

Additional Sections



What are Additional Sections?

While resumes can be built with just the four main sections, there will be times where it is important to add more information through more specialized sections to ensure all your relevant experience is covered. While there will be recommendations for where to put them in your resume, also order your resume sections by significance and relevance to the position you are applying for.

Many of these additional sections could also have their information placed in the four main sections instead (such as putting volunteer experience in work experience) but to draw attention to these parts of your experience it makes sense to create a special section just for them. Finally, it is not recommended to just stick them in because you can, try to have a reason.

The special sections are:

- Associations/Affiliations
- Awards
- Certifications and Licenses
- Extracurricular Activities
- Hobbies and Interests
- Languages
- Military Experience
- Objective
- Projects
- Publications
- Qualifications
- References
- Summary/Profile
- Testimonials
- Volunteer Experience

You may think of your own special sections as necessary too, in case one of these does not cover it. Just make sure that when you format it, it is easy to read and employers can find all the information without trouble.

We'll now talk more in-depth about each section. Each section also has a format outline. Please note that while I did not include section headings in the examples, **you should always include section headings**.

Associations/Affiliations

Associations and affiliations have to do with your professional connections through industry and civic groups. They could be volunteer groups, non-profit organizations, or industry groups like the Ontario Teachers College, to name a few examples. They all show that you have connections outside of the workplace, may be required in some cases, and demonstrate your

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interest in a particular field/s. You may be able to incorporate these associations into your work experience or education section depending on how much of a contribution you have had to make for them. If you put them in the work experience, either mention them in a bullet point or format them how you would the rest of your work experience. If you put them in your education section, do the same thing.

- Generally, only include if you have 3 or more.
- When choosing to include these, consider:
 - If the associations are relevant.
 - If they demonstrate skills and abilities related to the position.
- Should be a short section.
- Place between education and work experience or at the bottom.

Format

Use any of the following as needed:

Association Title (Acronym)	Location (If applicable)
Role (If applicable)	Date
Role	Date
Association Title	Location
Association Title (Acronym)	Date

Awards

During your experiences you may achieve awards and other accolades that will be worth mentioning on your resume. You can include these in your work experience or education section if they are relevant to them and you do not have enough awards for a separate section and/or don't need to highlight them more than anything else. If you do, put them in a bullet point in the relevant institution/the institution you were at when receiving the award. If you choose to include awards, here are a few notes:

- Consider what the award would show about you and if it needs to be highlighted.
- If it is a prestigious award then it is certainly worth highlighting.
- If it is an old award and not prestigious it does not need its own section.
- If the award is from elementary school, unless it is very prestigious, do not mention it.
 - Your third grade attendance award, sadly, is not very impressive anymore.
- Recent graduates lacking experience can use awards to demonstrate transferable skills.
- Use action words when creating the section, such as "achieved" or "awarded"
- Avoid religious and political awards unless applying to a religious or political institution that would appreciate the award.
 - It opens you up to discrimination, which while illegal, does happen.
- Should be a shorter section on your resume.

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- Place at the top if particularly impressive, otherwise place at the bottom.

Format

Use any of the following formats:

Award Name

Institution

- Purpose of Award.
- Scope of Award.
- Why you won the Award.

Date
Location

Award Name

Institution

Date

Certifications and Licenses

Certifications and licenses are documents saying you are competent and allowed to engage in a variety of activities. Vehicle licenses, fishing permits, and first aid certificates are all examples of what might go into this section. These documents are standardized documents which usually come from government agencies or other larger organizations. Online courses and certificate programs are more so considered education and belong in that section as opposed to a devoted certifications and licenses section. If you do not want to create a separate section, most of the time these can go in your education, skills, or work experience section as a bullet point or as a standalone piece formatted the same as the rest of the section. A few more notes:

- If the job description requires you to have a certification and you have it, make sure it is on your resume and is easy to find either in this section or in another.
- Put “in progress” if needed.
- Never put on expired certifications.
- There are three types of certifications to list:
 - Required:
 - These are certifications you must have to get the job.
 - Recommended:
 - These are related certifications that are not necessary but demonstrate relevant knowledge.
 - Optional:
 - These are unrelated certifications that can show transferable skills.
- Manufacturers’ certifications are another acceptable organization to list.
 - They show that you know how to use their product, such as adobe certifying that you know how to use photoshop.
- Write out the full name, not just the acronym to ensure there is no miscommunication.
- Place this in-between your education and work experience sections.

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Format

Use any of the following formats:

Certification Name (Acronym)	Date-Expiration Date (if applicable)
Institution	Location

Certification Name (Acronym)	In Progress
Institution	Location

Extracurricular Activities

Many students engage in extracurricular activities during their academic careers and these experiences can be very valuable, especially if you do not have a lot of work experience. Extracurricular activities can demonstrate transferable skills, show your interests outside of academics, and otherwise show who you are as a person. As with many of the other additional sections, Extracurricular Activities can fit in a broader experience section, or could be mentioned in your education section as either a bullet point or its own piece.

