



Writing a resume for your first job

Are you about to apply for your first job? When you phoned to enquire, you may have been told to send in a resume (also known as a CV – “curriculum vitae”). Are you wondering how you can write a resume when you haven’t any previous work experience to include? It’s a good idea to start working on your resume as soon as possible, from about Year 10 onwards, and keep adding to it and editing it so that when you need it, it’s ready to go. You will still need to adapt it to suit the job you are applying for, but you will have the structure organised.



What to include in your resume:

- contact details
- skills
- education
- awards/achievements
- availability
- objective or summary statement
- work experience
- volunteering
- special interests
- references

Not all of these may be relevant to every job – choose the ones which apply to your situation.

Contact details

Include:

- full name (given name followed by family name is usual in Australia)
- mobile phone number
- email
- home address

Will your email address help you get the job?

Your email address should show you as a responsible, professional person. So if your current email address is partyanimal@hotmail.com or nerdynellie@yahoo.com think about getting a new email address, such as nelliesmith@gmail.com

If your names are common, and are already taken, try adding your middle initial, or using a dot or a number, e.g. nelliefsmith@gmail.com or nellie.smith@gmail.com or nelliesmith33@gmail.com



Week Twenty One



Objective or summary statement

This is a short (25 words or less) statement about who you are and what your career objective is. Some examples:

VCE/VCAL student looking for a trade apprenticeship. Long-term objective: start my own business.

Recent school leaver seeking to start a career in administration

Recent school leaver seeking to start a career in hospitality

Experienced customer service employee seeking full-time opportunities

Final-year student seeking graduate-level opportunity in a human resources position

The statement should be matched to the job you are applying for. If you're applying for a job in a café, don't say your career objective is to be an accountant. You could say:

Accountancy student looking for an opportunity to develop skills in customer service

Skills

When you first start looking for work, and lack experience, it's important to let employers know the skills you can offer. You can include specific skills, such as "fluent in Spanish"; "competent user of MS Excel" and also more general skills such as time management, communication skills, record keeping, cash management. You may be able to show how you learnt or developed these skills in activities such as volunteering, sports participation, Scouts/Guides, helping with school events such as fetes or concerts.

Work Experience

Are you thinking **"But I don't have any work experience!"**? Think again: there are other ways you might have something you can list here, apart from paid employment. Of course, if you have had a paid job, even if it was casual, part-time, a short-term or holiday job, this is where you mention it. For example:

Customer assistant at Barry's Burger Bar

December 2019-January 2020 (school holiday position)

Key responsibilities:

- received and recorded customer orders
- managed cash and EFTPOS payments

Achievements:

- developed health and safety protocols for the business, and implemented improved cleaning routine



Week Twenty



You could include: work placements you completed through school work experience programs; internships or other voluntary work placements; casual jobs for friends or neighbours, such as babysitting, lawn-mowing, house-sitting, pet care.

Using dot points, list the **key responsibilities** you had and the **skills** you learned through the job.

Volunteering

85% of Australian employers regard volunteering experience as credible work experience, so make sure you include it, either as a separate section or under Work Experience. List voluntary work for clubs, sporting groups, not-for-profit organisations, your school; leadership roles (school captain, student council representative) and explain how the skills you developed are transferable to the work situation. Did you learn to be reliable and fulfil commitments that you made? Were you on time? Were you willing to help out with a range of tasks?



For example, if you're going for a retail position, you can show that your participation in a school fundraising event gave you experience in handling cash and dealing with customers.

If you were a member of a sporting team, you have developed teamwork skills:

- getting along well with other people
- sorting out problems between people
- communicating clearly, so everyone knows what they should be doing
- being ready to ask for help if you don't understand something.

Give the name of the group or organisation, and the time during which you volunteered, e.g. Monbulk Cub Scout Pack Leader, 2018-2020



Week Fourteen



Education

List your highest level of educational qualification, and if you are currently studying, name the course. Name the school/college/university, and give the year. If you have qualifications in more than one area, list them. For example:

- Certificate III in Hospitality at William Angliss Institute – course commenced March 2020, part-time – in progress
- Year 11, four VCE Unit 1 & 2 subjects, including English and Food Studies, at Leongatha Secondary College, 2019
- Completed: Food Handling Certificate (Level 1) at Food Safety First (RTO 41127), online course, January 2020

Awards / Achievements

These can be listed along with the activities to which they relate: for example, if you received an award as a volunteer, list it along with the details of your volunteer work. If you received a scholarship or school award, list it under your educational qualifications.

You may have a personal achievement which shows attributes of your character which an employer will value. For example, you may have participated in a charity fundraiser such as the Heart Foundation's My Marathon. You could list it like this:

I participated in The Heart Foundation's MyMarathon, a fitness and fundraising challenge to run, jog or walk 42.2 kilometres at your own pace during October, while helping to raise vital funds for lifesaving heart disease research. I set a goal of 50 km and \$5,000, and achieved my goal with the help of family and friends. This challenge showed that I could persevere to reach a goal, that I was able to communicate about an important issue, and showed that I am dedicated and reliable, all useful traits in an employee.



Special Interests

It is not essential to list hobbies or interests, but if you have room, it can help to show that you are involved in your community and a well-rounded person.

Availability

If necessary, you can include information such as “Available to start work immediately” or if it is a part-time position “Available Thursday and Friday evenings and all day Saturday and Sunday” or any information of this type which might limit your ability to accept the job if it is offered to you.



Week Twenty One



References

Make sure that you have 2 or 3 people who are willing to be your referees. **You must ask them first!**

List the following:

- name of referee
- business or organisation name
- referee's role in business or organisation
- phone number
- email address if available

Your referees could be former employers, work placement supervisors, adult volunteers at organisations where you have volunteered, teachers. They should not be members of your family.

Unless you are asked to include referees in your resume, it is quite acceptable to write "References available upon request". Let your referees know that you are applying for jobs.

Further information

You can find more help with writing a resume at these websites:

<https://www.youthcentral.vic.gov.au/jobs-and-careers/applying-for-a-job/what-is-a-resume>

<https://kidshelpline.com.au/teens/issues/resume-writing>

<https://www.training.com.au/ed/resume-no-experience/>

<https://artofsmart.com.au/how-to-write-your-first-resume/>

<https://www.seek.com.au/learning/careers/your-next-job/job-preparation/how-to-write-a-resume-for-your-first-job>