I'm not a bot

We all know that having the right skills is the key to landing a job. But when it comes to quantifying our skills and defining exactly what we can offer a potential employer, many of us struggle to find the right words.You don't want to undersell your capabilities and miss out on an opportunity ... but on the other hand, you also don't want to misrepresent yourself or claim a competency you don’t have.The solution? Use skill levels on your resume. Words like Expert, Proficient, and Beginner quantify your skills, highlight your expertise, and give employers a clear understanding of your abilities — making it easier for them to hire you.How to list skill levels on your resumeIn that case, how do you list skill levels on your resume? Here's how to get started:Write a list of the skills you possess. You should keep this as a master list somewhere to help you easily customize your resume by swapping out skills.Take a look at the job description. Match that up against your own list until you have 10-15 skills in common.Create a section toward the bottom of your resume titled "Skills" or "Additional Information."Choose how to organize your skills list (more on these options later).Specify your level of proficiency clearly and simply, so that it can be understood at a glance.Reinforce these skill levels by mentioning key skills in your Work Experience bullet points.Now, let's take a closer look at how to categorize skill levels.How to display skill levels on a resumeYou have a few different options for displaying skills levels on your resume. You can:Categorize skills by level of proficiencySpecify your skill level in parentheses after each skillDescribe your skill level in simple termsList your years of experience with each skillInclude formal levels of qualificationKeep scrolling for some examples of what each of these options should look like and how to use them for your own resume.Categorize skills by level of proficiencyThis is one of the clearest ways to indicate skill level on your resume. In your Skills section, create subheadings like "Expert" and "Proficient," then list your relevant skills.Here's a basic template:Expert: Python, Microsoft Excel, Adobe PhotoshopProficient: Java, CSS, UX DesignAnd here's an example of a resume using this approach:Example of grouping skills by proficiency level on a resumeSpecify your skill level in parentheses after each skillYou can also list your proficiency level after each skill if you have a number of varying skill levels. Here's a template you can use:SKILLSMicrosoft Access (Expert)Strategic Planning (Proficient)PRINCE2 (Proficient)Agile Project Management (Novice)And here's an example from a resume:Example of listing skill levels in parentheses on a resumeDescribe your skill level in simple termsIf you prefer to organize your skills in a different way — for example, by breaking them up into categories like "Technical Skills," "Certifications," "Volunteering," and "Awards" — you can add in a couple of simple words to describe your skill level.Here's a template for you to follow:SKILLSTechnical Skills: Advanced in Microsoft Access, SQL and Tableau; Proficient with Python, Java and HadoopLanguages: Fluent in English, Spanish; Conversational Proficiency in French, GermanAnd here's another example of what it could look like:Example of describing skill levels on a resume in simple termsList your years of experience with each skillDo you feel self-conscious about self-describing as an "expert?" You can get around this by listing your years of experience instead. This has the additional benefit of being purely factual, allowing recruiters to see more easily if you match their ideal candidate.Here's a template:SKILLS HTML/CSS (12 years)Java (10 years)PHP (9 years)And here's a resume example:Example of listing years of experience with each skillInclude formal levels of qualificationSimilarly, you can use formal qualifications as a shortcut to describing your skill levels. Qualifications can go in an "Additional Information" section alongside other skills, or in a separate resume section if you prefer.Here's a template you can copy and paste:ADDITIONAL INFORMATIONTechnical Skills: Financial Analysis, Forecasting, QuickBooksCertifications: CFA Level 2 (August 2016)And here's an example in action:Example of including qualifications to illustrate skill levelsDo's and don'ts of putting skill levels on a resumeOnce you've decided how to organize your skills, here are a few tips to keep you on track.DOList the skills you're most proficient in first.Use technical language and name the exact tools you use — for example, "WordPress, CSS and Javascript" instead of "website creation."Use the same scale for all skills and be consistent with your wording.List more skills at an "Expert" or "Proficient" level and limit the number of "Novice" or "Intermediate" skills on your resume.Use the job description to guide you. You can also enlist the aid of tools like our Skills and Keywords finder or Targeted Resume.DON'TDon't use color coding to represent your skill levels. Not all recruiters will understand what different colors are supposed to mean, and most ATS software will strip out formatting — including color.Don't use pie charts, graphs, or infographics to display your skill levels. It may look fancy, but images generally don't belong on your resume.Don't give yourself a rating — for example, "5 stars" or "95/100."Don’t list skills you have no experience with. You should have a basic understanding of every skill on your resume and expect to be questioned about it in an interview.What skill levels to use on your resumeThere is no standardized way to quantify skills, but don’t fret. No matter the industry, these universal terms can be applied to most common skills.General skill levelsHere is an example of general skill levels and what these terms mean to recruiters.Beginner, Novice or Entry-level: You have some working experience with this skill and have taken a course or other training. You are familiar enough to perform basic tasks, but require guidance or oversight if using this skill independently.Intermediate: You are comfortable using this skill as part of a team with minimal assistance. You have some hands-on experience and could discuss this skill in an interview.Proficient or Working Experience: You have used this skill independently at work, are comfortable with all aspects of this skill and require no supervision or assistance.Expert or Advanced: You have extensive hands-on experience performing this skill independently to a high level. You could teach this skill to others and run a team where this skill was a primary focus.If you're not sure if you have represented your skill levels the right way, upload your resume to the tool below – you'll get a confidential resume review and suggestions for improvements.Language-specific skill levelsHere are some options for including language skills on your resume.Basic or Elementary: You know a few simple phrases but would struggle to hold a conversation.Intermediate or Conversational: You can hold a conversation in this language but struggle with complex terms or topics. You can make yourself understood but need assistance to read or write.Fluent or Proficient: You can hold an in-depth conversation and communicate ideas effectively. You can read and write in this language easily.Native or Bilingual: You are fluent and consider this a first language. You could conduct an interview or hold a meeting in this language.Programming and coding skill levelsHere is an example of how the general skill levels above would relate to industry-specific computer programming skills.Basic: You just started learning this language, can read code, and have limited experience with it at work.Competent: You have a basic understanding of a specific database and can perform simple tasks, but would require assistance to create projects independently.Skilled or Proficient: You have a thorough understanding of this particular programming language, can perform complex tasks, and create effective applications independently.Expert: You can create complex applications and have used this language on multiple projects. You could oversee a team of beginners and teach the basics.Determining your skill proficiencyWhen determining your proficiency level, consider how confident you would be using a skill independently.Do you have prior experience with this skill?Do you need oversight or guidance to use this skill?If asked about this skill in an interview, could you talk about it confidently and offer examples?Be honest about your skill levels and never oversell your abilities or claim competencies you don’t have. There is no shame in being a beginner, but an employer needs to know truthfully so they can provide any assistance or training you might require.Hard vs soft skillsHard skills are technical abilities associated with specific job tasks, for example, Javascript, WordPress, or SEO. Soft skills are personal qualities you bring to a team, such as conflict resolution, time management, and organization.Hard skills can be quantified through skill levels and qualifications. Soft skills are subjective and speak more to how you perform in a work environment.Avoid putting soft skills on your resume and focus on specific hard skills. Soft skills are better exemplified through work experience and descriptions of specific accomplishments. Anyone can write that they are hardworking with good attention to detail. Instead, demonstrate these facts to your recruiter through a detailed work history.ATS: Why are skills important?Automated software known as Applicant Tracking Systems are used to scan resumes for specific keywords. ATS is popular with recruiters as it streamlines their work by eliminating unqualified applicants.Not including relevant skills on your resume can be the difference between making it past the ATS and getting filtered out at the first hurdle. Knowing what keywords recruiters are looking for is key.Make sure to include all relevant skills and use our Targeted Resume tool to scan your resume and identify any important keywords or skills you might be missing.You can also use the skills search tool below to get a list of skills and keywords relevant to the job you're applying for. What to do if a skill is missing from your resumeNever lie and claim a skill you don’t have. Instead, invest some time into training courses, like Google Career Certificates or Coursera online courses, so you can confidently add a new skill to your resume. Reddit and its partners use cookies and similar technologies to provide you with a better experience. By accepting all cookies, you agree to our use of cookies to deliver and maintain our services and site, improve the quality of