Here are a few extra notes:

- Be thoughtful with skills and achievements. What's more important to employers, how many goals you scored or how you balanced class and being on a school sports team?
- If you are trying to group it with other experiences, you could call it "leadership experiences" or substitute in another describing word.
- This should be a short section and usually placed towards the end of your resume since it is unlikely to be a main selling point for you.

Format

Activity Name – Role	Date
Institution	Location
- Skills	
- Accomplishments	
- Responsibilities	
- Awards	

Hobbies and Interests

While this section is **not recommended**, there are times when you might choose to include it. Perhaps you don't have a lot of experience or you know that your kayaking hobby with certification (which could go in a different section) will be very relevant for a job in kayak tours. This section can also help show your personality and may even show transferable skills. Like all sections, it is up to your judgment whether to include it or not, but we suggest that you don't. If you do, here are some tips and format ideas to get you started:

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- Look at the company culture, your hobbies might fit in well there.
 - For example, companies with team socials might consider people whose interests would be shared to help the team be cohesive.
- Be specific with your hobbies and interests
 - What type of books do you read? What sport do you play? What music do you listen to?
 - These can show transferable skills such as teamwork and critical thinking as well as make you more personable.
- Be conscious of unique hobbies and interests
 - Some can be great and interesting.
 - Others can be 'red flags.'
 - Such as being an amateur taxidermist.
 - If you aren't sure, ask a friend.
- Think about the way you are wording your hobbies and interests
 - Taking care of cats vs petting cats.
- Show a variety of hobbies and interests if possible.
- If used, make it short and at the bottom, it is incredibly unlikely that it would be a good idea to put it above your other sections
- Avoid politics, religion, and sex.
- Section can make you more memorable, but that might not be a good thing.
- Use 1-3 bullet points.

Format

Hobby/Interest

Date (if applicable)

- Skills
- Accomplishments
- Certifications
- Awards

Languages

Languages can be a very important section of your resume depending on the job and is certainly recommended when applying to any job that requires dealing with people who might speak one or more of those other languages. Canada is a multicultural country with two official languages and many more spoken throughout. Usually, unless the position requires that you are multilingual, you can put this section after the main four sections or you can put it in your skills or education sections. Here are a few tips about including languages on your resume:

- Indicate the language name in the language of the resume (on an English resume write Français as French)
- Indicate your skill level:
 - Years of speaking is not an effective way to show proficiency, instead, there are different systems used to identify language skills.

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- This is because someone who learned for 3 months in school would have a different level of understanding than someone who lived in a place that spoke the language for 3 months.
- For French, Canada has an equivalency rating (A,B,C) system that can help employers understand your French language level.
- For other languages, use the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) scale or research to find other reputable scales online.

Format

Language

Skill Level

Military Experience

Military experience is another type of experience you could highlight in your resume which is at least as valuable as work experience. You can create a separate section for military experience or put it in your work experience section. One of the biggest challenges you will face is translating military terminology to civilian terms. We have suggestions on how to do that along with a few other tips:

- Use The Canadian Government's [tool that compares military positions to civilian ones](#) and even gives suggestions on job types to apply to.
- When possible, consolidate your positions
 - For example, if you worked multiple positions in the air force that were similar, consider consolidating them.
- Make sure you focus on experience related to the job you are applying for and use measurable accomplishments.
- Military awards can be impressive, but may not be more important than skills for employers
- Do not include graphic details about combat experience.
 - It might be relevant to include that you were in combat when applying for security/law enforcement positions, but still be conscious when talking about that experience
- Have a non-military person read over your resume.
 - Book a Resume Review with the Career Zone.

Format

Position

Institution/Branch/Base

Date

Location

- Responsibilities
- Accomplishments
- Awards

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Objective Statements

Objective statements used to be common practice in resume writing but has since become a section we strongly recommend **against**. Usually the information can be better shown in a cover letter and the objective statement tends to take up space in your resume that could go to something more valuable. While we recommend not including an objective statement, there may be times where you choose to do so, so we'll cover what they are followed by some helpful tips. A career objective statement is a 2-3 sentence snapshot of your career intentions. These sentences cover who you are, what you offer to the employer, and how your goals and the employer's goals are connected. These statements must always be modified based on the company and job description. Here are a few more tips for writing these statements:

- It's not actually about you, so focus on how you can help the employer
- Use facts and numbers instead of subjective statements.
- If you do mention your own career goal, make sure it is related to the company you are applying to.
- Avoid unnecessarily long/complex words.
- Could be useful to use one of these if putting in a general resume for an employer's inventory.
- Career change resumes and internship applications are the resume types that would most benefit from an objective statement.
- Look for keywords from the company and job description.
- Do not just say that you want the job, of course you do, and so does everyone else who is applying.

Format

In the first sentence you should include your name, one describing adjective, such as motivated, and your current job title or degree program. In the second sentence you want to name between one and three skills/experiences you have that connect to the job description. In the final sentence you can describe your own goals, mention the employer's goals/values, and how you connect to the employer.

