

Effective Résumé Writing for Creative Artists

If you're a visual artist, writer, musician, or performing artist, a résumé isn't always the first thing you think of when working to further your career. But a clear, concise résumé is vital for every person working in the arts, especially if you're applying for grants and other opportunities. But, as you might expect, an effective arts résumé won't necessarily look like those for traditional professions. Even choosing whether to spell "résumé" with those artsy accents can be a tough call. Nevertheless, here are a few tips to get your résumé in shape:

What is a résumé? Most of us will probably have needed to create a résumé at some point in our careers. But artists do things differently, and if you've had a career in the arts throughout your working life, it's possible you've never even seen one, let alone had one of your own.

Simply put, a résumé is an overview of your work experience, education, and other relevant details that qualify you for jobs, grants, residencies, and other career opportunities.

Keep it simple. Your résumé doesn't have to be elaborate or "artistic;" it just needs to convey your work history, artistic accomplishments and milestones, and *relevant* details. If a job you held a decade ago has no bearing on the position or grant you're seeking, it probably doesn't need to be there. Include links to your work, impressive achievements, your education where it's relevant, and most of all, let your résumé tell a story which lets your personality shine through. **Next:** read Creative Live's [detailed list of résumé tips](#).



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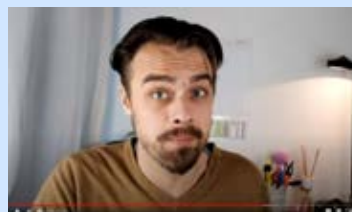
An artist's résumé is an important tool to help you unlock doors to creative opportunities. Hopefully, the recommendations above will help you craft an effective and focused résumé which helps turn applications into awards, and interviews into offers. Find more resources at art.mt.gov

Think about content. How much you include in your résumé matters, but what you include matters too. If you're seeking a job, your work history, education and skills matter. But for grants, fellowships, or residencies, your creative output, exhibition history, publications, and awards should come to the fore. Academic credentials may be highly relevant, but then again they may not. Providing clickable links to your work and exhibitions will typically be more powerful than the value of your degree as long as what you're looking for isn't a job. **Next:** Monster.com provides [in-depth advice on what to include in a creative résumé](#).

Résumé or CV? The résumé you need may not be a résumé at all. In the world of academia the curriculum vitae, or CV, is frequently used in addition to or in place of a traditional résumé. A CV focuses on your creative work and achievements. A detailed listing of your education, exhibitions, teaching positions, fellowships, residencies, honors, lectures and other work gives the recipient an understanding of your creative history and accomplishments. For many people in the arts seeking grants or other creative opportunities, a document which combines the standard elements of a résumé with the creative emphasis of a CV might be the most useful approach. **Next:** Look at a more detailed [explanation of résumés and CVs](#) from Columbia University.

Get down to brass tacks. Once you've decided which information is relevant for the document you're going to create, it's time to put it into a logical format. There's a tremendous amount of detail you can add to your résumé, including education, solo and group exhibitions, grants and awards, publications, commissioned work, collected work, and print, online, and broadcast press. Deciding in which order it should be presented will help your résumé do its job. If you have a long list of awards but haven't taught any workshops, put awards first. **Next:** the College Art Association's exhaustive rundown of [what to include and how to format it](#).

That's a lot to read. And if you're better as a visual learner, another resource we'd recommend comes in the form of YouTube tutorials. You'll find lots of them explaining how to make a solid creative résumé; we'll get you started with a couple of suggestions: one short and sweet, and one with 30 minutes of detail.



[How To Write Your First Artist CV](#)
by Surviving Art
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rAxWIXjdfOY>



[PAChats | Writing an Artist Résumé](#)
by Patchogue Arts Council MoCA LI
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2-3R8rxJFEE>



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