GENERAL

how to write a high school student resume

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Introduction

When you're still in high school, the idea of a resume can feel both exciting and intimidating. On one hand, it's a chance to showcase your achievements, skills, and experiences to future employers, colleges, and scholarship committees. On the other hand, you may wonder how to write a high school student resume that stands out while staying professional and concise. This guide will walk you through every step of the process—from gathering information to polishing the final draft—so you can create a resume that truly reflects your potential.

Why a Resume Matters for High School Students

A well crafted resume does more than list your schoolwork. It demonstrates your readiness for the next phase of your life, whether that's a part time job, an internship, a summer program, or a college application. A strong resume can:

- Showcase leadership, teamwork, and communication skills that employers and admissions officers value.
- Provide a structured way to highlight extracurriculars, volunteer work, and awards.
- Help you reflect on your growth and set clear goals.
- Make you memorable in a competitive job market or admissions pool.

Understanding these benefits will motivate you to invest time and effort into learning how to write a high school student resume that shines.

Key Elements of a High School Resume

While the core sections of a resume are fairly universal, a high school resume has unique considerations. Below are the essential components you should include:

Contact Information

Your name, phone number, email address, and optionally a LinkedIn profile or personal website. Keep it professional and easy to read.

Objective or Summary

A brief statement (one or two sentences) that explains what you're seeking—such as a part time position, internship, or scholarship—and what you bring to the table.

Education

List your high school, expected graduation date, GPA (if above 3.0), and any relevant coursework. If you're enrolled in dual credit or AP classes, highlight them.

Experience

Include paid jobs, internships, or significant volunteer roles. Even if you're a student council member or a club officer, treat it as experience that demonstrates responsibility.

Extracurricular Activities

Clubs, sports, arts, or any organized groups. Note leadership roles and notable achievements.

Honors and Awards

Academic recognitions, scholarships, or community accolades. Provide context when possible (e.g., “Top 5% of class”).

Skills

Hard skills (e.g., Microsoft Office, programming, foreign languages) and soft skills (e.g., teamwork, communication). Use bullet points for clarity.

Volunteer Work

Community service or charitable activities. Highlight the impact and your role.

Additional Sections (Optional)

Certifications, publications, or projects that are relevant to the opportunity you’re pursuing.

Step by Step Guide to Writing a High School Resume

Follow these ten steps to build a polished, effective resume.

1. Gather Your Information

1. Make a list of all jobs, volunteer roles, and leadership positions.
2. Collect details about your academic achievements, such as GPA, class rank, and courses.
3. Compile a list of extracurriculars and any awards or honors.
4. Identify key skills you’ve developed through school, work, or hobbies.

2. Choose a Format

Three common formats:

- Chronological – lists experience in reverse order. Good if you have a steady work or volunteer history.
- Functional – focuses on skills rather than dates. Useful if you’re new to work or have gaps.
- Combination – blends both. Ideal for students who have relevant experience and strong skill sets.

For most high school students, a combination format works best.

3. Write Your Contact Information

Place this at the top of your first page. Keep it simple:

John Doe
1234 Maple Ave, Springfield, IL 62704
(555) 123-4567
john.doe@email.com
LinkedIn: linkedin.com/in/johndoe

4. Craft a Strong Objective

Tailor this to the specific role or opportunity. Example:

Objective:“Motivated sophomore with strong analytical skills seeking a summer internship in data analysis to

apply classroom knowledge and gain real world experience."

5. Highlight Academic Achievements

Showcase your GPA, class rank, and relevant coursework. If you have a high GPA or have taken advanced courses, mention them.

6. Showcase Work Experience

For each role, list the job title, employer, location, and dates. Then describe your responsibilities and accomplishments using action verbs and quantifiable results.

- "Managed a team of 5 volunteers, increasing event attendance by 30%."
- "Created a social media campaign that grew followers by 200."

7. Add Extracurriculars

Include club names, positions held, and any significant projects. Emphasize leadership, teamwork, and initiative.

8. List Skills

Separate hard and soft skills for clarity. Example:

- Hard Skills: Microsoft Excel, Python, Spanish (Conversational)
- Soft Skills: Communication, Time Management, Problem Solving

9. Include Honors

Provide context and dates. Example: "National Merit Scholar, 2024" or "Valedictorian, 2023."

10. Proofread and Edit

Check for spelling, grammar, and consistency. Ask a teacher, mentor, or friend to review it. Ensure the layout is clean and the font size is between 10 12 points.

Formatting Tips for a Clean, Professional Look

- Font: Choose a classic typeface like Times New Roman, Calibri, or Garamond.
- Margins: Keep 1 inch margins on all sides.
- Bullet Style: Use simple round or square bullets.
- Consistency: Use the same tense throughout (past tense for past roles, present tense for current roles).
- Length: Aim for one page. Two pages are acceptable only if you have substantial experience.
- Alignment: Left align all text for readability.
- Whitespace: Use adequate spacing between sections to avoid clutter.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

- Using a generic objective that doesn't match the position.
- Listing every single activity, even those that are unrelated.
- Including personal details like age, marital status, or a photo (unless required).
- Using overly casual language or slang.
- Neglecting to quantify achievements.
- Submitting a resume with typos or grammatical errors.

Sample Resume Templates for High School Students

Below is a simple template you can adapt. Replace the placeholders with your own information.

Template 1 – Combination Format

Jane Smith

456 Oak St, Springfield, IL 62704 | (555) 987-6543 | jane.smith@email.com | LinkedIn: linkedin.com/in/janesmith

Objective

Motivated junior seeking a part time customer service position to develop communication skills and contribute to a dynamic team.

Education

Springfield High School, Springfield, IL
Expected Graduation: May 2025
GPA: 3.8/4.0 | Class Rank: 12/600

Experience

Retail Associate, ABC Mart, Springfield, IL
June 2023 – Present
- Handled daily cash transactions totaling $5,000.
- Trained 3 new staff members on POS system.
- Consistently achieved a 95% customer satisfaction rating.

Extracurricular Activities

Vice President, Debate Club
- Organized weekly debates and led team to state championships.
- Developed research and public speaking skills.

Honors & Awards

National Honor Society Member, 2023
Academic Excellence Award, 2022

Skills

- Microsoft Office Suite
- Spanish (Conversational)
- Strong communication and teamwork

Volunteer Work

Volunteer, Springfield Food Bank, 2022
- Assisted in sorting and distributing food to over 200 families weekly.

FAQs

- Do I need a resume for college applications? Many colleges prefer a separate application essay, but a concise resume can be useful for scholarship applications or extracurricular listings.
- Should I include my social media profiles? Only if they are professional and relevant (e.g., a portfolio or LinkedIn). Avoid personal or unprofessional accounts.
- Can I use a template? Absolutely. Templates provide structure, but personalize them with your unique information.
- What if I have no work experience? Highlight school projects, club leadership, and volunteer work. Focus on transferable skills.
- How often should I update my resume? Whenever you gain new experience, take on a new role, or achieve an award.

Conclusion

Writing a high school student resume may seem daunting at first, but by following a clear structure and focusing on your strengths, you can create a document that opens doors to internships, jobs, and scholarship opportunities. Remember to keep it concise, professional, and tailored to each opportunity. With practice, your resume will evolve into a powerful reflection of your growth and potential. Good luck, and let your resume be the first step toward the future you're building!

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