Reddit, personalize Reddit content and advertising, and measure the effectiveness of advertising. By rejecting non-essential cookies, Reddit may still use certain cookies to ensure the proper functionality of our platform. For more information, please see our Cookie Notice and our Privacy Policy. Reddit and its partners use cookies and similar technologies to provide you with a better experience. By accepting all cookies, you agree to our use of cookies to deliver and maintain our services and site, improve the quality of Reddit, personalize Reddit content and advertising, and measure the effectiveness of advertising. By rejecting non-essential cookies, Reddit may still use certain cookies to ensure the proper functionality of our platform. For more information, please see our Cookie Notice and our Privacy Policy. Do you often turn to Reddit for answers to your burning questions? And, have you considered exploring this popular online forum to uncover what the best resume advice according to Reddit is? Of course, Reddit can be notoriously difficult to navigate and not all of its users actually know what they're talking about. Still, Reddit and other public forums can be valuable sources of first-hand experience in all things resume. We've painstakingly sifted through countless subreddits, all dedicated to resume writing and career tips, to save you the trouble. Now, we present to you the crème-de-la-crème of Reddit resume advice. In this article, you'll find: 6 best resume advice according to Reddit; What we think about them; And, of course, examples. TL;DR: 5 Best resume advice according to reddit First, for those in a hurry, here's the TL;DR version of our top five resume advice gathered from Reddit: Use a single column layout to pass the ATS. Don't name your resume 'resume.pdf'. Keep you job descriptions short. Use bullet points and action verbs. Use numbers to quantify your achievements. Less is more for both word count & job applications per day. Use resume builders to make your life easier. Now, let's look at the best resume advice according to Reddit users more closely. Here's what we think: 1. Use a single column layout to pass the ATS Source: Reddit If you thought that layout doesn't play any significant role in the success rate of your resume, you thought wrong! In case the company you're applying to uses an Applicant Tracking System, always opt for a single column layout. The reason? ATS compatibility. Even though all ATSs are designed to read text from top to bottom, left to right, not every ATS is programmed to distinguish between columns. And you just can't know with certainty which software you'll encounter. Therefore, reduce the risk of your resume being incorrectly processed or rejected by picking a one-column ATS friendly resume template. This will make the process of parsing and interpreting information easier and safer. HOWEVER. That doesn't mean you should discard the two-column resume all-together. Here are some reasons why a two-column layout can still be beneficial: Non-ATS employers. Many companies still don't use ATS systems, making the ATS compatibility argument less relevant in these cases. For these employers, the visual and organizational benefits of a two-column layout could be more advantageous. Aesthetics. A two-column format can be more visually engaging, making your resume stand out. Ease of reading. Smaller chunks of information can make the resume easier for the human eye to navigate. Space management. For those with less experience, a two-column layout can help evenly distribute text and avoid large empty spaces. Strategic organization. It allows for a more strategic presentation of information, guiding the recruiter's eyes through your resume efficiently. Moreover, if you're just entering the workforce with no experience, your resume is probably still quite sparse. Because of this, you may end up with a large, unattractive empty space at the bottom of your document. And with one-column structure resumes, this is often the case. There' s an easy fix! Organizing your resume sections into a two-column structure can help spread the text more evenly. 2. Don't name your resume 'resume.pdf' Source: Reddit Indeed, putting together a good resume is quite a tedious process. There're so many rules and principles to think about, for instance: Every single resume section, whether it be the resume summary, work experience section, education section, skills section, or any other optional section, requires your full and undivided attention. You must remember to always tailor your resume to fit a specific job description. Not to mention the subsequent formatting and proofreading! By the time you've finished writing your resume, you're likely mentally drained. It's at this time that errors creep out from the most unexpected places. One such error is not naming your resume file appropriately. How to name your resume file: step-by-step. When naming your resume file for submission, it's important to consider clarity, professionalism, and the likelihood of it being easily found by the recruiters. Here are our recommendations for naming your resume file: Use your name. Start with your full name. This is the most crucial piece of information because it clearly identifies the document as yours. For example, "PeterStones". Specify the document type. Make it clear that the document is a resume. This helps distinguish your resume from other documents like a cover letter. For example, "Resume". Add the job title. This can be particularly helpful if you are sending the resume directly to a hiring manager. For example, "ProductManager". Use a professional format. Avoid using any unnecessary symbols or fancy formatting. Underscores (_) or hyphens (-) are acceptable to separate words. A good file name for your resume could look like this: "PeterStones_Resume_ProductManager.pdf". Finally, before hitting send, consider carefully what to write in an email when sending a resume. Of course, when you're applying for a job, every detail matters. Don't neglect the content of your email - it's also responsible for making a positive first impression. 