It’s important to reflect regularly on the skills you have, and on the skills you are gaining through your educational experiences. Why? Because your future will most likely involve application forms, cover letters, resumes, personal statements, and job interviews. In all of these scenarios, you’ll be expected to identify the skills and strengths you can offer, as well as examples of when you used or displayed those skills.

It is also interesting to think about which skills you most enjoy using (i.e. your motivated skills). Sometimes our strongest skills aren’t necessarily our favourite ones to use. Think about future career options that will let you apply your motivated skills, or combine both your strongest and most motivated skills.

Option A: Skills → Activities

Sometimes it’s easy to think about the skills we have – maybe people have told us we’re very organized, or we notice that we have a knack for explaining complex ideas in an understandable way. In this case, you can:

- Start off by first identifying your skills – feel free to include transferable and specialized/technical skills
- Rate where you think you’re at with these various skills – do some of them need work?
- Finally, and most importantly, list specific examples that illustrate or demonstrate the skills
- You can also list skills you would like to have, so that you can brainstorm ways to develop them in the future (e.g. through classes, volunteering, other jobs). Think about the transferable skills employers are looking for (e.g. verbal communication, teamwork, problem solving)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Never done</th>
<th>Needs work</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Above average</th>
<th>Best example of when I’ve used this skill (or ideas for activities/ways I can develop this skill)</th>
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</table>
Option B: Activities → Skills

Sometimes it’s hard to identify our transferable skills – we know we’ve done ‘stuff’ but don’t realize the hidden skills we have as a result! To get started, think about your research process as a whole, from learning about research, to finding opportunities, developing technical skills, seeking resources, and sharing your results. List all the concrete activities you’ve done as part of your undergraduate research work:

- E.g. Designed a poster to visually display results of my research

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Now connect your experiences with the transferable skills you’ve gained from them (don’t forget about specialized/technical skills not listed here). These are just a few sample transferable skills – there are more!

- Accepting responsibility
- Anticipating problems
- Being a good listener
- Being inventive
- Being kind and understanding
- Being logical
- Being pleasant and sociable
- Being tactful and diplomatic
- Checking information for accuracy
- Clearly expressing myself
- Creating and talking about new ideas
- Designing presentations
- Identifying and solving problems
- Initiating ideas and tasks
- Interviewing people
- Interpreting and clarifying results
- Locating answers and gathering information
- Managing conflicts and resolving issues
- Managing and mentoring people
- Meeting deadlines
- Negotiating
- Organizing and managing projects
- Paying attention to details
- Planning ahead
- Planning daily work or special events
- Reducing costs
- Setting up my own network of experts or helpers
- Showing patience
- Speaking in public
- Supervising others
- Talking easily with others
- Teaching others and giving clear instructions
- Writing clear and concise reports

Adapted from various sources, including www.servicecanada.gc.ca; www.sunraye.com; www.auckland.ac.nz

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