

# Writing Resumes: A Guide for Undergrads

## What is a Resume?

A resume is a snapshot of the education, experience, and skills you have that are valuable to an employer. Its main purpose is to convince a potential employer to invite you for an interview – to make them want to learn more about you. Resumes are used to screen applicants and determine which candidates have the background most closely matching the employers' needs. It answers the questions: “have you”, “can you”, and “will you do the job”.



## Before writing a resume, you should...

- Research the industry and the job so you fully understand what the employer is seeking
- Learn to speak their language. Pay attention to vocabulary that is particular to the industry
- Learn about the trends developing in the industry
- Identify core skills needed for the job so you can highlight and emphasize your relevant prior experiences and skills



## To craft a successful resume, you should...

- Be strategic and intentional when choosing your relevant activities and accomplishments. Choose experiences that are relevant to your application rather than trying to fit a list of everything you've done on one page.
- Quickly and succinctly capture an employer's interest by tailoring your resume. Most employers only spend 30 seconds reviewing a resume!
- Emphasize and quantify accomplishments rather than simply listing responsibilities in your past experiences. Be as specific as possible! For example: “designed and delivered 20 math tutoring lessons to a group of seven fifth and sixth graders”.
- Highlight transferable skills, which are skills you acquired in one context or situation that are valuable in another. Examples include: communication, teamwork, organizational, etc.



## Do's and Don'ts

- **Do** proofread your resume for grammar and spelling.
- **Do** quantify and be specific whenever possible For example: “Coordinated the planning of a 4-day student run conference for 100 participants, including accommodation and venues”
- **Do** use consistent formatting with your font, bullet points, alignment, and spacing.
- **Do** organize the information on your resume in reverse chronological order.
- **Do** pay close attention to verb tenses in your bullets.
- **Do** keep your resume to one page.
- **Do** be truthful about your accomplishments without undervaluing your experiences.
- **Don't** use resume templates.
- **Don't** use phrases like “responsible for” and “was in charge of”
- **Don't** say what you were supposed to do, say what you did
- **Don't** begin bullets with “I” or use complete sentences
- **Don't** include personal information such as your social security number, age, or citizenship details
- **Don't** list unrelated, minor duties such as “opened mail” or “filed documents”



# Undergrad Resume Guide



## Resume Sections

- **Contact Information:** always put your current address, phone number, and UChicago email address at the top of the page
- **Education:** starting with your UChicago BA, list your degrees, major/minor, university, expected date of graduation, study abroad experiences, and GPA (if above 3.00).
- **Honors:** in this section, include your academic honors such as Dean's List, scholarships, or honors societies. These can also be listed as a sub-section under education.
- **Experience:** include your employment, internships, significant campus leadership offices, volunteer work, and relevant class/research projects. Make sure to include your job title, the name of the organization, location, and dates worked. Do not worry about separating your paid and unpaid experiences, remember the focus should be on emphasizing duties, responsibilities, and skills that are appropriate to the position you're applying for
- **Activities & Interests:** list college-related activities including student government, fraternities/sororities, student clubs, and sports activities etc. that have not been mentioned elsewhere. These activities can also be included in Experience.
- **Skills:** some basic skills to include in this section are foreign language proficiencies, computer programs, and certifications



Below is a list of powerful action words to use on your resume:

**Management:** Administered, Analyzed, Assigned, Attained, Chaired, Consolidated, Contracted, Coordinated, Delegated, Developed, Directed, Evaluated, Executed, Improved, Increased, Organized, Oversaw, Planned, Prioritized, Produced, Recommended, Reviewed, Scheduled, Strengthened, Supervised

**Communication:** Addressed, Arbitrated, Arranged, Authored, Collaborated, Convinced, Corresponded, Developed, Directed, Drafted, Edited, Enlisted, Formulated, Influenced, Interpreted, Lectured, Mediated, Moderated, Negotiated, Persuaded, Promoted, Publicized, Reconciled, Recruited, Spoke, Translated, Wrote

**Research:** Clarified, Collected, Critiqued, Diagnosed, Evaluated, Examined, Extracted, Identified, Inspected, Interpreted, Interviewed, Investigated, Organized, Reviewed, Summarized, Surveyed, Systematized

**Technical:** Assembled, Built, Calculated, Computed, Designed, Devised, Engineered, Fabricated, Maintained, Operated, Overhauled, Programmed, Remodeled, Repaired, Solved, Upgraded

**Teaching:** Adapted, Advised, Clarified, Coached, Communicated, Coordinated, Demystified, Developed, Enabled, Encouraged, Evaluated, Explained, Facilitated, Guided, Informed, Instructed, Persuaded, Set Goals, Stimulated, Trained

