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Careers through
Culinary Arts Program

Creating a Great Culinary Resume

Your résumé should include your contact information, education, and past work experience. List information and highlight with bullets. Always start with what you did most recently and end with what you did the longest ago.

Contact Information

- Your full name and address
- Your telephone number – list the number *you* answer, such as your cell
- Your e-mail address – if you list it, be sure *you check it regularly*

Education

- Schools you attended (name, city, and state) – college and high school only
- Dates when you attended or the year you graduated from each
- Degrees or certificates you received

Also include:

- Honors classes taken
- Culinary courses taken
- Special awards or scholarships

Work Experience

- List your past jobs. Start with the most recent one first
- For each job, include the name of the place, city, and state. Describe it (such as restaurant size, type of cuisine, and volume)
- For each job, list how long you worked there (months or years)
- For each job, give your job title (if you were promoted, list both positions and dates).
List your responsibilities (stations worked, average dishes prepared, prep tasks, supervising, ordering, purchasing, inventory, developing menus, and so on)

Other Skills and Experience

- Special skills (such as cake decorating)
- Languages spoken (other than English)
- Volunteer activities that connect to culinary work (such as helping in a soup kitchen)
- Hobbies that relate to culinary work (such as reading cookbooks)



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TIPS

- **Be honest:** Never lie on your resume. Don't list jobs you didn't do. Don't list skills or degrees you don't have. If you're found out, it can ruin your chances for a job.
- **Be strategic:** Look at what your resume tells about you. If you didn't work for a year, how did you fill your time? Think about classes or volunteer activities to list that show you were still learning. Did you have a job for only a few days or weeks and then quit? Don't include it. Leaving something off your resume is not the same as lying.
- **Be concise:** Don't make your resume too long. It should be two pages or less. If possible, make it one page.
- **Be neat:** Your resume must be easy to read. Write it on a computer so you can make changes easily. Print out a fresh copy for each possible employer.

Writing a Great Cover Letter

A cover letter goes with your resume. The purpose of a cover letter is to introduce yourself to a potential employer. It's also to explain why you're the right person for a job.

Start by thinking about the job you're applying for. Jot down answers to these questions:

1. What is the position?
2. What does this employer need?
3. What is my goal in applying for this position?
4. What skills do I have that I can use in this position?

Now use your notes and these guidelines to write a great cover letter each time:

- **First paragraph:** Name the position you're applying for and how you learned about it.
- **Second paragraph:** Give reasons why you are interested in the position. Try not to give general reasons. Show the person you want this *specific* job.
- **Third paragraph:** Identify some key skills and experiences from your resume that prepare you for this position. Your goal is to get the person to read your resume and give you an interview.
- **Last paragraph:** End in a positive way. Say thank you for looking at your resume. Say that you look forward to hearing from the employer. Give your phone number for reaching you (even though it's on your resume).



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TIPS

- A cover letter should be only one page.
- You're writing a business letter. Check your spelling and grammar.
- Address the letter to "Dear Sir or Madam" if you do not have a person's name.
- Close your letter with "Sincerely yours," or "Very truly yours," and your signature.

Writing a Great Thank-You Note

After every interview, send a thank-you note to the person who interviewed you. It's considered a professional courtesy. But not everyone does it. So your note can set you apart from others going for the same job!

This is a short note. Here is what to include:

- Thank the person for taking the time to meet with you.
- Identify something you learned from the interview. Describe how it makes you more certain than ever that this job is right for you.
- Repeat one or two reasons why you are right for the job.

TIPS

- Write on plain paper or a simple note card. Spelling and grammar are still important.
- Address the person who interviewed you: "Dear..." (Mr., Mrs., Ms., or Chef...).
- Close with "Sincerely yours," or "Very truly yours," and your signature.
- Try to send the letter the same day as your interview. Send it by the next day for sure!