

## CAREER TOOLKIT

# Your Résumé, Step by Step

*A clear guide to building a one-page resume that shows your strengths*

**How to use this guide**

The guide is to help you through completing your résumé template. There is a beginner template for those with little to no work-based experience and a more advanced template for those students with more experience. Be sure to access those templates to help you get started! For consistency, there is a template within this guide to reference as you read along.

Work through this guide in order: do's and don'ts, then a sample resume, then build your own.

**Keep consistent & save everything with a professional filename**

Use the exact same professional name on your résumé, cover letter, LinkedIn, and references — skip personal nicknames and pick one version of your name to use everywhere. (Ex: Jane A. Smith, John Jones, Maria González)

Use one clean, professional email address for your job search, like firstname.lastname@gmail.com. Skip nicknames, numbers, and old addresses from when you were younger. This may require you to set up a new account.

Save two versions of this résumé: a Word document (.docx) you keep editing, and a PDF you actually send when you apply — a PDF keeps your formatting locked in place (Hint: go to File > Save As > PDF).

**Name your files clearly: FirstLastName\_Resume.docx and FirstLastName\_Resume.pdf.**

## BEFORE YOU START

### 1. Résumé do's and don'ts

A résumé has a specific job: to get you an interview. Employers often spend less than a minute on a first look, so clean and clear formatting matters as much as what you say. Here's what to aim for — and what to skip.

| DO                                                                                | DON'T                                                                                |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ✓ Keep it to one page                                                             | ✗ Go over one page                                                                   |
| ✓ Use a simple, easy-to-read font — see the box below                             | ✗ Use decorative, script, or hard-to-read fonts                                      |
| ✓ Use 11-12 pt font for body text, 14–16 pt for your name and headings            | ✗ Shrink text below 10 pt to fit more in                                             |
| ✓ Put your <b>Education</b> section near the top, especially as a current student | ✗ Include a photo, age, or personal details                                          |
| ✓ Use consistent formatting for dates, headings, and bullets                      | ✗ Write in dense paragraphs                                                          |
| ✓ Start each bullet with a strong action verb                                     | ✗ Start bullets with "I" — use short phrases, not full sentences                     |
| ✓ Use bullet points instead of paragraphs                                         | ✗ List high school once you're a couple years into college                           |
| ✓ Leave white space — margins of about 0.75–1 inch                                | ✗ List references or write "available upon request" — save that for a separate sheet |
| ✓ List experience in reverse chronological order (most recent first)              | ✗ Use an unprofessional email address                                                |
| ✓ Save and send it as a PDF unless asked for a different format                   | ✗ Skip proofreading and hope for the best                                            |
| ✓ Proofread it yourself, then ask someone else to check it too                    |                                                                                      |

#### Quick reference: fonts & sizes

Fonts: Calibri, Arial, or Garamond are safe, professional choices. Times New Roman also works if you want a more traditional look. If you want to use color for your headings, choose Navy Blue.

Name: 16–20 pt, bold. Section headings: 14–16 pt, bold. Body text: 10–12 pt.

Use the same font for the entire document. It's fine to bold headings and job titles for structure.

## SEE IT IN ACTION

### 2. Sample résumés

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Here are two full sample résumés that follow the do's above: a Beginner version for students with little or no work experience yet, and an Advanced version for students further along.

Use either as a model — **not** something to copy word for word. The initial goal is to build your draft résumé. The draft is the foundation from which to build. Once you have a solid draft, it is so much easier to develop a résumé to adapt or tailor to a specific job with the job description's keywords. The draft résumé is the critical first step in a job search.



## SAMPLE 1 OF 2

### Beginner resume

For a student who's just getting started — a little campus involvement and one work related experience is plenty to work with.

#### SAMPLE 1 — SEE HOW IT ALL COMES TOGETHER

### Jordan Rivera

Putney, VT | (802) 555-0148 | jordan.rivera@email.com

### EDUCATION

#### B.A. in Business Studies (Intended)

Landmark College, Putney, VT

*Expected May 2029*

### EXPERIENCE

#### Volunteer — Putney Community Food Shelf, Putney, VT

- Sort and organize food donations weekly
- Greet and assist community members with patience and care

*Fall 2025–Present*

### ACTIVITIES

#### Best Buddies Club — Member, Landmark College

*Fall 2025–Present*

### SKILLS

Technical — [programs, tools, and systems] ← **NOTE: remove text in brackets and the brackets after you are done**

Google Workspace (Docs, Slides)

Interpersonal — [how you communicate and work with others]

Teamwork, Active listening

Executive Functioning — [how you organize, plan, and manage tasks]

Time management, Following through on commitments

Additional — [languages, certifications, or licenses]

Conversational Spanish

\*Helpful hint: increase the font size if you want your résumé to take up more space on the page.

### Advanced resume

For a student further along — more experience, an objective statement, and optional sections like certifications and coursework.

#### SAMPLE 2 — SEE HOW IT ALL COMES TOGETHER ON ONE PAGE

## Jordan Rivera

Putney, VT | (802) 555-0148 | jordan.rivera@email.com | linkedin.com/in/jordan-rivera-landmark

### OBJECTIVE

Motivated Business Studies student at Landmark College seeking an entry-level marketing or administrative role to apply skills in customer service, organization, and content creation.

