

Resume Writing Basics for Musicians

What is a Resume?

A resume is a document that highlights your accomplishments and markets your credentials. It outlines your experience/qualifications and prompts potential auditioners or employers to talk to you further about the opportunities they offer. A resume gets you in the door, it doesn't get you the job. (You'll have to do that through your audition and interview.)

Create a Master List

The first step is to recall and list every experience you can think of including performance experience, teaching jobs, teachers/coaches/conductors, festivals, recordings, publications and competitions. You should also list paid jobs and all educational experiences. Don't worry about the format yet. This master list will provide you with all the information you need to create your resume, as well as other marketing materials including the cover letter, bio, rep list and will even help prepare you for interviewing.

Organize Your Resume

The second step is to identify who you are preparing the document for and what you need to accomplish: what's your objective? This will help determine the format you will want to use to best showcase your strengths. The order of information should be based on the reader's interest. For performance jobs list performance experience first and teaching jobs should list teaching experience first. Most students and recent grads with limited experience list their education first.

It is not recommended that you use a template – create your own unique format.

Depending on your professional interests, you will likely have a separate version of your resume for performance, teaching, and administrative positions. It can also be helpful to emphasize non-musical experiences that are relevant to your objective, or experiences that demonstrate specific transferable skills needed for the job. These experiences might be listed under *Additional Experience* with descriptive text elaborating on the position or role you held.

Transferable skills might include: effective written and oral communication, organizational skills, problem solving, flexibility/adaptability, self-awareness, critical thinking, and interpersonal skills.

Organize Your Resume

Length: Your resume should be one page long. Two page resumes are acceptable under certain circumstances. If you have a two-page resume, make sure your name is at the top of the second page and that the pages are numbered.

Appearance: There are many creative ways to design a resume. You want it to be easy to read, so have a good balance of text and white space. Keep in mind that most auditioners/employers will scan, not read, your resume.

Margins: One-inch is standard, but you can use slightly smaller margins if needed. Make sure your resume is centered on the page.

Font Size/Style: An 11-inch font size is standard. Roman and Times are two professional looking styles.

Header: At the top of the page, list your name (largest), instrument, address, city, state, zip code, phone number, and email address. List permanent contact info if you will move before receiving responses or if relevant to the employer. Spend some time making your header appear professional and unique because it should be used on all of your publicity materials.

You can list the contact information in a square, block style, or in a single line across the page. You may choose to separate this information from the body of your resume with a single-line border. Singers may also wish to include their height, weight, etc. in this section.

Content

Typical categories for music resumes include; performance experience, education, teachers, awards and scholarships, and special skills.

In the PERFORMANCE EXPERIENCE section, omit all personal pronouns. Typical performance categories include, orchestral,

chamber, solo, ensemble, club engagements, operatic, and musical theater. Avoid wordiness and strive for conciseness. Use phrases instead of sentences and use action verbs to describe your accomplishments and duties. Include descriptions especially for arts administration and teaching resumes illustrate with specifics about outcomes and goals you met.

The EDUCATION section gives details about your college, degree, graduation date, and majors. If you are a double degree student, be sure to list both majors. PRINCIPAL TEACHERS, COACHES, and CONDUCTORS can be listed in the education section. Do not list masterclass teachers unless they will really remember you if someone calls them. Generally, you will not include high school experience, unless your high school is well known or is relevant to the audition/employer.

An AWARDS/SCHOLARSHIPS section is common for music students and you should list the prize level, name and date.

A SKILLS section is recommended, particularly for teaching positions, and should include computer, language, dance and other relevant skills.

You can write the description of your experiences either using bullets or in a paragraph style. Again, make sure it is easy to read. Bulleted statements can contain more than one sentence and be more than one line if needed.

Final Presentation

Print your resume on the same paper you will use for your cover letter. Do not use standard photocopy paper. Choose a conservative color: white, ivory, off-white, light gray or eggshell.

Proofread, proofread, proofread! Even if you use spell-check and grammar-check, proofread carefully and have your resume critiqued by at least two to three (*hundred*) other person. The best way to proof your resume is to read it out loud to another person who has a copy of it. It is a good idea to have a faculty member in your department look it over.

