

# Resume Writing

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General resumes communicate your education, experiences and capabilities (skills). Artist resumes provide information about exhibitions, awards, grants, residencies, education and perhaps a brief artist's statement.

Your resume should list all experiences that may be relevant to your career choice. Don't think you have not had enough experiences just make the list. Experiences may include coursework, jobs, volunteering, internships, externships, work-study, and other relevant experiences. Demonstrate qualifications for a given position by always *tailoring your resume* to the description of the position for which you are applying.

Typically, resumes appear in reverse chronological order (most recent first) and are most commonly presented in either a *paragraph* or *bulleted* format. Functional resumes highlight your skills and have a different presentation, allowing a demonstration of your capabilities, regardless of experiences. Examples of the paragraph, bullet, and functional resumes consisting of the same experiences, follow the information provided in this handout.

Remember, resumes are fluid documents that need to change for each new application.

## **Important points:**

1. **Check your spelling!** Check and double-check that the name of the contact person who receives your resume is spelled correctly, as well as the company/institution you are applying to. These are common mistakes and will get your resume thrown in the trash immediately.
2. Use an easily readable font and font size
3. Ensure that you submit the resume in the manner that is requested, i.e. if requested via email, send it via email. Do not send on a disc or CD unless specifically requested
4. If the ad you are responding to states "No phone calls", do not call. This is a sure-fire way to get your resume trashed
5. If you are including references with your resume, remember to ask permission from those people you are listing as referees before naming them.

## General Resume Formats/Styles

There is no one correct format. However, there are general guidelines about what to include on a resume. A resume should look good, be concise and read well. Format and style are two different things in resume writing. The examples below were all created in Word, but you may wish to create documents in a program that allows for more style, such as InDesign or Illustrator. However, do not let the 'design' elements take over from concentrating on the actual information embedded in the document. If you do use a different program for your resume, save it as a PDF so that any recipient can open it, even if they do not have the program that you used to create it on their computer.

In general, avoid using too much color, and unless you have been asked for a full CV or *curriculum vitae*, stick to one page. Most employers will not read past the first page unless the information is highly applicable. When presenting a resume on a website, you can be a little more flexible but be aware that many potential employers will want to print it out to keep on file, so it must look as good printed as online (i.e. have the correct margins, etc).

### Heading

The heading includes name and contact information. Your name should be in a larger font than the rest of the resume. Contact information includes address, e-mail address, URL for your website and telephone number(s). Make sure your telephone number(s) have reliable recording devices (e.g., voice mail, answering machine or someone who will take a message). Additionally, your out-going message needs to sound professional.

If your email address is 'funny' or 'amusing' or even slightly risqué, change it to one that is more professional. It can be worthwhile to have a separate email address just for job applications and responses.

### Objectives

Objectives on a resume are optional. If you choose to include an objective statement, it would go directly under the contact information. Make sure it is clear and tailored to the job for which you are applying. Generalized objectives should be avoided. A Summary of Qualifications is like a brief cover letter, and what follows should support the statements you have made. It is not recommended that you have *both* an Objective and a Summary of Qualifications.

### Education

List *all* your post-secondary education in reverse chronological order. As a graduate student, start with your MFA. Include the name of the institution, the name of your degree, concentration area, and date of graduation or expected graduation.

### Experience

There are many ways you can present your experiences. If you are writing a general resume, group your experiences so that the most relevant experiences are listed first.

List your current and past experiences in reverse chronological order. Give the name of the company or organization, followed by the name of your position, and then a description of what you did and/or the skills you employed or gained (see sample resumes). Unless the dates are relevant, list them on the right side of the page rather than down the left side. Use *action verbs* to strengthen descriptions of your capabilities (see list of action verbs). Action verbs are more powerful and persuasive than passive voice.

### Other Sections

Experiences may be categorized into sections; some headings might be:

- Activities
- Leadership
- Skills
- Volunteer/Community Service
- References

It is not necessary to state “references available upon request” on your resume. Instead, have a list of three references with all pertinent contact information (name, address, telephone number[s] and e-mail) on a separate typed sheet of paper.

## **Artist Resume Format**

An artist resume is a short document that is usually used as regards commercial galleries, searching for exhibition opportunities, and for certain grant or artist-in-residency applications. It lists exhibitions, grants and awards, reviews and education. As with general resumes there is no correct format, but there are general guidelines. Avoid making it too complicated. It is meant to be short and easy to review. The example below is particularly for commercial galleries, *not* academic applications, who will usually request the longer CV (see below).

### Heading

The heading includes your name and contact information. Your name should be bold or in larger font. Contact information includes your address(es) (you may want to include both your home and studio addresses but if so, *indicate the preferred mailing address*), your telephone number(s), your e-mail address and perhaps your website.

