

Curriculum Vitae

- Your Curriculum Vitae (CV) is your claim of qualifications, experience, skills and interests.
- A CV is a document which outlines your personal details, experience, relevant skills and qualifications. It is used to help you 'sell yourself' to a potential employer by highlighting your strengths and achievements, your extra-curricular activities and your hobbies/interests. The aim of a CV is to persuade an employer to invite you to interview. You never get a second chance to make a first impression so your CV needs to show evidence that you have the qualities to do the job well. If a job advert states that a job description/person specification is available upon request then it is essential that you gain a copy. The job description/person specification will inform & determine your CV.

General Tips on Writing your CV

Step 1: Create a first draft

- Under the headings of personal history, employment history, education, qualifications and hobbies/interests take a note of the relevant dates, addresses, institutions, etc.
- Now write down everything you've gained personally from these experiences – skills, abilities, education, etc. Write as many pages as you need to get the brainstorming process done as you can later trim down the information to what is relevant and what is not.

Step 2: Filter out the unimportant

- Your CV will not be able to inform potential employers of your entire history, but it can highlight the important details for them: these will include skills and abilities that you have been able to develop, as well as your educational qualifications and what you gained from your studies and experience.
- Remember to keep your CV concise at all times. Recruiters have lots to do, so you should not make the mistake of asking them to read through an unnecessarily long CV (it should be one to two pages in length).

Step 3: CV essentials

- Make sure your CV contains personal information such as

Name

Address

Telephone Number

Email Address

Driving Licence (if you have one)

- Your 'employment history' section is very important. It should be presented in reverse chronological order (most recent first). Give the dates, names & addresses of employers, your job titles and the relevant job duties you completed. It is not essential to list all of your work history. If you have plenty of work experience then it is not necessary to mention the part time job you had when you were 16. A more extensive list of job duties in a relevant job will impress a potential employer more.
- Your qualifications should also be presented in reverse chronological order. Include the dates, the names of institutions, the course titles and accreditation achieved. It is not necessary to list all the modules/subjects you have studied.
- Make your CV easy on the eye. Use normal margins and do not try to cram your information onto the page. Use a crisp & clear font such as 'Arial', 'Century Gothic' or 'Helvetica' at size 11 or 12. Allow for some 'white space' between the different sections to give your CV a clear design and a professional look.
- Correct grammar & punctuation are essential. Potential employers are never impressed by sloppy mistakes.

Step 4: Gaps in Work History

- Many people have gaps in their work history. If you have reasons for gaps then you can simply state this on your CV. There are 2 ways to deal with this.
 1. Draw the reader's attention to them and present them in a positive manner.
 2. Change the format of your CV where there is less emphasis on the dates and more on actual skills & experience (Skills Based CV).

Step 5: Targeted Buzz Words/Targeted CV

- You want your CV to say to an employer 'I can do this job' and 'interview me' so you need to present yourself in the most positive manner possible. Use 'targeted buzz words' to promote yourself and emphasise your accomplishments. Use the 'buzz words' contained within the job description and person specification in your CV. If the job description/person specification demands someone who is resourceful then it is vital that you use the word resourceful throughout your CV.
- Target your CV to the job in question. A job as a postal delivery worker is very different than a job as a receptionist. Your CV should reflect this.

Different Jobs = Different Skills = Different CV

Step 6: Action Words

- Alongside the use of targeted buzz words it is essential to use actions words throughout your CV (see Action Words List).

Top tips for writing a successful CV

Always

- Limit your CV to a maximum of 2 A4 pages.
- Use A4 paper of a white or pale background & ensure the printout is of good quality.
- If applying by post, send your CV in an A4 envelope (do not fold the CV).

Remember

- Be honest at all times.
- Check your spelling and grammar.
- Keep your CV to the point. Don't waffle.
- Keep the language formal with short, crisp sentences.
- Highlight your selling points clearly.
- Use active keywords which have a positive impact (the Job Description & Job Specification will help you do this).
- Tailor your CV to the job description (this may mean you have more than 1 CV).
- Always include a Covering Letter.

Common Mistakes

- Never mention political affiliations.
- Never mention salaries earned or required.
- It is not necessary to mention personal characteristics such as age, height, weight, marital status, etc.
- Employers are likely to be deterred by unusual/silly email addresses or answer phone messages. It is important to be professional

And when it's done

- Keep your CV up to date (add new qualifications and new jobs as and when necessary).

Action Words

Acquiring
Addressing
Administering
Advising
Analysing
Approving
Arranging
Assessing
Assembling
Building
Budgeting
Creating
Combining
Completing
Consulting
Calculating
Classifying
Constructing
Controlling
Coordinating
Counselling
Collating
Conceiving
Consolidating
Defining
Delivering
Demonstrating
Determining
Detecting
Designing
Developing
Devising
Doubling
Disturbing
Editing
Encouraging
Establishing
Evaluating
Examining

Expanding
Founding
Formulating
Generating
Identifying
Illustrating
Implementation
Improving
Increasing
Initiating
Innovating
Instructing
Interpreting
Installing
Introducing
Investigating
Inventing
Launching
Leading
Lecturing
Liaising
Logging
Managing
Marketing
Mediating
Motivating
Maintaining
Navigating
Negotiating
Networking
Obtaining
Opening
Operating
Ordering
Organising
Originating
Performing
Pioneering
Planning

Preparing
Presenting
Processing
Producing
Programming
Promoting
Proposing
Providing
Purchasing
Recommending
Recruiting
Redefining
Redesigning
Recording
Reducing
Refining
Reorganising
Researching
Restructuring
Revising
Rendering
Rewarding
Restoring
Referring
Saving
Scheduling
Selling
Servicing
Solving
Supervising
Serving
Selecting
Supplying
Teaching
Testing
Training
Transforming
Translating
Uncovering
Verifying
Writing