3. Keep your job descriptions short. Use bullet points and action verbs Source: Reddit Undoubtedly, you know that the work experience section is the heart and soul of your resume. The recruiters always pay it the most attention, and so you need to be extra diligent and patient while writing about your past employment. Consequently, many will try to fit in as much information as humanly possible, disregarding the readability and quality of their entries. To steer clear from such mistake, follow these two simple principles: Organize your work descriptions into bullet points. Under each work experience entry, list 4-5 bullet points underlining your most notable responsibilities and achievements. That is to say, you should focus on demonstrating the impact your presence had on your former employment, rather than just stating your daily duties. Open the said bullet points with action verbs. The recruiters don't care about long winding sentences! That's why it's a good idea to start each bullet point with an action verb. This will not only make your writing more concise, but it'll also depict you as a proactive, and therefore valuable, employee. For example, a well conceptualized work entry description can look like this: Senior Product Manager XYZ Tech Solutions, New York, NY | June 2019 - Present Led a team of 8 in the development of an innovative mobile application, increasing user retention by 35% within six months. Collaborated with cross-departmental teams to streamline product delivery, reducing time-to-market by 20%. Managed product lifecycle from concept to launch, including market analysis, positioning, and rollout strategy. Oversaw a budget of $1M, optimizing resource allocation and cutting costs by 15% without impacting product quality. 4. Use numbers to quantify your achievements Source: Reddit This is another great resume advice according to a Reddit user! The recruiters adore to see numbers in your resume! Why, you ask? It makes life a bit easier for them. By quantifying your accomplishments, you simultaneously allow recruiters to better gauge your abilities; and add more weight to your words. Be as specific as you can - numbers are universal. Struggling to figure out how to incorporate numbers into your resume? Here are few examples of what you can quantify: Revenue and sales increases. If you contributed to growing revenue or sales, specify the percentage or dollar amount of the increase. For example: "Boosted sales by 20% within a six-month period." Cost reduction. Similarly, if you implemented strategies that reduced costs, mention the amount or percentage saved. For example: "Cut operational costs by 15% through process optimization." Time efficiency. If you streamlined processes, indicate how much time was saved. For example: "Reduced project turnaround time by 30%." Team management. If you manage a team, you can specify the number of people you supervise. For example: "Led a team of 12 sales professionals." Project scope and delivery. Quantify the size or value of the projects you managed, then mention if you delivered them under budget or ahead of schedule. For example: "Managed projects worth $2M, consistently delivering 10% under budget." Training and development. If you were involved in training, mention the number of people you trained or the improvement in performance post-training. For example: "Trained over 30 employees, leading to a 40% increase in overall team efficiency." 5. Less is more for both word count & job applications per day Source: Reddit Resume advice two-in-one! As this Reddit user rightly pointed out, less is sometimes more. This is especially true when it comes to the content of your resume as well as the amount of job applications you send out each day. When crafting your resume, keep in mind that you must show the recruiters that you have everything they're looking for. Chances are, you actually have much more - more diverse job experience; more interesting hobbies; or more fulfilling volunteer work you'd like to share with them. Don't! Obviously, resumes have their length limitations. Once you've started to write yours, you'll soon learn that you have to be picky! Recruiters prefer resumes that are focused, relevant, and straight-to-the-point. In other words, don't make them read information they didn't ask for. The same applies to applying for jobs. Many in this situation start panic-applying to every single job posting they find. Because they assume that the more applications they send, the bigger their chances at landing a job will be. Makes sense right? In theory, maybe. In practice? Hardly! Believe it or not, there's such a thing as sending too many applications. Basically, if your solely focus on the quantity of applications, you're running the risk of sacrificing their quality. And that is a problem. If you'd like to learn how to go about this problem, including tips on how to manage the pressure of job hunting, take a look at what research says about the ideal number of job applications. 