### Education

List all academic degrees you have earned, noting honors if applicable. List in reverse chronological order, including the year of graduation, institution, and major studied. Also list attendance at any non-degree-granting institutions, i.e. Skowhegan, Chautauqua etc, after the list of degrees earned.

### Awards

This includes grants, fellowships, awards, honors, scholarships, etc. Additional awards may be scholarships, grants, or other commendations for which you or your work has received an award (for example, “Portland’s Outstanding Artist of the Year Award”). If

you have won awards at juried shows list them here rather than have a separate category for juried shows.

### Exhibitions

Break this down into several categories or keep it as one category. Possible categories are:

- Solo Exhibitions (sometimes called One Person Exhibitions)
- Group Exhibitions
- Juried Shows

It is an especially good idea to break this category down if you have had a significant number of solo exhibitions.

### Articles and reviews

This includes articles and reviews written about you and articles that you have published. It is to your benefit to list review information if the review has been positive. You may also use the heading “Publications/Bibliography” if you have written and published a substantial number of articles.

### Collections

If your work is included in a permanent collection (public or private) list that here. In the case of private collectors, ensure you have permission to list their name.

Other categories may include a listing of Bodies of Work, Travel, and people with whom you have studied.

### Current Gallery Representation

If applicable!

## **Artist Resumes for those just starting out**

Include the same information as above as appropriate. However, because you will have less experience, try some of the following strategies:

- Use a larger font size
- Use more spacing
- Write a summary artist’s statement at the top
- List those with whom you have studied
- Use “Bodies of Work” as a category

Don’t forget to visit the Library Resources page of the School’s website for more information about writing resumes, cvs and cover letters. Go to [www.nyss.org/reference.asp](http://www.nyss.org/reference.asp) and scroll down to “External Resources > Career Information”

## Artist Curriculum Vitae (cv)

A cv represents all of your professional activities and is intended mainly for use in academic situations. If asked for a “short cv”, list the highlights of your professional achievements. A “short CV” should be no longer than 3-4 pages.

On a long cv, list all your educational degrees, even those that are not art-related. Keep it as up-to-date as possible, and keep a record of every exhibition, grant or review that you receive so that you can add it to the cv. Bear in mind that you may not have something to list under every one of these headings, but this is a general guide as to what should be included.

### Heading

Include your name (in bold or larger font); address; phone numbers (work, studio, home, cell, etc); email; personal website (if applicable).

### Education

List all the degrees you have received, and the institutions from which they were received, and any specific areas of specialization under the listing (i.e. sculpture).

### Professional Experience

This regards teaching experience or academic appointments. List in reverse chronological order, most recent first, and list the full title of the position, the institution and the place where the institution is located. If you had experience as a TA, you can list it, and include the title of the course and semester that you were the TA for.

If you do not have teaching experience, list art-related experiences (i.e. studio assistant to X artist, etc.) or important positions outside the world of art that are worth listing. You can provide brief descriptions of nonacademic positions.

### Grants/Fellowships (Awards/Honors)

List in reverse chronological order, and ensure that you give the correct title for the award, and the year in which you received it.

### Exhibition Record (\*solo shows marked by asterisk)

If you do not have a significant number of solo exhibitions, it is advisable to list all exhibitions together on a year basis, and asterisk any solo shows or use mark them as (solo) after the title. If using an asterisk, indicate what they stand for next to the heading (see above).

For group shows, if juried, add (juried) or (invitational) after the name, as it indicates what process was used for inclusion of works in the show.

If you work in a couple of mediums, note the medium of the piece you exhibited at the end of the title, i.e. *Five artists from New York*, New York Studio School (sculpture); *Searching for the Image*, New York Studio School (painting). If you only work in one medium, this is not necessary.

Bibliography (Reviews/Articles/Catalogues, Reviews/Articles/Interviews)

List reviews or articles written about you and or/your work in the correct format, and be consistent. List the author of the piece, title of the article, the title of the journal/newspaper it appeared in, the volume & number, and the date of publication.

Publications (Published Writings, Critical Writings)

If you have published anything, including reviews of other artist's shows, or other items you have written, list them here.

Conferences (Symposia)

If you have presented a paper or taken part in a panel at any conference, list it here. Give the name of the conference; date; location it took place, and the title of the paper given or panel you participated in.

Lectures (Workshops/Critiques/Guest Lectures)

List the date and place that that lecture took place, and title where necessary.

**Other items to list**

- Gallery Representation
- Artist Residencies
- Technical Abilities
- Professional Organizations
- Exhibitions Juried
- Exhibitions Curated
- Collections
- Website
- Reference
- Travel/Foreign Languages Spoken