



MS/PhD RESUME CHECKLIST

FORMATTING

- Use an original format, not a template
- Margins: Side margins: 0.5-1 inch. Top/Bottom margins: 0.5 or 1 inch
- Length: 1-2 pages
- Fonts: Size 11-12 pts. No more than two easy-to-read fonts
- Use consistent formatting throughout, including font, bold/italics, punctuation, dates, line spacing, and bullet styles
- Design with white space – enough to improve readability, but not so much that it looks sparse
- Emphasize major headings, use bold appropriately and consistently
- (Optional, especially those in the field of design and architecture) Use color and graphics strategically to draw the eye to critical information only if necessary, understanding that content in graphics may not be scored by Applicant Tracking Systems

COMMON MISTAKES

- Resume inflation – Lack of honesty instantly disqualifies candidates when discovered
- Spelling and grammar errors
- Lack of accomplishments or evidence of skills (don't tell but show your work with numbers and results)
- Irrelevant information (to the position you are applying)– shows a lack of focus
- **In the USA, do not include:**
 - Personal information: age, marital status, religion, or political affiliation, photos
 - References available upon request
 - Pronouns in your bullets: I, me, my, we, etc.

SECTIONS TO INCLUDE: THE BASICS

The header, education, and experience sections are the staples of every resume.

Header / Contact Information

- This section is in the largest print: 16 – 20 pts.
- Full name. Add a “nick name” if you are known by a different name (e.g., first name (nick name) last name)
- Phone number and email address
- City and state (or country only if you are applying for jobs outside of the country you are currently staying) – Full mailing address is optional
- LinkedIn or personal website/portfolio (optional, but strongly recommended as recruiters and hiring managers tend to check them)

Education

All Degrees with most recent first (reverse-chronological order), including:

- College/University: full name (Georgia Institute of Technology), city, and state (or country)

- Year the degree was earned. If not yet complete, list as: Expected May 2040
- GPA. Optional, but needs to be listed for all degrees or none
- Licenses and certifications (EIT, Six Sigma, Secret Clearance) can be included here or in a separate section
- Consulting firms want standardized scores from GRE, GMAT, LSAT, etc.

Experience

- List positions in reverse chronological order, starting with the current position
- Include experience relevant to the posting, including full or part-time jobs, Graduate Research Assistant, Teaching Assistant, internships, and volunteers
- Use specific headers to make your resume more relevant to the reader by drawing their attention to key sections instead of having a general header, "Experience" (e.g., Data Science Experience)

Include for each job:

- Organization/employer name (no abbreviations), city, and state (or country)
- Job title
- If the organization is an unknown or a startup, consider providing a brief description under the job title
- Bullets that describe your relevant experiences and provide evidence of the skills required by the position/organization
- Begin each bullet with an action verb (see Power Words list below)
- Select the most relevant accomplishments with measurable outcomes instead of listing everything you've done (2-4 bullets per job recommended)
- Quantify the results as much as possible
 - Example: "Developed a new process to solve a critical problem, which resulted in a 50% increase in productivity"
- Keep text brief for quick reading, removing adjectives and generic phrases
- Text should not be in complete sentences

(Technical) Skills

Required section for jobs that require technical skills (e.g., data engineer, analyst, scientist positions)

- A list of your technical skills. Include languages that add value or illustrate your ability to adapt but do not quantify as expert, novice, etc.

ADDITIONAL SECTIONS: INCLUDE AS NEEDED

Projects

- Classroom projects can be included, but only until you obtain your first full-time professional position.
- Include a project title, an institution name where you completed the project, and bullets
- Use specific headers to make your projects more engaging and relevant (e.g., Research Projects, Machine Learning Course Projects).

Leadership and/or Communication Experience (*strongly recommended*)

- Highlight teaching experience, other relevant campus, community, and service activities, and accomplishments. List as you would in the experience section.

- In addition to technical skills, many employers seek these transferable skills as they look for people who can work with and lead others.

Selected Publications and Patents

- These are more common on a CV than a resume but can be included for highly research-oriented positions and highlight your communication skills and expertise in a relevant field.
- List 2-3 most relevant publications and/or patents instead of listing them all, which is for your CV.
- Use your field's citation/bibliographic style and only include papers accepted and/or published.

Honors and Awards

- Include only major awards like an NSF or President's fellowship (when relevant to the job postings).

Additional Experience

- If you have additional relevant experience that does not fit into any existing headers and have space available in your resume, you can list it here.

Summary/Highlights– Present highlights of your experience in a quantifiable high-impact statement or 2-3 bullets.

- Best when applying for a specific job as it shows what they stand to gain by hiring you.
- Particularly beneficial for experienced professionals seeking a quick overview of their work history in an effective way (e.g., 5+ years of industry experience in analyzing data to assess the impacts of remote work on performance using Python and SQL).
- Two to three lines in length, showcasing 3-4 the most relevant skills/experiences.
- Provide evidence of the skills required by the position/organization.
- Indicate what you accomplished: made, created, saved, increased.

