



Identifying Your Skills

**Did you know that the average person has
between 5,000 – 10,000 skills?**

Why Identify Your Skills?

- To identify academic majors and careers that match your abilities and talents.
- To set goals for potential skills to acquire and further develop.
- To communicate your abilities to others through writing or conversation.

Skills can be defined as abilities to complete or perform tasks. A task can be simple such as brushing your teeth or complicated such as managing a work team. Skills are gained through play, school, work, and other day-to-day activities. Below are three categories that skills can be divided into. Understanding skill categories is one way to identify skills. However, we recommend using the following information to start to explore your own skills, how you acquire skills, gaining new skills and talking about your skills.

Context Skills - These skills are related to performing a specific task, job, or activity and differentiate one job or activity from another. For example, the work-related context skills that differentiate police officers, teachers, and engineers include handling of firearms, writing on a chalkboard, and understanding rocket physics. Context skills you might use in play, school, or day-to-day activities include, but are not limited to, swimming the backstroke, acting, and reading.

Transferable Skills - These skills can be used in various situations or contexts. These are the skills that *overlap* between occupations, tasks, and activities. For example, the transferable skills that overlap between police officers, teachers, and engineers include report writing, team building, and evaluating. Transferable skills used in being on a swim team, being in a play, and studying include time management, following directions, and adapting.

Miscellaneous/Personal Skills - These skills are sometimes known as personal characteristics, traits, qualities, and sometimes even as values. These skills may not be a specific activity but more of an approach to an activity or a personal style. Examples include practical, clever, imaginative, generous, motivated, and precise.

Transferable Skills

Accomplish	Counsel	Fix	Maintain	Research
Achieve	Create	Follow	Manage	Resolve
Adapt	Critique	Forecast	Manipulate	Retrieve
Administer	Decide	Formulate	Memorize	Review
Advise	Define	Fundraise	Mentor	Schedule
Analyze	Delegate	Gather	Monitor	Sell
Approve	Deliver	Generate	Motivate	Share
Arrange	Demonstrate	Guide	Multi-task	Simplify
Assemble	Design	Head	Negotiate	Sketch
Assess	Determine	Help	Observe	Solve
Assign	Develop	Hypothesize	Operate	Sort
Assist	Devise	Identify	Organize	Speak
Balance	Diagnose	Illustrate	Participate	Study
Budget	Direct	Implement	Perform	Summarize
Build	Discover	Improve	Persuade	Supervise
Calculate	Display	Improvise	Plan	Talk
Chart	Dissect	Increase	Predict	Teach
Clarify	Distribute	Influence	Prepare	Team-build
Classify	Draft	Inform	Present	Test
Coach	Draw	Initiate	Prioritize	Train
Collaborate	Educate	Inspect	Program	Translate
Collect	Edit	Install	Promote	Trouble-shoot
Communicate	Empathize	Instruct	Protect	Tutor
Compare	Encourage	Interpret	Read	Type
Compile	Enforce	Interview	Reason	Understand
Complete	Evaluate	Invent	Recommend	Unify
Compute	Examine	Investigate	Reconcile	Unite
Conduct	Expand	Judge	Record	Upgrade
Consolidate	Explain	Lead	Recruit	Update
Construct	Express	Lecture	Repair	Verbalize
Coordinate	Facilitate	Listen	Report	Write

Miscellaneous/Personal Skills

Adaptable	Considerate	Honest	Optimistic	Serious
Adventurous	Cooperative	Humorous	Organized	Sincere
Ambitious	Courageous	Imaginative	Original	Sociable
Analytical	Dedicated	Independent	Outgoing	Spontaneous
Artistic	Dependable	Industrious	Patient	Stable
Assertive	Determined	Initiative	Practical	Strong
Broad-minded	Easy going	Intelligent	Precise	Supportive
Cheerful	Efficient	Introspective	Preserving	Sympathetic
Clever	Energetic	Inventive	Punctual	Tactful
Competent	Flexible	Kind	Quick	Thorough
Competitive	Generous	Logical	Resourceful	Thoughtful
Confident	Goal-directed	Motivated	Responsible	Trustworthy
Conscientious	Good-natured	Open minded	Sensible	Understanding
Conservative	Helpful	Opportunistic	Sensitive	Verbal

Additional Skill Categories and Triggers

The following categories are another way to group skills. These may trigger you to identify things you know how to do or are good at.

Would people describe you the following ways? How come? What have you done that demonstrate you are this kind of a person?

R – You are good with tools, building things, and/or creating things with your hands. You are coordinated, rugged, athletic, physical, and/or strong.

I – You are good with math, science, theories, analysis, critical thinking, inquiry, and/or investigation.

A – You are good at dance, music, writing, drama, expressing yourself, creating new things, and/or developing concepts from scratch. You are creative and expressive.

S – You are good at helping people; feel better about themselves, learn, grow and develop.

E – You are a motivator, leader, and/or charismatic. You know how to win and are driven to be the best.

C – You are good at details, organization, and/or turning chaos into structure. You get things done.

I – You can focus in quiet situations, focus on one project for a long time, develop ideas by internal reflection, and/or can function well when working alone.

E – You can function in high activity situations, develop ideas by discussion, and/or can work well in teams.

S – You can clearly see details/facts and accurately report them, rely on past experiences to solve problems, fine tune materials or situations, and/or can stay focused in the moment.

N – You can see the big picture and complex relationships, solve problems with creative and inventive ideas/approaches, have bursts of inspired energy, and/or can focus on potentials and futures.

T – You can use logical analysis to reach conclusions, work without harmony, focus on efficiency, and/or can focus on multiple situational principles equally.

F – You can focus on values to reach conclusions, create harmony with others, emphasize meeting people's needs, be sympathetic, and/or be aware of the underlying values in a situation.

J – You can develop plans/lists and follow through on them, focus on completion, make decisions quickly, and/or function well with schedules and structure.

P – You can be spontaneous and comfortably reactive to situations, good at creating options and possibilities, take time to make decisions, and/or function well in changing and unstructured environments.

Celebrate and review the skills you have in the categories above! Later, spend time thinking of examples that would demonstrate those skills you have.