GENERAL

how to make a resume for a teenager

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Introduction

In today's competitive job market, even teenagers are expected to present themselves professionally. A well crafted resume can open doors to part time jobs, internships, volunteer opportunities, and even scholarships. But many young people wonder: **how to make a resume for a teenager**that looks polished, showcases their strengths, and stands out to employers? This guide breaks down the process into clear, actionable steps, ensuring your resume reflects your unique experiences and aspirations.

Why a Resume Matters for Teenagers

Resumes serve as the first impression you give to potential employers or program coordinators. For teenagers, a resume is more than a list of jobs—it's a storytelling tool that highlights your growth, skills, and enthusiasm. A strong resume can:

- Showcase responsibility and initiative.
- Demonstrate transferable skills gained through school, clubs, or volunteer work.
- Help you stand out in a crowded applicant pool.
- Provide a foundation for future career documents.

Understanding the Purpose of a Teen Resume

Unlike professional resumes that focus on years of experience, a teen resume emphasizes potential. Its goal is to:

1. Highlight your education and academic achievements.
2. Showcase extracurricular activities and leadership roles.
3. Demonstrate relevant skills—both technical and interpersonal.
4. Provide evidence of work ethic through part time jobs or volunteer work.

Key Sections of a Teen Resume

Every effective resume contains essential sections that guide the reader. For teenagers, these sections are tailored to emphasize education, experiences, and skills rather than a long employment history.

1. Contact Information

Place this at the top. Keep it concise and professional:

- Full name
- Phone number (use a mobile phone with a professional voicemail greeting)
- Email address (use a simple, clean format such as first.last@email.com)
- LinkedIn profile or personal website, if available

2. Objective or Summary Statement

A brief 1 2 sentence statement that tells the employer what you're looking for and what you bring to the table. Example:

"Motivated high school junior seeking a part time cashier position to apply strong customer service skills and a proven track record of punctuality."

3. Education

Include your school name, location, expected graduation date, and GPA if it's strong (typically 3.5 or higher). Mention any honors or advanced coursework.

4. Experience

List part time jobs, internships, or volunteer work. For each entry, use bullet points to describe responsibilities and achievements, starting each with an action verb.

5. Extracurricular Activities

Showcase clubs, sports, student government, or community involvement. Highlight leadership roles or significant contributions.

6. Skills

Divide into hard and soft skills. Hard skills might include software proficiency, languages, or technical abilities; soft skills cover communication, teamwork, and problem solving.

7. Certifications, Awards, and Honors

Include any relevant certifications (e.g., CPR, Microsoft Office Specialist) and awards (e.g., academic scholarships, sports trophies).

8. References

Optionally, list 2 3 references with contact information or state "Available upon request."

Choosing the Right Resume Format

Teen resumes benefit from clean, simple layouts. The three primary formats are:

Chronological

Lists experience in reverse chronological order. Ideal if you have a steady work history.

Functional

Focuses on skills rather than dates. Useful if you lack work experience but have strong skills from school projects or volunteering.

Combination

Blends both chronological and functional elements, showcasing skills at the top followed by a brief work history.

For most teenagers, a **functional or combination format** works best because it highlights transferable skills and achievements without overemphasizing limited work experience.

Step by Step Guide: How to Make a Resume for a Teenager

Follow these steps to create a polished, professional document.

1. Gather Your Information

   List all jobs, volunteer roles, and extracurriculars.

2. Collect dates, titles, responsibilities, and achievements.
3. Note any awards, certifications, and academic highlights.

- Use free templates from Microsoft Word, Google Docs, or Canva.
- Pick a clean design with ample white space.
- Ensure the template allows easy editing of sections.

- Place it at the top in a single line or centered block.
- Use a professional font like Arial, Calibri, or Times New Roman.

- Keep it concise: 1 2 sentences.
- Tailor it to the specific job or program.

- Include school name, city, state, and graduation year.
- Add GPA if 3.5 or higher.
- Mention honors, AP courses, or special projects.

- List positions in reverse chronological order.
- Use bullet points; start each with a strong action verb.
- Quantify achievements when possible (e.g., “Managed a team of 5 volunteers.”).

- Include clubs, sports, or community service.
- Mention leadership roles or significant projects.
- Emphasize teamwork, time management, or creativity.

- Hard skills: software, languages, technical abilities.
- Soft skills: communication, problem solving, leadership.
- Group similar skills together for clarity.

- List any relevant certifications with dates.
- Add academic or extracurricular awards.

- State “Available upon request” or list 2 3 referees with contact info.

- Check for spelling and grammar errors.
- Ensure consistent formatting (font size, bullet style).
- Ask a teacher or mentor to review your resume.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

Even a well structured resume can fall flat if it contains errors or poor choices. Watch out for:

- Typos and grammatical errors – Proofread multiple times.
- Unprofessional email addresses – Use a simple, school like format.
- Overly long resumes – Keep it to one page.
- Using generic objective statements – Tailor to each job.
- Including irrelevant personal details – Focus on achievements.

Tailoring Your Resume for Different Opportunities

Every role has unique requirements. Adjust your resume accordingly:

For Part Time Retail Jobs

- Highlight customer service skills and punctuality.
- Mention any sales or cash handling experience.

For Internships in STEM Fields

- Showcase relevant coursework (e.g., AP Calculus, Computer Science).
- Include projects or science fair participation.
- List technical skills like programming languages or lab techniques.

For Volunteer Positions

- Emphasize teamwork, leadership, and community impact.
- Describe specific tasks and outcomes.

Using Action Verbs and Quantifiable Results

Action verbs bring energy to your resume. Use words like:

- Managed
- Organized
- Implemented
- Coordinated
- Assisted
- Developed
- Facilitated

Quantify achievements whenever possible. Numbers provide context and demonstrate impact.

Formatting and Design Tips

- Use a single, professional font and keep the size between 10 12 points.
- Leave adequate margins (1 inch on all sides).
- Use bullet points for clarity and to avoid dense paragraphs.
- Keep color minimal; black text on white background is safest.
- Ensure the resume is PDF ready to preserve formatting.

Tools and Templates to Get Started

Several free resources can help you build a strong teen resume:

- Canva Resumes – Drag and drop templates.
- Microsoft Office Templates – Classic and modern designs.
- Google Docs Resumes – Collaborative editing.
- Resume.com – Resume builder with step by step guidance.

Sample Teen Resume (One Page)

Below is a concise example that showcases how to structure content. Feel free to adapt the language and details to fit your own experiences.

John Doe

123 Main St. • Anytown, CA 90210 • (555) 123 4567 • john.doe@email.com • LinkedIn: linkedin.com/in/johndoe

Objective

Enthusiastic high school senior seeking a part time cashier position to leverage strong customer service skills and a proven track record of punctuality.

Education

- Anytown High School, Anytown, CA – Class of 2026
- GPA: 3.8/4.0; Honors: AP Biology, AP Calculus AB
- Dean’s List, 2024 & 2025

Experience

- Cashier, QuickMart – Anytown, CA (June 2024 – Present)
- Processed an average of 120 transactions per shift with 99% accuracy.
- Maintained inventory and restocked shelves, reducing out of stock incidents by 15%.

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