Overall Appearance and Formatting

☐ I used a professional/easy-to-read font (Arial, Georgia, Tahoma, Times New Roman, etc.).

☐ The font size is consistent throughout the résumé; only the heading and section titles are larger.

☐ There is consistent/appropriate spacing between lines and blocks of text. It's easy to differentiate sections.

☐ Bold, underline, and/or italics are used sparingly to enhance readability.

☐ My choice of bullet style is appropriate and consistent. Bullets are closed or open circles. (Check-marks and arrows are not standard.)

☐ The document is of appropriate length: 1-2 pages (standard résumé/private sector), 3-5 pages (federal/government résumé) or 3-10 or more pages (scientific/academic CV), for an undergrad, probably 2-5 pages for the CV.

☐ In a single-page résumé, at least two thirds of the page are filled with text. If there are additional pages, the final page is at least half full. I have not left a couple lines or one item floating on its own page.

☐ I saved the résumé as a PDF to maintain formatting.

☐ There are no graphics, artwork or pictures (unless industry-appropriate).

☐ There are no spelling or grammar errors. Two other people reviewed the résumé and verified this.

☐ I tailored headers to the opportunity where appropriate (e.g., Agricultural Research & Fieldwork, Teaching Experience vs. generic section headers, e.g., Work Experience).

☐ Margins around the outside are no smaller than 0.5" and no larger than 1".

Contact Information/Heading

☐ My name is bolded and in a larger font (14-16 pt) at the top of the page.

☐ I provided an appropriate mailing address. Local or school address, just city and state, or omitting altogether are options.

☐ I included a phone number that I check regularly with an appropriate voice message greeting (format (555) 555-5555 or 555-555-5555).

☐ I provided a professional email address (OSU email is fine until graduation).

☐ Where appropriate, extra professional information has been included: LinkedIn (condensed URL format), portfolio URL or website/online projects URL.

Summary of Qualifications or Professional Summary

☐ Optional; replaces objective section.

☐ My statement is short and simple (1-3 sentences), written in paragraph form without personal pronouns or as a bulleted list.

☐ It includes my most relevant 2-5 skills with language tailored to the position description I am applying to.

Education and Certifications

- ☐ I listed my college/university experience in reverse chronological order. I omitted high school. (Transfer degrees are optional.)
- ☐ I don't include college/university experience that did not result in a degree or certificate (unless there's a relevant reason to include it).
- ☐ I listed my earned or anticipated degree(s) with majors, minors, options, certificates and licenses.
- ☐ I included my projected graduation date next to my ongoing program (e.g., June 2026) vs. explaining that it is expected or anticipated.
- ☐ Optional: GPA of 3.0 or higher is listed. (Include GPA if mentioned in the position requirements. Can opt to include in-major GPA. International students can use U.S. equivalent to different scales.)
- ☐ Where appropriate, I included study abroad, relevant coursework/projects, thesis titles or research (may also go in separate sections).

Work or Professional Experience

- ☐ I listed employer, city, state, job title and dates of employment.
- ☐ I included months and years, not specific days of employment (April 2013, not April 25, 2013).
- ☐ I used bullet points to summarize responsibilities and achievements. They are 1-3 lines each.
- ☐ Each statement begins with an action verb.
- ☐ All verbs for a position are in the same tense (past tense for past experience, present for ongoing).
- ☐ Where appropriate, I use verbs and phrases similar to those in the position description. I didn't copy phrases from the description.
- ☐ I have not used personal pronouns—I, me, my (e.g., I worked on writing a grant).
- ☐ I placed emphasis on results, achievements and transferable skills. I thought about my value from the organization's perspective.
- ☐ Where appropriate, I used numbers, industry terminology and data to show my strengths and knowledge in quantifiable ways.

Additional Résumé Tips

- ☐ I don't have a lot of professional experience yet, so I described course projects in detail, listed skills I've learned in labs or classes, volunteer experiences, club involvement, extracurriculars, etc. to build a case for my field experience.
- ☐ I tailored my résumé to the position/organization I am applying to, prioritizing my most relevant skills and experience.
- ☐ Since employers often only spend about 6 seconds looking at résumés, I reviewed my résumé asking what they would see in that time.
- ☐ I used key words from the position description or company website.
- ☐ I listed my most relevant experience/skills in the top third of the page to catch the reviewer's eye.
- ☐ The whole document is consistent in period usage, date format, header size, spacing width, tenses, etc.
- ☐ I have not included personal references on the résumé; rather I compiled references in a separate sheet.
- ☐ I omitted personal information (marital status, age, religion, gender).

Additional Tips for CVs

- ☐ I included sections on to research, teaching, funding/grants, service, publications, projects, conference attendance, trainings and workshops, memberships, awards, etc.
- ☐ I have been concise but thorough in explaining my accomplishments and skills, not limiting myself to 1-2 pages like a standard résumé.
- ☐ My focus has been on scholarly or academic pursuits, but I remembered to include industry and work experiences.
- ☐ My CV is balanced, showing involvement in community/organization/service and real-world experience in addition to research interests.
- ☐ I followed the appropriate format (Chicago, MLA, etc.) for my citations.
- ☐ My name is bolded when listed in multi-author publications.
- ☐ The CV is chronological within sections. The most relevant sections to the position/organization are prioritized.
- ☐ My last name and page number are on each page footer.
- ☐ I have quantified where possible (e.g. number of students taught in courses, number of samples run).
- ☐ I avoided dense paragraphs and overly long bullets that might decrease digestibility of content.
- ☐ I haven't just listed jobs, projects and classes; I included sub-bullets with context explaining what I did and what results I achieved.
- ☐ I clearly mentioned my current assistantship or role with the university so I don't appear to have a multi-year work gap.