Resume Worksheet

These are only *sample* categories; there are many other options you can use.

I. Name/Contact Info

(Include your instrument(s), current address, permanent address, and e-mail address)

II. Performance Experience

(Use the categories that fit your experience)

III. Education

(If you are double degree, list both majors in the College and the Conservatory)

IV. Awards, Honors and Scholarships

(List first, second, etc. place/prize for competitions. "Finalist" can be used if it's a major competition)

Action Verbs To Use When Describing Experiences

accomplished
adapted
administered
advised
analyzed
appraised
approved
assembled
assisted
authored
broadcast
budgeted
built
catalogued
clarified
coached
communicated
compared
competed
compiled
composed
conducted
constructed
consulted
controlled
coordinated
copyrighted
correlated
corresponded
created
delegated
demonstrated
designed
developed
devised
discovered
directed
discovered
earned
eliminated

enhanced
established
evaluated
examined
facilitated
financed
fostered
founded
generated
guided
heightened
identified
illustrated
implemented
increased
installed
integrated
interpreted
interviewed
introduced
invented
investigated
launched
lectured
maintained
managed
marketed
mastered
measured
mediated
modeled
moderated
motivated
negotiated
organized
originated
performed
persuaded
planned
prepared

presented
prioritized
produced
programmed
promoted
proposed
provided
publicized
published
purchased
questioned
realized
recommended
recorded
recruited
redesigned
reduced
regulated
reorganized
represented
researched
reviewed
rewrote
scheduled
screened
served
simplified
solved
sponsored
strengthened
succeeded
supervised
systematized
taught
tested
toured
trained
translated
updated
wrote

Sara H. Student, Bassoon

Current Address:	OCMR #5555, Oberlin, OH 44074	(440) 774-5555
Permanent Address:	1234 Anywhere Road, Dallas, TX 75222	(214) 555-1212
E-mail:	student@oberlin.edu	

Orchestral Performances

Oberlin Orchestra, Oberlin Conservatory, Oberlin, OH	2008 - Present
Contemporary Music Ensemble, Oberlin Conservatory, Oberlin, OH	2008 - Present
Oberlin Chamber Orchestra, Oberlin Conservatory, Oberlin, OH	2007 - 2008
<i>Associate Principal</i> , Wooster Symphony Orchestra, Wooster, OH	2007 - 2008
<i>Associate Principal and contra</i> , Firelands Symphony Orchestra, Sandusky, OH	2007 - 2008
Juilliard Symphony, Juilliard School of Music, New York, NY	2006 - 2007
New Juilliard Ensemble, Juilliard School of Music, New York, NY	2006 - 2007
Juilliard Orch. Repertory Class/ Wind Ensemble, Juilliard School of Music, New York, NY	2006 - 2007
Interlochen Arts Academy Orchestra, Interlochen, MI	2004 - 2005, 2006 <i>associate principal</i>
Transylvania Symphony Orchestra, Brevard, NC	Summer 2005

Solo Performances

Junior Recital, Oberlin Conservatory, Oberlin, OH	April, 2009
Freshman Recital, Juilliard School of Music, New York, NY	March, 2007
Senior Recital, Interlochen Arts Academy, Interlochen, MI	May, 2006

Chamber Ensemble Performances

Oberlin Bassoon Quartet, Oberlin Conservatory, Oberlin, OH	2007 - Present
Woodwind Trio & Quartets, Juilliard School of Music, New York, NY	2006 - 2007
Woodwind Quintet, Interlochen Arts Academy, Interlochen, MI	2003 - 2006

Awards, Scholarships, and Special Engagements

<i>Solo and Recital Tour of Beijing, China</i> with the Oberlin Bassoon Quartet	Dec. 2008 - Jan. 2009
Full Scholarship, Oberlin Conservatory, Oberlin, OH	2007 - Present
Full Scholarship, Juilliard School of Music, New York, NY	2006 - 2007
Full Scholarship, Interlochen Arts Academy, Interlochen, MI	2003 - 2006

Education

Oberlin College Conservatory of Music, Oberlin, OH	
Bachelor of Music in Bassoon Performance	2007 - May 2010
Juilliard School of Music, New York, NY	2006 - 2007
Interlochen Arts Academy, Interlochen, MI	2003 - 2006

