

High School Resume Writing Tips

Applying to college can be a hectic time, with forms to fill out, essays to write, records to request, financial aid to consider and schools to visit. To get a head start on the process, start gathering application information during your sophomore or junior year of high school. Focusing your efforts on creating a robust resume could help you through the application process.

High School Student Resume: Building a winning resume for your college applications.

Source: <http://www.studypoint.com/ed/high-school-student-resume/>

Why have a resume at all?

- According to www.acceptedtocollege.com, standard college applications don't always give a student space to highlight all of his or her accomplishments and experience. A resume can help to bridge that gap.
- Based on research conducted by The College Board, a resume helps you keep better track of your accomplishments. When the time comes to fill out college forms, an updated resume will go a long way.
- A strong resume can spark a college admission essay topic. Reflecting on experiences from summer jobs, volunteer work or school activities may lead to a unique essay topic that will make you stand out.
- Activities and achievements can lead to scholarships. Scholarship committees look for participation in extracurricular programs and some require that recipients be involved in a particular activity.
- An impressive resume can lead to summer internships, jobs or study-abroad opportunities that will strengthen your college applications.

Why start during sophomore year?

- It can help you target non-academic areas that need improvement long before sending out college applications. Colleges look for students who are well rounded and have good time-management skills. If you haven't participated in extracurricular activities, there is still plenty of time to get involved in something new before application time.
- It can help you identify academic areas to boost. [Www.ecampustours.com](http://www.ecampustours.com) recommends that students list their GPA, but only if it's above 3.0. If it's lower than that, an early resume will give you an idea of what needs attention before it's too late to bring those numbers up.
- A resume is a great introduction to a college recruiter. College fairs don't always allow for long talks between recruiters and students. A quick introduction and resume hand-off will give you the chance to connect with as many recruiters as possible.
- A resume will get you thinking about potential references. College applications ask for recommendation letters from teachers, coaches, mentors and employers and it's never too early for you to line these up.

What should be included on the resume?

Resumes are as unique as the people who write them, but certain conventions should be followed. Here is a checklist of what to include from acceptedtocollege.com:

- *Name, address, e-mail, phone number.*
- *Education information.* This includes the name and address of your high school, GPA (if it's brag-worthy), and class rank (if you know it). College courses can also go in this section, if you've taken any.
- *Activities.* These can be in or out of school—for example, marching band, intramural basketball or youth group at your church or temple. Especially important are any leadership roles you have taken in these groups.
- *Other experience.* A part-time job, participation in a walk for cancer awareness or participation in a science fair are all pertinent details.
- *Accolades.* Academic awards or recognition in extracurricular competitions like a state wrestling championship or membership in a top-ranking marching band should be included.
- *References.* Names and phone numbers of teachers, coaches, employers or internship directors don't necessarily have to go on the resume, but it's good to have these people lined up in advance.
- *Anything that makes you shine.* A resume is where you'll have a chance to tell college recruiters everything they need to know. If something makes you unique and interesting, include it. Fluency in a foreign language or proficiency in advanced computer programs may qualify here. A word of caution, however: Don't go overboard, resumes should contain only what a specific school will want to know.

Other tips

- A poorly written resume can be worse than no resume at all. It should be proofread (more than once) to ensure correct spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- The resume should be in a professional-looking and easy-to-read font, such as Times New Roman or Arial. The formatting should catch the eye of the recipient and bring attention to key items.
- Be honest. When you lie—or even stretch the truth—on your resumes, it can come back to haunt you later, particularly when it comes to things like GPA and test scores. Read your resume carefully to ensure all of the information is accurate.

Resume resources

What does the perfect resume look like? Check out some samples and templates (for high school students in particular) on the sites below.

- <http://jobsearch.about.com/library/samples/blhsresume.htm>
- <http://jobsearch.about.com/library/samples/blhsresume2.htm>
- Bestsampleresume.com
- <http://www.bestsampleresume.com/resume-templates/high-school-resume-template.html>

Tips to Perfect your College Application Resume

Source: <http://acceptedtocollege.com/blog/application/20-tips-perfect-application-resume-1/>

How should the resume be structured?

Professional resumes generally lead with work experience and discuss an individual's professional career. Colleges are more interested in what you've done as a scholar, so many of the typical rules for resume structure don't apply to college applicants. In general, this format will work for you:

- **Heading:** Make sure to include a heading that states your name and other identifying information.
- **Overview:** Write a 3 sentence mini biography about yourself. If you speak more than one language, mention it. If you're the science fair champion four years running, mention it. Highlight your strongest features. Naturally, anything you include in the overview should also appear in one of the later sections.
- **Education:** After the heading, lead with educational information. The name of your high school and its address will go here. Follow that with your GPA and, if you know it, your class rank. Any special academic distinction may be placed here too, but do not list academic awards, those will come later.
- **Activities:** Any clubs, programs, community service organizations or sports you were a part of during high school should go here. Try to limit the list to 8 entries. If you have less than 4, try to think of an organized event you participated in. Remember, it doesn't have to be a school-sponsored program; activities through your church, community center or of your own personal drive (bands, etc.) may be included. Each activity should have a short, one sentence description using strong, active verbs.
- **Special Projects and Experiences:** Something that you did once or twice but that can't necessarily be considered an 'activity' will go here. For example, participation in a science fair or one-time volunteer effort. You should limit your list to 3 entries and provide a bit more detail than you would have in the Activities section (about 2-3 short sentences). If you have held a steady job during high school, feel free to add your position here with a few descriptive sentences.
- **Awards:** Don't limit yourself here. This section can be a laundry list (though you should explain any awards that don't have obvious titles). Remember that even accomplishments that you never received a trophy, medal or certificate for fit into this category.

How long should the resume be?

Your resume should not be longer than a single page. If you are running low on space, re-assess the content of your resume, or get creative with the margins and font size/ style.

Should I include activities from before high school?

Generally no, unless the activity continued into high school (such as playing in the middle school band and in the high school band). Colleges are generally not interested in your pre-high school experiences.