

Writing a CV



When you are applying for jobs or apprenticeships one of the first things you should do is write a CV. This leaflet provides you with an introduction to how to write your CV, what it is used for and examples of different types of CVs.

What is a CV?

A CV or 'curriculum vitae' is a document that describes who you are, what you have done and what you can do, particularly at work. It is a document that should persuade an employer to offer you an interview. It should impress them; you need to be positive and confident.

Planning your CV

When you are writing a CV you must think about what needs to be on it and how it will be presented.

Your CV should be:

Short – one side of typed A4 is usually best, it should be two sides at most. However, for some higher level jobs, where you may want to include more detail about relevant experience, skills and qualifications, it could be longer than this.

Relevant – use the job description or person specification for the job you are applying for, what you know about the job and your knowledge of the company to help you decide what is relevant. Emphasise the skills, experience and qualities they are looking for.

Readable – it should be clear, broken up with spaces and headings, wordprocessed and checked for spelling and grammar mistakes.

Positive – be confident, avoid giving negative impressions or information. First impressions count. If you feel that you must put something that is, or could be, a negative (a criminal record, for example) put it after the positive things you say about yourself. Don't say 'quite good...'; say 'good'. Don't oversell yourself, but don't undersell yourself either!

True – if you tell lies you will probably have to deal with the consequences at some stage. However, there is no need to mention something that might go against you, unless it is specifically asked about in the job advertisement.



Employers don't look at a CV for long, make sure you choose a professional font, such as Arial or Times New Roman, that can be easily read and scanned.



Gatsby Benchmarks

What should be in your CV?

Your CV is the way you promote yourself. You decide what goes in it and what you tell people. You need to get the attention of the reader as quickly as possible. Remember, unless you tell people you have done something, they don't know you have done it!

Information you should put on your CV

Personal details – name, address, up-to-date contact details – always put these in. Make sure your email address sounds professional. You may want to set up a specific email address just for job hunting.

Personal profile – a short statement or summary about yourself. It should focus on your skills and qualities. No longer than five or six sentences. For more information, have a look at the leaflet 'Writing a Personal Profile for a CV', in this series.

Key skills – this is not always a separate section in a CV – some people put their key skills in their personal profile or list them as part of their employment history. It is important that this information is included in your CV.

Work history – put your most recent employment in first. If you have not had any paid employment, have you done some work experience? Make sure you put in the dates, name of the company and main duties you carried out.

Education and/or training – like your work history, put your most recent education and qualifications in first and work backwards. Put in the name of the institution (school, college, training provider, university) and the dates you were there, the qualification you got, the grades you received or are predicted to receive and the dates you achieved them.

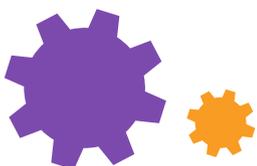
Interests – these can prove that you have valuable skills or experience or that there is more to you than school, college or work, try and relate them to the skills needed for the job.

References – you should have two referees. Before you give details of a referee ask for their permission and get their most up-to-date contact details. Normally, one referee should be your most recent employer, or if you are still in education, your tutor/head of year. Your second referee should be someone who can talk about your character. They should not be a member of your family.

Any other information is probably irrelevant; only include it if you think it may help, for example, 'I hold a clean and current driving licence'. You can put any other information in a cover letter or in the main body of an email when sending your CV electronically.



If you are applying for a specific job look at the job description and try to relate your key skills and interests to the skills the job requires. You can put this in the personal profile, key skills or work history sections of your CV.



Words for your CV

- Sometimes finding the words to use on a CV is difficult. You must choose your words carefully. You need to give a positive impression yourself.
- If you haven't had a lot of work experience refer to skills and achievements from school, college, voluntary work or interests that you have.
- Don't use words you are unsure about – check meaning if you need to.

Below you will find some suggestions, but try to think about other things you could say about yourself too.