Principal Teachers and Coaches

George Sakakeeny, Judith LeClair, Barrick Stees, Nicolasa Kuster, Carlo Columbo, Carol Wincenc, Richard Hawkins

Conductors

Steven Smith, Tim Weiss, Paul Polivnick, Kurt Masur, James DePriest, Pierre Boulez, Otto-Werner Mueller, Miguel Harth-Bedoya, Roberto Minczuk, Julius Rudel, Jeffrey Milarsky, Hugh Wolff, Mark Gould, John Stanley Ross

Caroline Student, violin

Current Address: 555 Elm Street; Oberlin, OH 44074, Phone (cell): (440) 555-9629

Permanent Address: 12345 NE 157th St; Vashon, WA 98070, (206) 555-3582

Caroline.Student@oberlin.edu

PERFORMANCE EXPERIENCE

Solo Performances

Soloist with National Repertory Orchestra, Mozart Rondo in C Major, Breckenridge, CO, 2009

Honors Recital, Oberlin Conservatory, OH, 2008

Junior Recital, Oberlin Conservatory, OH, 2008

Starling Recital Series, Aspen Music Festival, Aspen, CO, 2008

Recital at Chateau Gendebien, Residence of the Supreme Allied Commander of Europe
Mons, Belgium, 2005

Soloist with Seattle Junior Symphony, Khachaturian Violin Concerto, Seattle, WA, 2005

Chamber Ensembles

Ardesco String Quartet, Oberlin Conservatory, OH, 2005-present

Chamber Music Ensembles, Oberlin Conservatory, OH, 2004-2006

Orchestral

Oberlin Orchestra, Concertmaster, Oberlin Conservatory, OH, 2007-present

Including reading sessions with Franz Welser-Most and Sir Simon Rattle

Oberlin Contemporary Music Ensemble, Oberlin Conservatory, OH, 2008

National Repertory Orchestra, Breckenridge, CO, 2008

Oberlin Chamber Orchestra, Oberlin Conservatory, OH, 2005-2006

Aspen Concert Orchestra, Concertmaster, Aspen, CO, 2004-2005

SUMMER FESTIVALS

National Repertory Orchestra, Breckenridge, CO, 2008

Aspen Music Festival, Aspen, CO, 2004-2005

Icicle Creek Chamber Music Festival, Leavenworth, WA, 2003

PRINCIPAL VIOLIN TEACHERS

Gregory Fulkerson, Oberlin Conservatory, 2005-present

Naoko Tanaka, Aspen Music Festival, Summer 2002-2006

Margaret Pressley, Seattle, WA, 1999-2002

COACHES

Roger Chase, Andrew Jennings, Andor Toth, Richard Hawkins, Brian Alegant

AWARDS, HONORS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Klutznick Scholarship to Aspen Music Festival, 2008-2009

Helen Miller Clancy Scholarship, Vashon, WA, 2006-2007

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Secondary Violin lessons, Oberlin Conservatory, OH, 2007-present

Lead Violin sectionals, Northern Ohio Youth Orchestra, Oberlin, OH, 2006-present

Private Violin lessons, Vashon, Washington, 2001-2004

OTHER EXPERIENCE

Student Assistant, Conservatory Career Resource Center, Oberlin Conservatory, OH, 2007-present

EDUCATION

Oberlin Conservatory of Music, Oberlin, OH

Bachelor of Music in Violin Performance, anticipated May 2010

Helen Robins, *music educator*

Post Office Box 234
Oberlin, OH 44074

(866) 123-4567
HelenRobins@gmail.com

Education

2005-2009 Oberlin College Conservatory of Music, Oberlin, OH
Master of Music Teaching + K-12 Licensure (July 2009)
Bachelor of Music in Violin Performance (May 2008)
Violin Studies with Marilyn McDonald

Teaching Experience

Fall 2008 **Student Teacher**, *Elyria Public Schools, Elyria, OH (High, Middle, and Elementary)*
Student Teaching with String Orchestras
Rehearsed ensembles, lead sectionals, taught private lessons, tutored students,
organized concerts (Kathy Wainwright, Director)