### EDUCATION

#### B.A. in Business Studies

*Expected May 2027*

Landmark College, Putney, VT | GPA: 3.6

### EXPERIENCE

#### Front Desk Assistant — Landmark College Admissions Office, Putney, VT

*Sept 2024–Present*

- Managed front desk operations and greeted 20+ visitors daily
- Organized and updated a database of prospective student contacts, improving follow-up response time
- Trained two new student workers on office procedures

#### Marketing Volunteer — Putney Community Food Shelf, Putney, VT

*Summer 2025*

- Created social media content that helped increase event attendance by 30%
- Coordinated volunteer schedules for a team of 8

### SKILLS

**Technical — [programs, tools, and systems]** ← **NOTE: remove text and brackets after you are done**

Microsoft Office, Canva, Google Workspace (Docs, Sheets, Slides)

**Interpersonal — [how you communicate and work with others]**

Customer service, Teamwork, Active listening

**Executive Functioning — [how you organize, plan, and manage tasks]**

Time management, Organization, Adaptability

**Additional — [languages, certifications, or licenses]**

Conversational Spanish, Valid driver's license

### CERTIFICATIONS (OPTIONAL)

CPR/First Aid Certified — American Red Cross, 2025

### COURSEWORK (OPTIONAL)

Marketing Principles, Organizational Behavior

\*Helpful hint: If you do not have any certifications but are a member of campus clubs or have done an independent study, consider replacing “Certifications” with “Activities”. If you use these sections, remember to remove the word “optional”.

## A CLOSER LOOK

### 3. Turning your experience into a bullet point

Struggling with how to describe something you did? Start with what happened, then sharpen it into a short, specific phrase and use action verbs. There is a table with action verbs on the next page.

**Instead of this:**

*"I was in charge of stuff at the front desk and helped customers."*

**Try this:**

*"Managed front desk operations and resolved customer questions for 20+ visitors daily."*

**Notice what changed:** it starts with an action verb, drops "I," and adds a specific detail (20+ visitors daily). You don't need exact numbers for everything — even stating "weekly," "regularly," or "a small team" adds useful detail.

## NOW IT'S YOUR TURN

### 4. Build your resume

Fill in each section below in order. Education goes near the top of your finished resume — right after your contact information (and your Objective, if you use one).

#### Step 1 — Contact information

**Name:**

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**Phone:**

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**Email:**

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**City / State:**

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**LinkedIn URL (optional):**

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#### Step 2 — Objective (optional)

A 1–2 sentence summary of what you're looking for. This is optional, but can help fill out your résumé if you don't have much work experience yet.

*Example: "Motivated [Major] student at Landmark College seeking an entry-level [job title] position to apply skills in [skill 1], [skill 2], and [skill 3]. Eager to contribute [key strength] while growing within a [type of environment] environment."*

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### Step 3 — Education (include all post-high school education)

School (s):

Program / Major:

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Expected graduation:

GPA (only if 3.5+, optional):

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### Step 4 — Experience

Include jobs, internships, volunteer work, or major class or club projects. Copy this block for each experience you want to add — most resumes list 2–4.

Job / role title:

Organization:

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Dates:

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Write 2–3 bullets per job/role title. Try: "[Action verb] \_\_\_\_\_, which helped / resulted in \_\_\_\_\_."

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#### Action verb bank

Stuck on how to start a bullet? Pick a verb below that best fits your experience. For more inspiration, check <https://career.ucla.edu/resources/active-verb-list-for-resumes/>

|              |           |             |
|--------------|-----------|-------------|
| Organized    | Led       | Created     |
| Assisted     | Managed   | Designed    |
| Researched   | Solved    | Coordinated |
| Built        | Trained   | Improved    |
| Communicated | Analyzed  | Supported   |
| Wrote        | Presented | Planned     |

## Step 5 — Skills

Sort your skills into these four groups. You don't need a long list of skills in each group — 2–4 items is plenty.

### Technical — specific programs, tools, or systems you know how to use

*Example: Microsoft Excel, Google Workspace, Canva, Javascript*

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### Interpersonal — how you communicate and work with others

*Example: Communication, Teamwork, Active listening*

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### Executive Functioning — how you organize, plan, and manage tasks

*Example: Time management, Problem-solving, Adaptability*

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### Additional — languages, certifications, or licenses

*Example: Spanish (conversational), CPR/First Aid Certified, Valid driver's license*

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## Step 6 — Certifications (optional)

List the certification name, who issued it, and the year.

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## Step 7 — Coursework (optional)

List 1–3 classes that are directly relevant to the job you want.

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## Before you save or send it, check:

- ☐ Does it fit on one page?
  - ☐ Is Education near the top?
  - ☐ Is the font and size consistent throughout?
  - ☐ Does each bullet start with an action verb?
  - ☐ Did you proofread it — and ask someone else to as well?
  - ☐ Is it saved as a Word docx, and \*PDF, named clearly (e.g., FirstLast\_Resume.docx, FirstLast\_Resume.pdf)?
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**Keep going**

Landmark College has additional resources to support your career journey.

Career Advisors can help you with career planning, coaching, providing more in-depth “how-to” advice and resources as you grow your professional skills for life after Landmark.

Where can you make an appointment with a Career Advisor? Right here at this link:

<https://www.landmark.edu/academics/career-services>