

CV writing

A CV (curriculum vitae) is an important document when looking for jobs or apprenticeships. Your CV is a way of presenting all your skills, experience and qualifications in one document which is concise and easy to read.

Top tips

- Be short and to the point, try to keep it all on one page if you can and certainly no more than two pages
- Always word process your CV, make sure you use a clear and good sized font (something like Arial or Verdana and size 11 or 12)
- Make use of headings, bold text and bullet points so it is easier to read through
- Always make sure you double-check your spelling, punctuation and grammar
- Ask someone else to proof read your CV before you start using it
- You don't need to include things like your age, date of birth, National Insurance number, ethnicity or marital status
- Never give an employer a folded or creased CV (unless it's folded neatly in an envelope)
- Try to customise your CV for every job you apply for, this way you can make sure your relevant skills and experience for that job are highlighted
- Always make sure you can think of examples to back-up your skills – you might get asked to give an example at a job interview

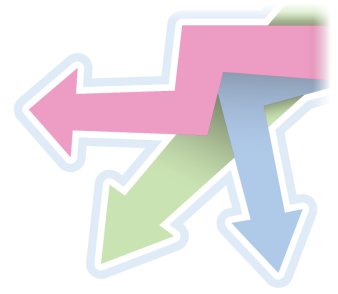
The information on a CV is usually divided into sections so the employer can quickly find the information they need. Here we describe the commonly seen sections of CVs and explain the kinds of information they include.

At the back of this pack we have included a template you can fill in to get you started and some examples of CVs and layouts.

A Profile

A Profile, which can also be called a Personal Profile or Personal Statement is a short paragraph which gives a good introduction to the employer. This also tells them the skills and qualities you have that would make you a good employee. You might also like to tell them the type of work you are looking for or your career aims. Don't forget, skills do not just come from employment; you might have developed skills through your personal life, volunteering or your education.

Look at some of these examples to help you identify some of the skills you have to offer. You can probably think of more.



- Teamwork skills, being supportive and sharing work
- Using your initiative, being innovative and coming up with new ideas
- Flexibility and adapting to new situations
- Communication skills, face-to-face and/or over the telephone
- Efficiency, being organised and able to plan ahead
- Working under pressure or to deadlines, prioritising your work
- Taking pride in quality of work, always wanting to improve
- A quick learner, keen to take on training and develop new skills
- People skills, working well with colleagues and customers
- Practical skills, using your hands
- Computer skills, using computer packages such as Word or Excel
- Confident, being resilient and willing to take on challenges

Skills and Achievements

Some CVs also include a Skills and Achievements section, which could also be called Key Skills or Skills Profile. This section is particularly useful on CVs which are targeted at specific types of work, because it highlights the skills and experience which are most relevant to that type of work. For example, if you are applying to a job in retail you might like to tell the employer about your customer service skills, if you are applying for an office job you might like to tell the employer if you have experience of answering a telephone and taking messages.

For this section you might find it helpful to find some careers information about the type of job you are applying for. This will tell you what skills and experience employers want. You can find careers information online at <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk>

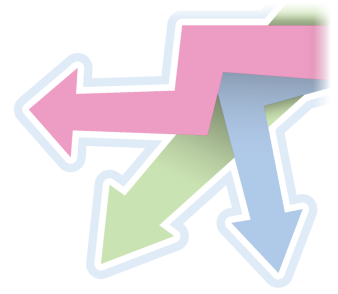
Employment History or Work Experience

Here you detail all your work experience starting with the most recent and working backwards. This should also include voluntary work or work experience you've had through school, college or a training programme.

You would usually provide the dates you were there, your job title and the company name. You should also describe your main responsibilities. Look at the example below.

Education, Training and Qualifications

List all the education and training you have done, not just at school, college or university but in the workplace or through a training provider. Also include short courses like First Aid, Food Hygiene or Health and Safety.



Follow the examples below giving the dates you were studying, where you studied and the qualifications you achieved.

Additional Information

Mention any other selling points you might have, for example having access to your own transport. You might like to write about what you do in your spare time, particularly if they are activities which show motivation or teamwork, for example keeping fit, playing sports, membership of clubs or organisations, community or charity work.

References

Employers often ask for references. A referee is someone who knows you well and can be contacted by an employer who wants to find out more about you. They can include former employers, teachers or tutors, but normally cannot be someone who is related to you.

It is unusual to give contact details for your references on your CV so you might like to write a phrase such as '**References available on request**'.