Projects

As you have made it through your academic life, you have certainly done projects and you may have worked on outside projects as well. Project experience can be very helpful, especially in project based careers such as computer science or for freelancers. Projects can go in your education or work experience sections or can be their own section.

- When listing project information, make sure to connect it with the job you are applying for.
 - Use job specific skills.
 - Use other keywords and skills.

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- Use projects to demonstrate hard skills
 - Facts and numbers fit in very well with this section.
- Depending on how many projects and the job you are applying for, you might not want/need to include all of them, only the most recent/relevant ones.

Format

Project Name, Your Role

Date

Institution

Location

- Responsibilities.
- Accomplishments.
- Outcomes.
- What you did, how you did it, and what was the result.

Publications

When applying for academic or professions related to writing, you may want to list your publications in their own section to draw attention. When doing this section, it is a good idea to cite them in an appropriate format (such as MLA for English or CSE for science) though it might not be necessary, as long as the information and publication are findable. Here are a few more tips:

- Modify the information based on where your publication is in the process of being published.
 - If it has not been accepted yet, say “manuscript submitted for publication.”
 - If accepted but not published, add “(in press)” after author names.

Format

Use either this format, or a citation:

Publication Name

Date + Status

Publisher

Location of Publisher

Authors

Qualifications

Sometimes called a “summary of qualifications” this is a section that belongs at the top of your resume instead of a career objective or professional summary. In the qualifications section you want to choose 3-5 points that best meet the qualifications in the job description and list them. Make sure that these qualifications are connected to the experience you list in your resume, employers want to see how you met the qualifications as much as they want to see that you do. This section is unlikely to be used if you do not have a lot of experience or are changing careers. In general we do not recommend using this section, though it is not a bad choice. Prioritize your other sections before trying to fit this in. Here are a few more tips:

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- Be specific when writing your qualifications.
- Use as much quantifiable information as possible.
 - If the job is looking for certain years of experience, write how many years you have.
- Avoid personal pronouns such as “I.”

Format

Below is the format with some ideas of what to include:

- Work experience.
- Skills.
- Qualifications based on description.
- More experience.
- No more than five points like this.

References

In most resumes **you should not even mention** references. You should not include “references available on request” because that is assumed if the job is asking for references. If you are going to include references, here are a few tips:

- This section should come last.
- Always put your best reference at the top of the section.
 - Be careful with who you select.
 - No family members.
 - Do not ask people who you have had professional conflict with.
 - If they are your current employer, make sure they are comfortable with you searching for a new job.
- Include 3-5 references.
- Fewer if an entry level position (Max 3).
- More if in a senior level position and the amount is not specified (could even go over 5).
- Never include personal information about the reference.

Format

First and Last Name

Title/Position

Company

City, Province/Country

Phone Number

Email Address

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Summary/Profile

This section is similar to the objective and qualifications sections. It also belongs to the top of your resume and briefly describes who you are and what your skills are. It is essentially a hybrid of the two sections. It can be done in bullet or paragraph form. As with the objective and qualifications sections, it is not recommended to do this section, especially if you get to submit a cover letter. If you choose to use it, here is some more information:

- Use 2-5 sentences in bullet or paragraph form.
- Be as specific as possible.
- Match your experience to the keywords of the job description.
- Include numbers/stats when possible.
- Avoid personal pronouns.
- Only use one of a summary, objective, or qualifications section.

Format

Try to use one of the following formats:

You could do a paragraph like this one. In that case, do 3 to 5 sentences covering who you are, the skills you want to highlight, and how you connect with the company. You could consider this to almost be like a mini cover letter. Try to ensure that whatever you talk about is backed-up by the remainder of your resume.

Or

- You could include a bullet point summary instead.
- Similar to the paragraphs, you should include about 3 to 5 phrases.
- This may take up more space than the paragraph form.
- This can also be easier to read.
- But you do not need to be longer than this.

Testimonials

You may at some point choose to include a testimonial section, or just put them in your resume. Testimonials are quotes from others to describe you. Usually not recommended since the space they take up could be used for more valuable information, but if you do choose to include them then it is important to talk about it. If you are just doing one testimonial, you could put it right under your contact information. You could also put testimonials with the relevant experience. Here is a bit more information:

- Always ask the person who's giving the testimonial if they are okay with you putting it on your resume.
- Can also create a separate testimonial section.
- Testimonials have to come from sources that know you professionally.
- Should show strengths related to the job you are applying for.

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- Use a max of 3 if you are including a separate section.

Format

Here is the format for a separate section:

Source's name
Institution/Company

Position
Date

"Testimonial"

Volunteer Experience

Volunteer experience is very valuable and if you have any we recommend that you include it in your resume. Aside from the skills that it allows you to demonstrate, it also shows your personality traits and that you like to give back to the community. If you can include it, it is worth it, but always remember to prioritize based on the job description what should be on your resume. You could also list volunteer experience in your work experience section.

Format

Position title
Organization

Date
Location

- Responsibilities
- Accomplishments
- Skills