

With all of the thought and effort you put into creating an outstanding resume, the last thing you want is for the final document to contain errors that will cause a potential employer to put it in the discard pile. You may think you have done everything possible to make your resume the best it can be, but it is not ready for use until you have double-checked to make sure it does not contain any of the following common, simple errors.

Spelling - While a good spell check program will catch the most glaring errors, it will not catch things like `wear' instead of `where', `and' instead of `an', etc. Always check the spelling yourself, and have one or two other trusted people check it as well. A great trick for proofreading is to read the material backwards, one word at a time.

Grammar - Most spell check programs also include some sort of grammar checker, so use it. You may think you are a whiz at grammar, but a grammar program will catch things like passive language, split infinitives, clichés and colloquialisms, and other common mistakes. No software program is perfect, though, so have one or two other people with good grammar skills check your resume as well.

Font Style And Size - You may think that Britannic Bold or Calligraphy Script is striking and eye catching, but most potential employers will not. Think in terms of a human resources specialist screening a pile of 50 or 60 resumes for a single job - would you want to wade through a resume that is hard to read? Instead, select a font style like Times New Roman, Arial or Tahoma that is easy to read, and make sure you use at least 11 or 12-point type.

Paper - Once again, simple is better. Opt for a nice white linen paper instead of a fancy color or texture. Use the same paper for your cover letter, and if available use a matching envelope. Some employers like to keep the envelope, letter and resume clipped together, so if they match it looks more professional.

Printing - Use the best quality printer you can find to print your resume and cover letter, even if you have to go to a commercial copy center and use one of their printers. Always use a computer and printer for the outside envelope as well - a sharp looking resume and cover letter will look strange emerging from an envelope with a handwritten address on it.

Pictures - A trendy thing to do in recent years has been to include your picture on your resume. Unless the job posting specifically requires you to include a picture, leave it off. Most employers will be put off by a resume that is too `cutesy', and including your picture definitely falls into that category.

Salary - Never include information in a resume about your past, present, or expected salary. If such information is specifically requested then it should go in the cover letter in the form of a salary range, not a specific number.

References - A resume should not include contact information for your references. This tends to distract from the focus on your skills and attributes, and it takes up space on the page that can be put to better use. If a potential employer specifically asks for references to be included as part of your resume package, it is usually better to put them on a separate page and note that page on the cover letter as an enclosure.