

Writing a Curriculum Vitae (CV)

A curriculum vitae (CV) is a brief overview of your education, skills, experience, and qualifications that demonstrates why you are suitable for a particular job vacancy. A form of personal marketing, it enables you to sell your abilities to potential employers. Employers often ask for a CV instead of an application form but sometimes you will need both. Each application you make should be focused on a specific job. It is important to match examples of your skills and qualities with those described in the essential and desirable skill requirements within the job description.

Writing Your First CV

Likely to be skills-based rather than experience-based, you can highlight your achievements in settings such as school and clubs to evidence transferable/employability skills gained. Mention awards you have won or projects that you have are proud of. Outline activities such as volunteering or mentoring, being elected as a prefect or head boy/girl, involvement in sports teams or musical ensembles. You may have unpaid in person or virtual work experience that you could talk about. All of these can be used to demonstrate the key skills employers are looking for.

Structuring Your CV

The format of a CV is flexible, and many different styles are used. While you need to tailor the content of your CV to the job in question, there are elements that most employers would expect to see. A suggested layout could be:

- **Length:** no longer than two sides of A4 paper
- **Font:** black, between sizes 10-12, use a professional font, e.g., Times New Roman work well. Use the same font as in your cover letter and keep it consistent.
- **Layout:** as simple and clear as possible. Use section headings in a larger font to make sure they stand out.
- **Order:**
 - ★ **Contact details** - Full name, home address, mobile number, and sensible email. You only need to include a photograph and date of birth if you are applying for a modelling or acting job.
 - ★ **Personal profile** - A concise paragraph which details what you can bring to a job or company. It is your opportunity to sell yourself to employers and to highlight the relevant skills and experience you possess and share your career goals.
 - ★ **Skills and achievements** - Those not previously mentioned. It could be the foreign languages you speak, completing D of E, specialist training and IT competency packages. Try to keep the skills you mention relevant to the job.
 - ★ **Education** - List the names of the institutions you have studied at, when you studied there, and the qualifications and grades achieved together with those that are pending.
 - ★ **Employment** - List in reverse chronological order, including company/organisation name, your official title, length of employment (month and year) and your main responsibilities. Highlight key achievements and link these back to the required skills or experience of the role.
 - ★ **Work experience** - as above
 - ★ **Hobbies and interests** - Relevant interests and the skills gained from them can tell an employer about who you are as a person and give you something to talk about at interview.
 - ★ **References** - It is standard to have at least two references when applying for a job, one could be someone from school and one from an employee.

Tops Tips

- ✓ Make it unique to the job you are applying for. Read the job description carefully and research the employer, select the experience and skills that are most relevant to the job.
- ✓ Be clear and concise. Make it quick and easy for the employer to navigate.
- ✓ Use active verbs when possible. For example, include words like 'created', 'analysed' and 'devised' as these will present you as a person who can show initiative.
- ✓ Provide real-life examples to show you have the key skills they are looking for.
- ✓ Never lie or exaggerate about your skills, you may be asked about them at interview.
- ✓ Do a thorough check for spelling, punctuation, and grammar – ask a family member or friend to check it.
- ✓ Convert to a PDF format before attaching to an email.

Further Help and Advice

[Employment and Apprenticeships - St Aidan's](#)
[How to write a CV | National Careers Service](#)

[Prospects - Example CV's](#)
[Prospects - How to write a CV](#)

[CV examples and samples | reed.co.uk](#)
[UCAS - How to write a CV](#)