**Financial:** Administered, Allocated, Analyzed, Appraised, Audited, Balanced, Budgeted, Calculated, Computed, Developed, Forecasted, Managed, Marketed, Planned, Projected, Researched

**Creative:** Acted, Conceptualized, Created, Customized, Designed, Developed, Directed, Established, Fashioned, Founded, Illustrated, Initiated, Instituted, Integrated, Introduced, Invented, Originated, Performed, Planned, Revitalized, Shaped

**Helping:** Assessed, Assisted, Clairified, Coached, Counseled, Demonstrated, Diagnosed, Educated, Expedited, Facilitated, Familiarized, Guided, Motivated, Referred, Rehabilitated, Represented

**Clerical/Detail Oriented:** Approved, Arranged, Catalogued, Classified, Collected, Compiled, Dispatched, Executed, Generated, Implemented, Inspected, Monitored, Operated, Organized, Prepared, Processed, Purchased, Recorded, Retrieved, Screened, Specified, Systematized, Tabulated, Validated

## Resume Template

### YOUR NAME

Street Address

City, State Zip Code

Telephone Number

youremail@uchicago.edu

### EDUCATION

**Institution**, City, State

**Degree**, expected Month Year

**GPA**: X.XX/4.00

Relevant Courses: *[Note: This is optional, however if you do choose to include courses, refrain from adding course numbers because it may not mean as much to an outside audience.]*

**Name of High School**, City, State

**Diploma**, Month Year

*[Note: Include GPA, class rank, or any other exceptional academic honor that might inform employers of your scholastic achievements. By the third year, most students should take their high school off their resume. Exceptions to this include if you want to establish a geographic tie to your hometown, or if your high school has strong name recognition or an alumni network.]*

### EXPERIENCE

**Organization**, City, State

**Title**, Month Year – Month Year [Note: you can bold your title or your organization – whichever is more relevant/important, but be consistent and keep the location with the organization]

- Describe your experience, skills, etc. in bullet form

*[Note: Include bulleted description above. Start with action verbs describing your skills and include details that will help employers understand your accomplishments, skills, knowledge, personal characteristics, and experience level. Include quantity, frequency, or impact of your work whenever possible. Consider answering the following questions to help you write more effective bullet points, but do not use sub-bullets in the resume; longer descriptions may lend themselves to using sentence fragment/paragraph style instead of bullets:*

- *What did you do? What were the results of your work?*
- *What were your accomplishments?*
- *How did you help the organization? What impact did your tasks have on your colleagues, your department, or the organization as a whole?*
- *What did you learn? What skills/knowledge did you enhance?*
- *How does this experience relate to your internship/employment goal?]*

### ACTIVITIES, COMMUNITY SERVICE or LEADERSHIP *[Examples of descriptive headings]*

**Title**, Organization, City, State, Dates

*[Note: This section can be formatted exactly like your experience section or you can omit a description. If this section's experience is more relevant to the type of work you're pursuing, consider putting it above experience. Your activities don't have to be separated into different categories; you can always include these activities in your Experience section.]*

### SKILLS

*[Note: List computer, language, and any other skills relevant to the position you're applying for. Other types of skills (e.g., communication skills, organizational skills) should not be listed, but rather incorporated into your descriptions above.]*

Coursework is a great way to demonstrate a familiarity with a particular topic that may not be obvious in your work experience. Choose at least 3 and no more than 5, and ensure that the courses you choose are relevant to the position for which you're applying.

## David Maroon

dmaroon@uchicago.edu | 773-555-1234 | 5454 S. Kimbark Ave., Apt. 5, Chicago, IL 60615

### EDUCATION

#### The University of Chicago

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science

Cumulative GPA: 3.62/4.00

Relevant Coursework: Statistical Models and Methods, Economic Analysis

Racial Injustice, Human Rights: Alien and Citizen

Chicago, IL

Expected, June 2019

The default GPA is cumulative. If a GPA isn't marked, one will assume it is your cumulative GPA. If you are also giving a major GPA, mark it as such. List your GPA to two decimal points.