6. Use resume builders to make your life easier Source: Reddit Now, hand over your heart! Would you prefer to sit in front of your computer for hours, battling with Microsoft Word and its many settings? Trying to create a perfect resume design from scratch? Admit it, even the thought of setting margins and spacing makes you roll your eyes. Hence, arguably the best resume advice according to reddit is to make a resume with an online resume builder to avoid these inconveniences (politely said). No need to scratch your head over a layout or the best colour palette! Instead, simply pick a resume template that best suits your needs (both aesthetic and practical), fill in all your information, and watch your resume come to life in seconds. Additionally, resume builders can proofread and correct any misspellings or typos you might've otherwise missed. Sounds good? If so, your perfect resume is one click away. Resume template by KickresumeThis resume was written by our experienced resume writers specifically for this profession. Key Takeaways: Best resume advice according to Reddit In conclusion, Reddit and other public forums can serve as a good starting point for seeking resume advice. Apart from first-hand applicant experience, many posts are sumbitted by actual hiring managers. However, there's a lot to weed out first to find the best resume advice according to reddit. Plus, you should always compare your findings with reputable sources. Which is exactly what we did. Use a single column layout to pass the ATS. Don't forget to name your resume file appropriately. Keep your job descriptions short with bullet points and action verbs. Use numbers to quantify your achievements. Keep your resume concise and the number of daily applications reasonable. Use online tools (like Kickresume) to build your resume. Reddit and its partners use cookies and similar technologies to provide you with a better experience. By accepting all cookies, you agree to our use of cookies to deliver and maintain our services and site, improve the quality of Reddit, personalize Reddit content and advertising, and measure the effectiveness of advertising. By rejecting non-essential cookies, Reddit may still use certain cookies to ensure the proper functionality of our platform. For more information, please see our Cookie Notice and our Privacy Policy. A targeted skills section is a major component of an excellent resume. Adding your skill level to your resume makes that section even more effective. The blog below will help you develop a resume skills section that represents your abilities at their best.A skills section is a given on any resume, but to boost the power of that section, you may choose to add your proficiency level to give employers a more honed representation of your abilities. But judging your own skills can be tough. You may be tempted to underplay or overplay your expertise level in an effort to impress. So how do you go about creating an accurate resume that includes skill levels? In this blog, we’ll break down the answer to that question into the following topics: Categories of skills to list What are resume proficiency levels? How to rate your skill levels for a resume Ways to list skill levels on a resume Expert tip Before you begin to rate your skill levels, you need to create a list of all your attributes. Brainstorm any and all knowledge and abilities that you have, regardless of whether they seem relatable to the job. Keep this master list and add to it as you progress in your career. It will come in handy when you compile your skills list, but also when you get asked that common interview question: “What are your greatest skills?” The 2 categories of skillsOnce you’ve created your long list of skills, you need to organize it. There are two main types of skills: Hard skillsHard skills are those you learned for the job. In other words, if you can take a class to learn it and it applies directly to your profession, it’s a hard skill. Examples include computer software, rules and regulations, accounting procedures, graphic design, and languages.Soft skillsSoft skills are interpersonal and general work qualities that are relatable to most jobs. Examples include communication, trustworthiness, reliability, problem solving, and organization.Your resume should include a blend of both of these types of skills.You may want to further divide your master list into categories of both hard and soft skills that will ensure you can easily create the best mix for your resume skill section. Below are example categories. Hard skills Soft skills Technical or computer Communication Industry knowledge Presentation Management Sales Analytical Creativity What are the 4 resume proficiency levels?Once you have impressed yourself with all the skills you have acquired in your life (not just your career because some of your most valuable soft skills are those you have developed in your relationships with others and in school), it’s time to think about how to rate your skill level.Here