Objective statement – Indicates what type of position you are seeking.

- Objectives are only recommended for a Career Fair or a general online system where recruiters look through resumes that are not associated with a specific job.
- When a cover letter is required, remove the objective statement from your resume.

Professional Organizations/Affiliations

- List your professional memberships here.

FINAL CHECKS

- Did you provide evidence of the skills required by the job posting? Were you persuasive?
- Is your formatting consistent?
- Did you check for spelling and grammar errors?

RESOURCES

- On campus – [The Career Center](#) and the [Communication Center](#) provide workshops and one-on-one consultations
- For resume samples, see [The Career Center's Resume Guide](#)

ACTION/POWER WORDS

Leadership & Management

administered
appointed
approved
assigned
attained
authorized
chaired
coached
consolidated
controlled
coordinated
created
decided
delegated
directed
drove
eliminated
emphasized
enabled
encouraged
enforced
enhanced
established
executed
guided
handled
headed
hired
hosted
increased
initiated
inspired
instituted
led
managed
mentored
merged
nurtured
orchestrated

organized
overhauled
oversaw
planned
prioritized
produced
recommended
streamlined
strengthened
shaped
steered
supervised
taught

Technical

Adapted
assembled
broadened
built
charted
classified
communicated
compiled
computed
conceived
conducted
constructed
coordinated
debugged
designed
detected
developed
devised
drafted
edited
educated
eliminated
engineered
evaluated
excelled
expanded

expedited
fabricated
facilitated
forecast
formed
generated
improved
increased
inspected
installed
instituted
integrated
interfaced
launched
maintained
marketed
mastered
modified
molded
operated
packaged
pioneered
prepared
processed
programmed
published
reconstructed
reduced
remodeled
repaired
replaced
researched
restore
revamped
streamlined
supplemented
surveyed
systematized
trained
upgraded
wrote

Research

assessed
analyzed
acquired
bred
clarified
collected
compared
controlled
critiqued
cultivated
developed
detected
diagnosed
displayed
distributed
ensured
evaluated
examined
exported
extracted
handled
harvested
identified
imported
inspected
interpreted
interviewed
investigated
maintained
manufactured
marketed
organized
optimized
planted
prepared
processed
produced
propagated
raised

researched
reviewed
sold
summarized
supplied
summarized
surveyed
sustained
systematized
tended
tested
validated
verified

Teamwork

co-hosted
collaborated
contributed
cooperated
coordinated
facilitated
harmonized
liaised
mediated
moderated
partnered
planned
represented
supported
teamed

Creative

acted
combined
conceptualized
created
designed
developed
displayed
directed
established
fashioned
founded

illustrated
instituted
integrated
introduced
invented
molded
originated
performed
photographed
revitalized
shaped

Communication

addressed
arbitrated
arranged
authored
corresponded
developed
directed
drafted
edited
enlisted
expressed
formulated
influenced
interpreted
instructed
interviewed
lectured
listened
mediated
moderated
motivated
negotiated
observed
outlined
persuaded
presented
promoted
proposed
publicized
reconciled

recruited
reinforced
reported
responded
solicited
specified
spoke
suggested
synthesized
translated
wrote

Accomplishments

achieved
completed
expanded
exceeded
improved
pioneered
reduced
resolved
restored
transformed

Administrative & Organization

adhered
administered
allocated
applied
appropriated
assisted
assured
attained
awarded
balanced
budgeted
built
charted
completed
contributed
coordinated
cut

defined
determined
dispensed
distributed
documented
drafted
enacted
enlarged
evaluated
examined
executed
followed up
formalized
formulated
hired
identified
implemented
improved
installed
instituted
justified
liaised
maintained
managed
operated
ordered
organized
packaged
planned
prepared
prescribed
processed
provided
recorded
repaired
reshaped
resolved
scheduled
screened
secured
solved
started
Teaching

adapted
advised
answered
apprised
augmented
briefed
built
certified
chaired
charted
clarified
coached
collaborated
communicated
conducted
coordinated
delegated
delivered
demonstrated
designed
developed
directed
dispensed
distributed
educated
effected
empowered
enabled
enacted
enlarged

expanded
facilitated
fomented
formulated
generated
grouped
guided
harmonized
implemented
influenced
informed
initiated
innovated
installed
instituted
instructed
integrated
lectured
listened
originated
persuaded
presented
responded
revolutionized
set goals
stimulated
summarized
trained
translate

Helping
advanced
advised
aided
arbitrated
assisted
attended
augmented
balanced
backed
braced
boosted
clarified
collaborated
consoled
contributed
counseled
comforted
consulted
demonstrated
diagnosed
encouraged
expedited
facilitated
familiarized
fostered
furthered
guided
helped
instilled

liaised
mentored
ministered
negotiated
nurtured
optimized
promoted
provided
reassured
reclaimed
rectified
redeemed
reeducated
referred
reformed
rehabilitated
repaired
represented
served
settled
supported
supplies
stabilized
streamlined
translated
treated
tutored
unified