

Curriculum Vitae

Your CV is your claim of qualifications, experience, skills and interests.



A Curriculum Vitae (CV) is a document which outlines your personal details, your relevant skills, experience 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 get you an 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.

General tips on writing a CV

Step 1: Create a first draft

Write all your qualifications, experience, employment history, personal history, hobbies and interests, including all relevant information under headings.

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, you can later trim down the information to what's relevant and what's not.

Step 2: Filter out the unimportant.

You can't tell potential employers your entire history, but you 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.

Be Honest and keep it concise.

Recruiters have lots to do, so don't make the mistake of asking them to read through an unnecessarily long CV.

CV's should be one to two pages in length.

Make sure it at least has all your personal information such as:

Name

Address

Telephone Number

Nationality, including visa and work permit status (if applicable)

Languages (level for both written and verbal)

Driving License (if you have one)

Include your Employment history

All your employment is important whether it is part-time, temporary, voluntary, vacation work or Saturday only. It should be presented in reverse chronological order, most recent first. Give dates, name of employer, job titles etc.

List your most recent qualifications first, including

Dates, Institution - Name of Course, Accreditation. It is not necessary to list all the modules you have studied.

Achievements / Positions of Responsibility

Include Hobbies / Interests

Use good document layout

Make your CV easy on the eyes. Use normal margins and don't cram your information onto the page. Allow for some "white space" between the different sections.

Use easy-to-read fonts and a clear design to make your CV more professional.

Read through your CV or ask someone else to read through your CV carefully once you are finished, a fresh pair of eyes often spots a mistake you missed.

Correct grammar and punctuation are important.

Gaps in Work History

Many people have gaps in their work history. If you have reasons for major gaps, such as going to school or having a child, you can simply state this on your CV. There two ways to deal with gaps on your CCV

- Draw the reader's attention to them and present them in a positive manner.
- Change the format of your CV where there is less emphasis the dates and more on actual skills and experience.

Buzz words

You want your CV to say to an employer "I can do this job" and "interview me" so you need present yourself in the most positive way possible. Use "power/ buzz words" to promote yourself and emphasise your accomplishments. The following work areas and associated words may help when putting together your CV

Coping with routine – conscientious, dealt with, managed, performed.

Working with others – advised, , managed, participated, presented, supervised.

Achievements –, achieved, co-ordinated, created, developed, recommended.

Problem-solving – implemented, improved, initiated, introduced, investigated.

Initiative - designed, developed, established, motivated, negotiated, organised.

Top tips for writing a successful CV

- Limit it to a maximum of 2 pages of A4 – keep it concise!
- Use good quality A4 paper (white or pale background)
- Include a list of referees and their contact details.
- Highlight your selling points clearly e.g. your key skills or achievements
- Career history and education should be most recent first
- Include hobbies and interests and explain any gaps in employment history
- Employers may be deterred by unusual or silly email addresses or answer phone messages
- Do be honest.
- Keep your CV up to date.
- Check your spelling and grammar.
- Keep your CV to the point.
- Keep the language formal with short, crisp sentences.
- Use active keywords (created, negotiated, managed,) which have a positive impact
- Don't date your CV.
- Never mention political affiliations.
- Don't mention personal characteristics such as age, height, and marital status.
- Never mention salaries earned or required.
- Always include a covering letter



"You married me — that proves you're brilliant and a great judge of character. Put that on your résumé!"