are the four levels of skills you should use to rank yourself: Expert. You know this skill hands down, can guide others in using it, and feel 100% confident that any related issue that comes up, you can handle. Proficient. You use this skill regularly in your profession and are confident in your ability to tackle most situations. You can troubleshoot when something goes wrong, although you may have to turn to an expert on rare occasions. Intermediate. You’ve moved beyond the basics, but are still learning. As long as the task isn’t complex, you can complete it and do some basic troubleshooting. Beginner. You’ve just started learning a new skill and can perform some basics, but you can’t say that you could use this skill without assistance or more training. Now that you have the definitions of skill levels, let’s look at how you can rank yourself within themHow to rate your skill levels for a resumeMany resume templates offer the option of ranking your skills to give recruiters a clearer picture of who you are as a candidate. This extra information requires more thought on your part, but will also help you find the right job fit.Resume skills section explanationUnless you really want to list a skill you believe is secondary to the position you seek, but adds to your candidacy, avoid choosing beginner-level skills.Hard skills Hard skills are easier to rate. You may even have taken an assessment test that tells you exactly where you fall on the proficiency scale of skill levels. Any skill that you have advanced certification in makes you proficient or expert—you’ve proved it by passing a class and earning a certificate.If you’re wavering between two levels, you can see if there’s a quick assessment you can complete online or ask a colleague. You don’t want to take yourself out of the running by being too modest, but you also don’t want to exaggerate and find that you are in over your head at your new job.Soft skills Soft skills can be more difficult to rate because there’s no simple test for how well you communicate or organize your workday. One method is to break down the skill into its components and see how many of the components you have. For example: Are you an active listener? Can you give feedback? Regularly communicate and share information with peers and other stakeholders? All of these are parts of communication skills. How to list skill levels on a resumeskills editor in resume.io builder Decide on your format. If you have more than seven skills you wish to highlight, consider a resume template that allows for more space for this section. A hybrid resume format typically enlarges your skills section. While this may take some space from your other sections, in particular your employment history, if the job requires many technical abilities, this may be the way to go. Use a design element. The best way to list your skill levels on your resume is to use a visualized rating system, such as stars, a bar, or another graphic element. This visual addition helps to highlight your abilities and gives recruiters a quick way to see that your talents match the position. To give more weight to your skills, choose a template that uses not only a rating scale but also a background color or another spot design that attracts attention. List skills in order. Start with the skills in which you are an expert, and then list those in which you are proficient. Intermediate skills should fall at the bottom, but lean toward only listing these if they are mentioned as “nice to have” skills on the job listing. Personalize for each job. Your skills list is dependent upon the job you’re applying for. This is even more true when you rate your skills because each job prioritizes skills a bit differently. Make sure you match your skills to those desired by your targeted employer and remember that being overqualified can also eliminate you from the running. Expert tip While your skills section is an important element of your resume, you need to back up this listing with concrete examples within the rest of your document. Use your profile, employment history, and education sections to provide evidence that backs up your ratings and broadens the picture of what you can do with your skills that will make your prospective employer’s workday easier. Key takeawaysThe skills section offers valuable information at a glance to HR personnel. Taking the time to rank and rate your skill levels will also help you target jobs for which you are an excellent candidate. Before you can rate your proficiency levels for your resume, you need to know what all your skills are. An outstanding skills section includes proficiency levels in both hard and soft skills. A design element will help guide a recruiter’s eyes to your top-notch skills and proficiency levels. Use your entire resume to show off how you use your skills to do a great job. Reddit and its partners use cookies and similar technologies to provide you with a better experience. By accepting all cookies, you agree to our use of cookies to deliver and maintain our services and site, improve the quality of Reddit, personalize Reddit content and advertising, and measure the effectiveness of advertising. By rejecting non-essential cookies, Reddit may still use certain cookies to ensure the proper functionality of our platform. For more information, please see our Cookie Notice and our Privacy Policy.