

how to write a resume high school

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Introduction

When you're a high school student, the idea of a resume can feel intimidating. You're still navigating classes, clubs, and a busy schedule, and the thought of putting all that into a single document might seem overwhelming. But a well-crafted resume is more than just a list of accomplishments—it's your personal marketing tool that opens doors to internships, part-time jobs, college programs, and community opportunities.

In this guide, we'll walk you through every step of creating a resume that showcases your strengths, highlights your unique experiences, and speaks directly to the people who matter most—college admissions officers, potential employers, and volunteer coordinators. Whether you're just starting or looking to refine an existing resume, you'll find actionable advice, templates, and insider tips that will help you stand out.

Why a Resume Matters for High School Students

College Applications

Many colleges and universities now accept or even prefer a resume as part of the application process. It provides a concise snapshot of your academic achievements, leadership roles, and community service—information that helps admissions committees quickly assess your fit for their programs.

Internships & Part Time Jobs

High schoolers often seek internships, summer jobs, or part-time positions to gain experience and earn extra income. A clear, professional resume is essential to demonstrate your reliability, work ethic, and relevant skills.

Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteering can enrich your personal growth and strengthen your college applications. A resume that showcases your volunteer history and the impact you've made can help you secure meaningful roles with non-profits, community centers, and more.

Leadership & Extracurriculars

Clubs, sports teams, and student government positions are great ways to develop leadership and teamwork skills. Highlighting these experiences on a resume helps you demonstrate initiative and the ability to manage responsibilities.

Key Components of a High School Resume

Contact Information

Place your name, phone number, email, and, if applicable, a professional LinkedIn profile or personal website at the top. Keep it simple and avoid including sensitive personal details like your home address.

Objective or Summary

A brief, one-sentence statement that tells the reader who you are and what you're looking for. For example:

“Motivated sophomore seeking a summer internship in environmental science to apply my research and

leadership skills.”

Education

Include your school name, expected graduation date, GPA (if 3.5 or higher), and relevant coursework or honors. If you're a senior, you can also list your cumulative GPA and class rank.

Work Experience

List any paid or unpaid positions, internships, or volunteer roles. For each entry, provide the organization name, your title, dates, and a brief description of responsibilities and achievements.

Volunteer Experience

Showcase community service projects, including the organization, your role, dates, and the impact you made.

Extracurricular Activities

Highlight clubs, sports, arts, and other activities. Include leadership roles, events organized, and any notable achievements.

Skills

List both hard and soft skills relevant to the positions you're applying for—computer literacy, languages, communication, teamwork, and problem solving.

Awards & Honors

Include scholarships, awards, academic recognitions, and any other accolades that demonstrate excellence.

Certifications & Training

Show any certifications (e.g., CPR, first aid, software proficiency) or training courses that add value to your profile.

Step by Step Guide to Writing Your Resume

Step 1: Gather Information

Start by compiling all relevant details—academic records, job descriptions, volunteer logs, and award certificates. Having everything in one place reduces the chance of forgetting an important point.

Step 2: Choose the Right Format

- Chronological: Lists experience in reverse chronological order—ideal if you have a steady work history.
- Functional/Skills Based: Focuses on skills rather than dates—good if you're new to work or have gaps.
- Combination: Merges both—great for showcasing skills while still showing a timeline.

Step 3: Craft a Strong Objective

Tailor your objective to each application. Keep it concise and action oriented. Example: **“Seeking a part time graphic design position to apply my Adobe Creative Suite skills and creative vision.”**

Step 4: Highlight Education Details

Include your school name, expected graduation, GPA (if high), and relevant courses. Mention any honors or AP/IB coursework.

Step 5: Showcase Work & Volunteer Experience

Use bullet points to describe responsibilities. Start each point with a strong action verb—“managed,” “coordinated,” “developed,” “led.”

Step 6: Emphasize Extracurriculars & Leadership

Show how you've contributed to your school community. Quantify achievements when possible (e.g., "increased club membership by 30%").

Step 7: Add Relevant Skills

Divide skills into categories: Technical, Language, Interpersonal. Keep the list realistic and relevant to the roles you want.

Step 8: Include Awards & Certifications

List any scholarships, awards, or certifications that demonstrate excellence and dedication.

Step 9: Proofread & Polish

Read the resume aloud, use spell check, and have a teacher, mentor, or parent review it. Ensure consistent formatting, proper spacing, and no grammatical errors.

Resume Templates & Examples

Classic Chronological Template

This template is straightforward, ideal for students with a clear progression of experience.

Functional/Skills Based Template

Best for those who want to highlight transferable skills over a traditional work history.

Combination Template

Blends both approaches, showcasing skills while maintaining a timeline.

Sample Resume for a High School Student (Detailed)

Below is a fully fleshed out example you can adapt. Replace the placeholder text with your own information.

Jane Doe

1234 Maple Avenue • Springfield, IL 62704 • (555) 123 4567 • jane.doe@email.com • LinkedIn: linkedin.com/in/janedoe

Objective

Motivated senior seeking a summer internship in environmental science to apply research and leadership skills.

Education

Springfield High School, Springfield, IL

Expected Graduation: June 2025

GPA: 3.8/4.0

Honors: National Honor Society, AP Scholar

Work Experience

Green Thumb Co., Intern

June 2023 – August 2023

- Conducted soil analysis, improving nutrient assessment accuracy by 15%.
- Assisted in developing a community garden project, attracting 200 volunteers.

Volunteer Experience

Springfield Food Bank, Volunteer

September 2022 – Present

- Organized food drives, increasing donations by 25% over two years.
- Managed inventory for 50+ volunteer shifts.

Extracurricular Activities

Student Council, President

September 2023 – Present

- Led a team of 10 to plan school events, boosting attendance by 30%.
- Negotiated with local businesses for sponsorships.

Skills

- Proficient in Microsoft Office and Adobe Photoshop
- Fluent in Spanish
- Strong communication and teamwork abilities

Awards & Honors

- 1st Place, Science Fair (2024)
- Scholarship Recipient, Springfield STEM Initiative (2023)

Tips for Making Your Resume Stand Out

Use Action Verbs

Start each bullet point with a dynamic verb to convey impact: “initiated,” “implemented,” “analyzed,” “collaborated.”

Quantify Achievements

Numbers add credibility. Instead of “helped organize events,” say “organized 5 events attended by 200+ students.”

Keep it Concise

For high school students, aim for one page. Use short, clear sentences and avoid unnecessary jargon.

Tailor to Each Application

Adjust your objective, skills, and highlighted experiences to match the specific role or program you're applying for.

Use Professional Formatting

Avoid Common Mistakes

Digital Tools & Resources

Resume Builders

Online platforms like Canva, Google Docs, and Canva's resume templates provide user friendly design options.

Canva & Google Docs Templates

Both platforms offer free, customizable templates that maintain a professional look.

Career Services at Your School

Most high schools have a career counseling office that can review your resume, provide feedback, and connect you with local employers.

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