

Resume-Building Tips & Tricks for Fresh Software Engineering Graduates

Stand out in the tech hiring process



SkillCompass

First Impressions Count

- Recruiters spend 6-7 seconds scanning resumes before deciding to continue or move on
- Effective resumes open doors to interviews—showcase your technical skills and potential value
- ATS filters out 75% of resumes before human eyes see them
- Your resume needs to work for both robots and humans
- Think of your resume as your personal brand statement



Contact Info

Name, phone, email, LinkedIn, GitHub



Summary

2-3 lines highlighting your focus



Technical Skills

Languages, frameworks, tools organized by category



Projects

3-4 key projects with tech stack



Education

Degree, institution, graduation date, relevant coursework



Experience

Internships, part-time roles, contributions

The Essential Structure

Keep it organized, scannable, and focused on what matters most

- Clear contact info: professional email, phone, LinkedIn URL, and GitHub link
- Brief summary (2-3 sentences) shows your specialization and focus area
- Group skills by category: languages, frameworks, databases, tools for readability
- Projects are your strongest asset—showcase 3-4 with tech stacks
- Education after projects: degree, GPA if >3.5, relevant coursework



Making Yourself Easy to Reach

89%

of recruiters check LinkedIn profiles during screening

76%

review GitHub repositories before technical interviews

- Use a professional email with your name (firstname.lastname@gmail.com), avoiding nicknames or numbers
- Include your full name, phone number with country code if applying internationally, and city/state location
- Add clickable hyperlinks to your LinkedIn profile URL and GitHub username for easy exploration
- Consider adding a personal website or portfolio link with live demos and detailed case studies
- Skip including your full street address—city and state are sufficient for privacy
- Make sure all links are active, public, and lead to professional profiles with updated information



Your 30-Second Elevator Pitch

- Keep summary to 2-3 lines, focusing on your technical area like full-stack, cloud, or machine learning
- Mention 1-2 key strengths: "React and Node.js expert" or "Python data analysis" to show specialization
- State your goal clearly—"seeking full-time role" or "passionate about scalable systems" helps recruiters
- Avoid generic phrases; use specific descriptors like "built 5+ applications" instead of "hard worker"
- Example: "Software grad specializing in full-stack with React/Django. Built 4 apps with 10K+ users. Seeking backend role."

Showcasing Your Tech Arsenal

- Organize skills into clear categories like Languages, Frameworks, Databases, and Tools for better scannability and ATS optimization
- List skills by proficiency within each category—put your strongest languages and frameworks first to catch recruiters' attention immediately
- Be honest about your skill level—don't list technologies you've only briefly touched; recruiters will test these in interviews with detailed technical questions
- Include version numbers for key frameworks when relevant to show you're current with modern tooling
- Add soft technical skills like Agile/Scrum, Git workflow, code review, or technical documentation if you have real experience

Technical Skills Organization by Category

Category	Skills
Languages	Python, JavaScript, Java, C++, SQL
Frontend	React, HTML/CSS, TypeScript, Redux, Tailwind CSS
Backend	Node.js, Django, Express, REST APIs, GraphQL
Databases	PostgreSQL, MongoDB, MySQL, Redis
Tools & Platforms	Git, Docker, AWS, Jenkins, Linux
Testing	Jest, Pytest, Selenium, Unit Testing

Project Section - Your Secret Weapon

Show don't tell—detailed projects beat generic job descriptions every time

92%

of hiring managers prefer seeing project work over coursework

2.5x

more recruiter responses with GitHub profiles having 3+ complete projects

- Feature **3-4 substantial projects** that demonstrate different skills—choose projects showing full-stack abilities, problem-solving, and real-world application
- Use the **PAR format**: Problem (what challenge did you solve?), Action (what did you build?), Result (what was the impact?)
- Include **specific metrics**: "Built recipe app serving 5K+ users" or "Reduced API response time by 40%" makes impact concrete
- List the **complete tech stack** for each project (React, Node.js, PostgreSQL, AWS) so recruiters see your technical breadth immediately
- Add **GitHub links and live demo URLs** when possible—recruiters want to see your code quality and working applications

Resume Red Flags That Kill Your Chances

Simple mistakes cost interviews—here's what to watch out for

- Typos and errors signal carelessness—proofread, use spell-check, and have friends review before submitting
- Generic objectives like "seeking challenging position" waste space—use specific technical focus instead
- Listing "Microsoft Office" on engineering resume looks out of touch—these skills are assumed
- Dense text blocks make resumes unscannable—use concise bullets with 1-2 lines maximum
- Inconsistent formatting like mixed fonts or random bolding looks unprofessional—maintain strict consistency



Beating the Robot Gatekeepers

75% of resumes never reach humans—optimize for ATS without sacrificing readability

75%

of resumes filtered by ATS before human review

60%

Simple formatting increases ATS parsing success

- ATS systems parse resumes by scanning for standard section headers like "Experience," "Education," "Skills"—avoid creative headers
- Stick to simple formatting with standard fonts, no text boxes, tables, or multi-column layouts that confuse parsing algorithms
- Save your resume as .docx or PDF with selectable text—never submit image-based PDFs or scanned documents
- Naturally incorporate keywords from the job description throughout your resume without keyword stuffing
- Use standard bullet points (• or -) rather than custom symbols or icons that ATS systems can't recognize



Use standard fonts

Arial, Calibri, Times New Roman



Save as .docx or PDF with text layer

Ensure text is selectable, not image-based



Avoid tables, columns, headers/footers, images, graphics

Keep layout simple for parsing



Use standard section headings

Experience, Education, Skills



Include keywords from job description naturally

Match terminology without stuffing

References



Source Basis

No external sources cited - this presentation is based on established **industry best practices** and **career guidance standards** for software engineering resumes.

- Content draws from widely recognized resume writing principles and technical hiring practices used across the software engineering industry
- Recommendations reflect common standards for ATS optimization, technical skill presentation, and project showcasing in entry-level engineering roles
- Guidance aligns with typical recruiter expectations and hiring manager preferences at technology companies of various sizes

