

Resume Skills Section

Uncover Your Marketable Skills

Have you thought about the skills you're listing in your CV's Skills section? If you treat this section as an afterthought, you could be missing an opportunity to show employers you've got the right skills for the job.

Listing skills can help you stand out. It can also add important keywords to your resume. Hiring managers often use skills as keywords when searching an employment database, so your resume will have a better chance of being found by the right people if you include a comprehensive skills list.

A one-week review of the top 100 skills posted by employment database members shows that 74 percent of these skills are computer- or technology-related. However, only 22 percent of the top keywords recruiters use to search resumes are related to technology. Technical skills are certainly important, but you should also be including other skills employers find desirable.

When completing the Skills section, consider: What skills would be important to the job you're seeking? The best way to get started is to search job titles on www.monster.com and review several postings for your target job. Look at the ideal requirements in the ads and write a list of frequently repeated skills. Next, create a list of your matching skills that you can incorporate in your resume. Keep in mind that skills may be developed from everything from work experience to education and training, hobbies, extracurricular activities, volunteer work and even self-study.

Three Types of Skills

- * **Job-related:** These are relevant to a specific job. For example, an accountant's job-related skills might include financial planning, budgeting and financial reporting.
- * **Transferable:** Skills learned in one field or job that are applicable to different ones are transferable. These skills can reflect how you deal with things (assembly, machine operation), data (research, synthesize information) and people (instruct, manage and negotiate).
- * **Adaptive:** These skills are the hardest to substantiate as they include personality traits and characteristics that determine your work style. Adaptive skills include reliability, ability to get along with colleagues, honesty and productivity.

Adding Your Skills to the Resume Builder

Job-related and transferable skills are the most desirable to list on your resume. For each skill, indicate when it was last used, your skill level and years of experience. It's important to be honest when evaluating your skill level. While it's tempting to select "expert," once you get the interview or job, you may need to prove it. But this is not the place for modesty either; do select "expert" if you are truly at that level.

Here's a guideline for rating your skill level:

Beginner: A novice understanding of the skill. You have exposure to the skill and understand its basic concepts but lack experience.

Intermediate: Between a beginner and an expert. You have experience with and can carry out the skill but don't understand its advanced concepts.

Expert: A highly developed skill level. You have solid experience and training with the skill and understand advanced concepts. You demonstrate proficiency and superior skill level.

How Many Skills to List?

Employers quickly scan resumes, so long lists are not likely to get read. Instead, select 10 to 15 of your strongest, most desirable skills. A short, targeted skills list will be more effective than one that's long and overwhelming.