In a work situation would you say you are:

Able to...	Accurate	Adaptable	Capable of	Caring	Confident
Creative	Decisive	Dependable	Effective	Enthusiastic	Excellent
Experienced	Flexible	Hardworking	Honest	Innovative	Methodical
Organised	Patient	Positive	Practical	Proactive	Punctual
Qualified	Reliable	Responsible	Skilled	Successful	Trustworthy

You can describe the skills and abilities you have in the personal profile or work history sections on your CV.

Use some action words like these to describe what you have done:

Achieved	Advised	Arranged	Assessed	Budgeted	Built
Completed	Co-ordinated	Created	Delivered	Designed	Developed
Enabled	Encouraged	Evaluated	Helped	Identified	Implemented
Improved	Led	Managed	Negotiated	Operated	Organised
Planned	Presented	Produced	Re-organised	Researched	Resolved
Restored	Supervised	Supported	Taught	Trained	Won

Can you:

Meet deadlines?	Show initiative?	Use different software packages?
Follow instructions?	Work as part of a team?	Solve problems?
Make decisions?	Deal with all sorts of people?	Work alone, without supervision?

And finally...

- When you think your CV is finished, leave it for a while. Go back and read it through later.
- Check spellings and grammar.
- How does it look – are headings and spacing consistent?
- If you are running just a few lines over onto another page, change the margins or spacing.
- Does it get your message across in a relevant, true and positive way?
- Have you missed anything out?
- Make sure you keep your CV up to date.
- If you feel comfortable with doing it, show your finished CV to someone who knows you well.
- You may need to change your CV for different jobs you apply for. Use job descriptions and specifications to tailor your CV to the job you are applying for.

Online applications and CVs

- Most recruitment is now done online.
- You will be asked to upload your CV.
- Employers may use a programme to scan your application form and CV, so it is vital you include key words and phrases related to the job you are applying for. The job advertisement, job description and person specification will provide clues to these words and phrases.
- If you send your CV by email attach a copy, do not put it in the main body of the email. It is a good idea to ask for a return message to say it has been received and then to follow it up to check on progress.

Please see pages 5-7 for examples of CVs:

- Student with little employment history
- Someone looking for a higher level job
- Someone with significant work experience

Good luck with your job search!



Once you have written your CV you must keep it up to date. Sending an old CV looks unprofessional.



CV - Student with little employment history

Alice Wilkins

11 Dyer Street, Anytown, AT2 7SF

Telephone: 06113 921678 Email: alice.wilkins@ckmail.com

Profile

I am a hard working, motivated and enthusiastic person. My goal is to find an apprenticeship in plumbing or heating and ventilation with an employer willing to invest in me. I am extremely reliable, trustworthy and pay attention to detail. I have a good record of attendance and punctuality. I am keen to learn new skills and would like to gain trade qualifications and experience.

Skills

- Enjoy working as part of a team but can work alone using my initiative
- Good practical skills with the ability to use a range of hand tools under supervision
- Able to follow diagrams and instructions
- Good communication skills, both written and verbal
- Confident user of Microsoft Word, the internet and email
- Knowledge of health and safety at work gained during my work experience

Education and Qualifications

Anytown Community High School September 2015 - June 2020

Qualification	Subject	Predicted Grades
GCSE	English Language	4
GCSE	English Literature	5
GCSE	Maths	5
GCSE	Combined Science	4/4
GCSE	Geography	3
BTEC First Award Level 2	Information Technology	Merit
BTEC First Award Level 2	Construction and the Built Environment	Merit

Work Experience

Anytown Plumbing June 2019

I went on a one week work experience in year 10. I observed what plumbers were doing and helped them with fitting boilers and a new bathroom suite. I also cut piping to size and used a variety of different tools whilst under supervision.

Hobbies and Interests

In my spare time I enjoy playing different sports such as rugby and Judo. I have completed my Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award and I will have completed my silver award by August 2019.