Fall 2008 **Laboratory Teaching**, *Langston Middle School, Oberlin, OH*
Created/taught general music lessons (Jody Kerchner, Director)

Summer 2008 **Private Violin Instructor**, *Credo Chamber Music Program, Oberlin, OH*

2007 - Present **Student Conductor**, *Camerata Orchestra (Northern Ohio Youth Orchestras)*
Rehearsed ensemble, selected literature, conducted concerts

2007 - Present **Private Violin Instructor**, *Avon School of Music, Avon, OH*
Instructor for students age 3-18

2002 - Present **Private Violin/Viola Instructor**, *Various Locations*
Taught private lessons, coached small chamber ensembles, facilitated recitals and
outreach concerts

Performance Experience

2006 - Present Mansfield Symphony- Substitute Violinist
2008 Silver Bay String Quartet- In-Residence Second Violinist
2007 Foothills Philharmonic-Violin Soloist, Menotti Violin Concerto
2007 Eastern Music Festival-Violin Intern
2006-2007 Oberlin Conservatory Orchestra- Concertmaster

Work Experience

2005 - Present Student Assistant, Oberlin Conservatory Career Center / Public Relations Office
2008 Office Intern, Credo Chamber Music Program

Organizations, Honors, Awards

2008 - Present Clifford Cook Grant in Music Education
2008 - Present Music Educators Association of Oberlin Conservatory
2008 - Present Ohio Music Educators Association
2008 - Present Music Educators National Conference
2004 Winner of Clemson University (SC) Violin Concerto Competition

John Q. Student, Baritone

(440) 776-5555 | John.Student@oberlin.edu

**459 E. Vine St.
Oberlin, OH 44074**

**6'1", 215lbs
Dark brown hair, Blue eyes**

Opera Performance

Papageno, *The Magic Flute*
Schaunard, *La Boheme*
Riff, *West Side Story*
Dancairo, *Carmen*

Oberlin Opera Theater, 2009
Oberlin Opera Theater, 2008
Hartford Symphony, 2007
Old Star Theater, 2006

Roles Prepared

Don Ottavio, *Don Giovanni*
Valentin, *Faust*
Falstaff, *Fenton*

Festivals

Tanglewood Festival
Chautauqua Institute, School of Voice
Opera Theatre and Music Festival of Lucca, Italy

Fellowship Recipient, 2008
2007
2005, 2006

Awards

NATS Competition
Siobhan M. Horowitz Foundation
Bel Canto Foundation Competition

Second Place Winner
Grant Recipient
First Place Winner

Education

Oberlin Conservatory of Music
Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance

Anticipated, 2009

Major Teachers: Franz Heidelberg, Mariana Petro, James Morrison Eady
Masterclasses: Thomas Garrett, Robert Marks, Renata Teppo

Obie A. Student, composer

P.O. Box 859 Yellow Springs, OH 46155 (440) 775-8899 obie.student@oberlin.edu

Partial List of Compositions

“Elisa” – Quartet Woodwinds and Timpani

“Tears”, four songs for Soprano and Orchestra

“Fantasie” for Bb Clarinet, Bass Clarinet and Orchestra

Symphony No. 1, for mixed Chorus, Bass, Contralto & Orchestra

“The Troubadour” for Woodwind Quintet and Piano

Education

Oberlin Conservatory of Music, Oberlin, OH
Bachelor of Music in Composition, anticipated 2010

Oberlin College, Oberlin, OH
Bachelor of Arts, Art History, anticipated 2010

Principal Teachers

Malcolm Peyton, Daniel Pinkham, Charles Hausmann, Michael Horvit

Seminars

Toru Takamitsu, Gunther Schuller, Maxim Shostakovitch, Anthony Elliot

Vocal Performance Experience

Oberlin College Choir, bass, 2009-present
Cleveland Orchestra Chorus, bass, 2009-present

Conducting Experience

Bach: Brandenburg Concerto #2, Senior Recital, Oberlin Conservatory, OH, 2008
Pinkham: Three Poems, recital, Dudley Hall, Cleveland Institute of Music, OH, 2007
Pinkham: Christman Cantata, Grace Presbyterian Church, Cleveland, OH, 2007