

HOW TO USE THE COLLEGE GRAD RESUME TEMPLATE

START HERE

- Remove the placeholder information and enter your information throughout the document.
 - Delete any section you don't need. Most people won't use all of them.
 - Copy a job block if you have more jobs to add. Delete the ones you don't use.
 - Save as a PDF before you send it.
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1. TARGET JOB TITLE

The job you want goes here. This makes who you are, what you do, and what you're looking for immediately clear.

2. YOUR TWO-SENTENCE SUMMARY

The summary should give a quick snapshot to describe your goals and qualifications.

Example: *Recent biology grad with two years of hands-on lab experience running PCR, cell culture, and sample tracking for a university genetics lab. Seeking a laboratory technician role in biotech or clinical research.*

3. EDUCATION

Include your degree, school, city and state, and your graduation month and year. If you haven't graduated yet, write "Expected [month, year]".

Relevant coursework is optional and works best when it lines up with the job posting. List course names, not course numbers, and only include courses that relate to the role.

4. THE JOB PARAGRAPH

One paragraph per job, describing both the employer and what you did there.

A reader likely doesn't know anything about your previous experience, and you don't want them guessing. Use 2-3 sentences to describe the scope and scale (it will provide context for all of your accomplishments!).

Pick the version that fits your situation and delete the others:

- Selected for [internship, fellowship, or program] — anything you applied and were chosen for. Add the numbers if you have them: 1 of 12 chosen from 400 applicants.
- Assigned to [team, project, or department] — you were placed on something specific, with no application story.
- Joined [lab or department] — research roles.

For the employer description, use whatever you know: what the organization does, number of staff, number of clients or patients served, number of students enrolled, research funding.

Don't know the numbers? Check the company's website (About or Careers page), its LinkedIn page, or a recent press release. You can also ask an AI assistant (always check for accuracy before you use information from AI!):

Prompt: *Roughly how big is [company name] in [city, state]? Give me staff count, number of locations, annual revenue, and what they make or sell. Don't make anything up—if you aren't sure of a figure, tell me that.*

Then summarize your primary responsibilities in that role, starting with an action verb (avoid "responsible for"). Use present tense for a role you still have, past tense for one you've left.

Example — Selected for: Selected for a 10-week summer research fellowship at a 250-person biotech company developing gene therapies, 1 of 12 chosen from 400 applicants. Ran cell culture assays and logged results in the company's electronic lab notebook.

Example — Joined: Joined a 12-person molecular genetics lab studying antibiotic resistance, funded by a \$1.2M NIH grant. Prepared samples, ran PCR and gel electrophoresis, and maintained the lab's sample database.

5. IMPACT STATEMENTS

Not what you were assigned. What changed because you did it. Include specific numbers whenever possible.

Stuck on what to write? Reflect on these questions to get you started:

- What are you most proud of from this role?
- What did you actually produce or hand off at the end?
- Did you fix or improve something during your time there?
- What did your supervisor trust you to do on your own by the end?

Weak: Assisted with research in a molecular genetics lab.

Strong: Ran 200+ PCR reactions across 3 studies and rebuilt the sample tracking spreadsheet, cutting retrieval time from 15 minutes to under 2.

Don't know the numbers? Think about how many of something you did, how many people you helped, or how long it took. If your number is a rough estimate, say "approximately" to keep it honest.

6. LEADERSHIP & CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT

This section is for any role where you were responsible for other people or for keeping something running. Not just officer titles — resident advisor, teaching assistant, team captain, orientation leader, peer tutor, work-study supervisor, club treasurer, and event organizer all belong here.

Write it like a job. Start with one sentence describing the organization and its size, then two or three impact statements.

Size matters here and most people leave it out. "President, Marketing Club" tells a reader nothing about whether that was nine people or two hundred. Use whatever you know: number of members, chapters, budget managed, events run per year, students served.

Example: Led a 60-member student chapter with a \$12k annual budget. Ran weekly meetings, managed 4 committee chairs, and organized the spring career fair.

7. SKILLS

Two skills layouts are included. Keep the one that works better for you and delete the other.

List things with names. Software, systems, lab or studio equipment, methods, languages.

Examples: Python, R, SPSS, PCR, Qualtrics, Adobe Illustrator, Excel, Spanish.

Don't list:

- Skills the job you're applying for doesn't use (check the job posting!)
- Words that describe you: team player, hardworking, detail-oriented, fast learner, multitasker
- Things you're familiar with but couldn't speak to in an interview
- Things nearly every applicant has: Microsoft Word, email, internet research, basic computer skills

If you can't come up with 5-6 items that pass this test, delete the skills section entirely.

8. ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

This is where jobs go that aren't related to the role you're applying for — restaurant and food service, retail, campus dining, warehouse, babysitting, rideshare.

List the job title, employer, and location. No bullet points and no dates needed. The point is to show you've worked, not to describe the work.

If any of these jobs is relevant to what you're applying for — e.g. you worked retail and you're applying for customer service roles — move it up to your Experience section and give it a paragraph and bullet points instead.

BEFORE YOU SEND

Delete any sections that aren't relevant or don't apply to you. Publications · Licenses & Certifications · Leadership & Campus Involvement · Honors & Awards · Languages · Additional Experience

Avoid flowery language and excessive jargon. Stay away from descriptive words that don't prove anything (e.g. results-driven, passionate, dynamic, proven track record, detail-oriented, team player). Use industry terms only if that's what people in your field call it, not because it sounds more impressive.

Check for accuracy. Dates, job titles, employer names, and numbers. Every claim should be something you can explain if someone asks two follow-up questions. Check your own email and phone number while you're there!