



Student Resume Guide

These days a great resume is essential for every student. Use our **5 Steps to a Head-Turning Resume** and **Resume Checklist** to get your resume organized, then use our **Resume Content Guide** for specific details on what to include.

5 STEPS TO A HEAD-TURNING RESUME

1. **Define your skills, talents, and passions.** This is one of the most important parts of the resume building process. You must genuinely believe you have something unique to offer (and you do!).

For each activity or experience you want to include on your resume, first reflect on your contributions, the problems you solved, the projects you initiated, and your proudest moments.

Jot these things down, and be clear on what they are before you even draft the resume itself.

2. **Identify your audience** (internship, college, job?) and craft your resume according to your desired outcome and goals.

What qualities does that audience value? What are they looking for in a student/candidate? How can you connect your experiences to those values? What aspects of your resume will most appeal to this audience? Highlight those!

3. **Demonstrate your strengths through specific examples.** You've probably heard this rule a lot in your writing, and it applies to resume writing too: Show, don't tell!

Don't simply say you are a leader, demonstrate your leadership through projects you led, ideas you taught others, visions you made tangible, etc.

4. **Assemble your resume:** use strong action verbs, clear and precise language, and appealing visual presentation.

5. **Proofread and get feedback.** Allow for a number of days or even weeks between reviews, whenever possible. This will help you see your resume with fresh eyes.

RESUME CHECKLIST

- Put entries under each category in *reverse* chronological order -- most recent first
- Don't focus only on names of activities or titles of positions you held. Tell the reader what you actually *did*. Use "active verbs" -- here's a resource that can help: [Resume verbs](#)

- ❑ Rearrange the order of the categories depending on what’s most important to you, what experience the receiver of the resume may be looking for, and/or what presents your background in the most-impressive light
- ❑ Double-check the Activities List on any college application -- if you can’t present enough detail to explain what you did, see whether the college will allow you to attach your resume OR use the detail you put in your resume in the Additional Information section of the CommonApp.

RESUME CONTENT GUIDE

Your student resume should include the following:

Extracurricular Activities

- This includes school clubs, afterschool programs or activities

SAMPLE ENTRY

- 2016 Susan B. Anthony High School’s Debate Team
 - Elected as President of 5-person management team
 - Led nationally-ranked 30-member team to 6 consecutive national titles
 - Nationally-ranked policy debater: independent research on U.S. healthcare policy, worldwide global warming
 - Participated in over 15 debate tournaments per year
 - Organized practices, assigned research
 - Trained new members in techniques of logical analysis
- 2015 Vice President
- 2014 Member

Internships/Summer Programs/Independent Research Work

- This is where you put “longer-term” experiences that are more “pre-professional” in nature

SAMPLE ENTRY

- 2016 Summer Debate Program, Georgetown University
 - Selected as one of 300 out of 1,000 applicants to 6-week program
 - Worked with nationally-ranked debate coaches in small seminar settings, learning advanced debate techniques
 - Specialized training in policy debate
 - In-depth research on the US educational system, and international development projects sponsored by the World Bank

Community Service

- This is where you put volunteer experiences

SAMPLE ENTRY

- 2016 Susan B. Anthony Tutoring Club

- Founder, President of 40-person volunteer organization to tutor Susan B. Anthony students in STEM subjects
- Recruited over 40 high-achieving STEM students as tutors
- Created teacher referral process through discussions with faculty members
- Coordinated scheduling for tutors and client students
- Personally tutored four students whose grades increased from failing to A-B range

Sports

SAMPLE ENTRY

- 2016 Co-Captain, Susan B. Anthony Varsity Field Hockey Team
 - Elected by 30 team-members
 - Led team to 3 consecutive statewide championships
 - Co-managed practice; invented and taught team drills
 - Worked closely with coach on game strategy
- 2015 Junior Varsity

Skills/Other

- This is where you would include piano playing, visual arts, individual sports, etc.

SAMPLE ENTRY

- Trumpet
 - 2015-2016 1st chair, Susan B. Anthony High School Marching and Symphonic Band
 - 2016 1st chair, California Youth Symphony
 - Selected through audition

Honors/Awards

- Include math competitions and results, robotics competitions and results, computer competitions and results. Since this entry will be at the end, by the time the reader gets to this section, the reader will know what activities you've engaged in and this list will make sense. You may want to organize it by category of activity, and then reverse chronological order within categories
- If you have both individual and team awards -- and there are enough of them -- you may want to separate out "individual" and "team" as two different categories
- Make sure you clarify what you won -- don't just say "First place," if there was a "first place" winner in many categories, or one per class and many classes. Colleges and competitive internships and programs have been admitting high school students for decades, and have probably admitted students from your school -- don't "inflate" your record
- Don't include "awards" received for "just showing up" -- i.e., "participation" recognition for numbers of hours of community service, especially if this was required

SAMPLE ENTRY

- Debate
 - 2016 1st place, individual policy event, Swarthmore Debate Tournament (national)
 - 2015 3rd place, team policy event, Georgetown University Invitational (national)
 - 2014 1st place, individual policy event, Western region, US Debate Association Tournament