References

Mrs K Dutton
Head of Year
Anytown Academy
Faraway Road
Anytown
AT16 7RH
K.Dutton@anytownacademy.co.uk

Mr S Singh
Manager
Anytown Plumbing
24 High Street
Anytown
AT1 1EH
ssingh@anytownplumbers@gmail.com

Kiran Ahmed

23 Mary Lane, Bigtown, BT3 6TG

079284567120

Kiran.ahmed27@ckmail.com

Personal Profile

I am a positive and energetic A level student with strong numeracy, analytical and communication skills. Being successful in my A level courses, part-time job, sport and other activities shows I can manage my time well. I am now keen to use my skills to develop a satisfying career in finance. I am eager to learn and complete a higher level or degree apprenticeship.

Skills

Numeracy and analytical skills: These have been developed through my A level subjects. I am predicted to get grade A in my maths. I have also been studying for an AAT accounting qualification.

Communication and team working: At Jacksons I work as part of a team, like to give good customer service and enjoy training new part-time staff.

IT: I am confident in using Microsoft Office packages and the internet.

Organisational skills: I am the events manager for our Sixth Form's Sports and Social Committee.

Education

Bigtown College
10/2018 – present (p/t)

AAT level 2 Foundation Certificate

Bigtown Academy
2012 – present

A levels: Maths, English Literature, Biology
(predicted grades A, B, B)

GCSEs: Maths (8), English (7/7),
Chemistry (B), Physics (B), Biology (B),
History (C), PE (C), Music (C)

Employment and Work Experience

Jacksons
2016-present

Sales assistant
Customer service, cash and credit handling, stock control, staff training

Childminding
2017-2018

For relatives and neighbours

Interests

I run for Bigtown Harriers and last year came 10th in the Bigtown half marathon.

References

Mr J Brown
Headteacher
Bigtown Academy
Small Lane
Bigtown
BT3 4RG
j.brown@bigtownacademy.co.uk

Ms J Bond
Manager
Jacksons
1 East Way
Bigtown
BT1 8KR
j.bond@jacksonmail.com

Zachary Smith

144 Oval Street, Busytown, West Yorkshire, BT3 4AY
07927231587 z.smith@ckmail.com

Personal and Skills Profile

I am a reliable and hardworking person with experience of working with a wide range of people. I have excellent customer service skills and am able to communicate effectively at all levels. I remain calm under pressure and have had experience of dealing with difficult situations. I am capable of using my initiative to make decisions and take responsibility, I am an effective team member.

Employment History

Hotel Poshe, Mayfair, London 07/2017 - present

Assistant Head Porter

- Supervising and training staff
- Dealing with questions from guests from all over the world
- Moving luggage safely and effectively
- Contacting local taxis, shops, bars and theatres by phone and email
- Using IT to enter and maintain records

Princess Royal Hotel, Worcester 02/2014 - 07/2017

Porter

- Greeting guests and answering their questions
- Organising transport for guests as requested
- Ensuring luggage was stored and moved safely
- Monitoring people entering the hotel

Royal Navy 10/2009 - 01/2014

Petty Officer (promoted through the ranks from ordinary seaman)

- Responsibility for the efficient operations of people and equipment at sea and ashore, in UK and abroad
- Dealing with forces and civilian personnel at all levels and in a range of situations, some hazardous and stressful

Education and Qualifications

Busytown Comprehensive School 09/2004 - 06/2009

A rang of subjects studied to GCSE level, including maths and English

Hobbies and Interests

I enjoy playing and watching football, reading naval history and going to music gigs. I also like to keep up to date with different languages. I am able to understand and speak French, Spanish and some Russian. I would like to learn Mandarin and Urdu. These languages have really helped me connect and communicate with customers.

References

Available on request.



Some companies have said that they don't like seeing 'references available on request'. If you can, put referees on your CV. **Don't** forget to ask for permission before giving out their details.

CV - information for your CV

Name:
Address:

Phone number:
Email:

Personal Profile

Skills

Education

Work Experience

Hobbies and Interests

References



Email: enquiries@ckcareers.org.uk

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