### EXPERIENCE

#### DonorsChoose.org

Jeff Metcalf Logistics & Business Relations Intern

New York, NY

June 2018-September 2018

- Analyzed special requests and technological demand to account for applications and devices requested
- Created vendor stories and snapshots of vendor-specific classroom materials to present at client meetings
- Formulated vendor performance reports with spend charts and sales trends for client presentations

#### LuminAID

Advertising and Public Relations Intern

Chicago, IL

June 2017-September 2017

- Synthesized marketing research and company goals to create and carry out a summer advertising and PR campaign, including applying Adobe Photoshop/InDesign skills to create marketing materials
- Facilitated the evolution of an enriched company brand through ongoing marketing and client relations efforts

#### Campus Catalyst Consulting

Community Analyst

Chicago, IL

January 2017-March 2017

- Analyzed a teacher training program's application materials to evaluate effectiveness of teacher selection
- Collaborated with a team to improve the application, to develop methods of tracking teacher success, and to provide deliverables to our nonprofit client

#### Chicago Policy Research Team

Student Consultant for the Woodlawn Public Safety Alliance

Chicago, IL

February 2016

- Conducted interviews with residents of Woodlawn to identify perceptions of public safety
- Analyzed qualitative data from the interviews to write a report with recommendations to the client about how to effectively use online media to promote public safety in the community

### LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES

#### Varsity Basketball, University of Chicago

Captain

"Leadership" means being an active participant, i.e. coordinating an event.

Chicago, IL

September 2017-present

- Balance 20+ hour weekly commitment to basketball with full course load
- Manage and organize team offseason workouts, team activities, and participation
- Received NCAA Division II tournament bids, 2017 and 2018

#### Student Government, University of Chicago

Class Representative

Chicago, IL

September 2016-June 2017

- Organized more than 20 campus activities and functions for the student body
- Oversaw the execution of the Spring General Election and Campus Dining Advisory Board

### SKILLS

Computer: Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign

Language: Fluent in German

Mark your knowledge of language as "conversant", "proficient", and "fluent". If it is a dead language, then instead of "conversant" write "beginner".

**Sally Smith**  
smith@uchicago.edu

*School Address:*  
5412 S University Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60637  
(773) 555-7864

*Permanent Address*  
123 Main Street  
Stevens Point, WI 54481  
(715) 456-222

## EDUCATION

**The University of Chicago**, Chicago, IL  
*Bachelor of Arts*, Expected, June 2022

Enrolled in core liberal arts courses with plans to pursue pre-med curriculum. GPA: 3.45/4.00

*Once you determine your major, state "Bachelor of Arts in \_\_\_." You can continue to include high school until your third year, or you run out of space.*

**Splash High School**, Stevens Point, WI  
*Diploma*, June 2018

**Honors Included:** President's Education Award for Outstanding Academic Achievement (2018) and National Council of Teachers of English Nomination for Excellence in Writing (2017)

*It is best to include a GPA if it is a 3.00 or higher.*

## EXPERIENCE

**University of Chicago Department of Psychology**, *Research Assistant*, Chicago, IL, October 2018 - present

- Investigate and extract data from academic research to formulate and design experiments that explore career goals and outcomes in executive leadership roles
- Collected and examined data from various sources to gather meaningful and measurable evidence about human behavior and the motivation behind philanthropic giving

**The Boston Consulting Group (BCG)**, *Extern*, Chicago, IL, December 2018

- Attended Case Team Meetings and gained knowledge on the problem-solving and consulting process
- Assessed risk potential and summarized reports on upcoming and ongoing projects for externship host

**Private Family Client**, *Childcare Provider*, Chicago, IL, May 2016—August 2018

- Supervise two children, ages 4 and 7, while parents are away at work during afternoons and evenings
- Create a child-friendly environment by monitoring children's activities, overseeing meals and naps, and organizing activities and games to enhance children's physical, emotional, and social well-being

## LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES

**Model United Nations Team**, **University of Chicago**, *Delegate*, Chicago, IL, November 2018 - present

- Represent university at national Model United Nations Conferences as part of top-ranked competitive team
- Recognized as Best Delegation in GA First Committee at American Model United Nations (AMUN) 2018

**Women in Public Service**, **Institute of Politics**, *Member*, Chicago, IL, October 2018 - present

- Participate in and develop weekly seminars on a variety of public policy topics led by field experts
- Identified and recruited potential speakers for WPS events

**Students Against Destructive Decisions**, *President*, Stevens Point, WI, November 2016 – June 2017

- Led executive board members in coordinating four large campaigns and raising more than \$3000
- Increased active membership by 30% through innovative membership drive efforts
- Served as spokesperson to local community, raising awareness of violence and injury prevention strategies

*Volunteer and student activities can be just as impressive to an employer as work experience.*

## SKILLS

**Computer:** Proficient in Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and Java

**Language:** Proficient in reading and writing Spanish

## INTERESTS

Competitive fencing, marathon training, and southern cuisine

*Your interests aren't qualifications for a job necessarily, but they provide employers with topics about which they can inquire at the beginning of an interview. This often helps you relax and leads to a better interview but can easily be dropped if space is an issue.*