

How to write your first CV



What is a CV?

Short for 'Curriculum Vitae' a CV is a formal document outlining your skills, experience and achievements. It is an introduction to an employer or university and shows what an amazing person you are! A good CV takes time and must be free of spelling and grammatical errors.



Why do you need a CV?

When you apply for a job whether it is a part-time job, apprenticeship or permanent job later in life, chances are the employer will ask for a CV. You may also need one for university. As you gain more experience and skills, you can add these to your original CV. You will need to update it and adapt it throughout your life.

What should your CV look like?

Your CV should include personal information so you can be contacted and have a number of headings so it is easy to read.

Contact details

First name and surname

Address

Phone number

Email address (nothing silly)

Headings

Introduction

Education

Work Experience

Achievements

Hobbies and Interests or Additional Information



Introduction

This section is to introduce yourself and provide an overview of your skills, aspirations, goals etc. Talk about your favourite subjects, what you might want to do in the future. You can add hobbies later. Here's an example:



INTRODUCTION

I am a year 12 student studying A level PE, Biology and Psychology. I am keen to become a sports physiotherapist in the future and currently volunteer for the local u11s football club. I have excellent communication skills gained through work experience and my part-time job. I am also well organised with good time management skills.

Education

Add the name of your sixth form, year you started, year you are due to finish, all subjects and predicted grades. Example:



EDUCATION

Sir John Talbot's Sixth Form, Whitchurch

2019 – 2021

A levels (Predicted grades)

- PE – B
- Biology – B
- Psychology – B
- Extended Project Qualification (A comparison of recurrent injuries across all football levels) – B

Sir John Talbot's School, Whitchurch

2014 – 2019

GCSEs

- Maths – 6
- English Literature – 6
- PE – 7
- Geography – 5
- English Language – 6
- Science – 5/6
- Spanish – 5
- Art – 5

Work Experience

In this section you can include information about work experience, any part-time or summer job you may have had and volunteering you have been involved in. You can also include a paper round, babysitting, dog walking etc. When describing what you did, try to add as much information as possible so you can show what skills you have. Ensure you include the name of the company, dates and your job title.

Key skills required by employers include:

Problem Solving
Communication
Time Management
Teamwork
Organisation
Leadership
Interpersonal skills
Use of initiative



See an example below.

WORK EXPERIENCE

ABC Restaurant, Whitchurch

May 2019 – Present

Waiting Staff (Part-Time)

- Improve communication skills by delivering a high level of customer service in a 20-cover Italian restaurant.
- Work as part of team to ensure food and drinks orders are taken accurately and delivered efficiently.
- Utilise problem solving skills to help customers with a range of queries such as vegan choices and items not on the menu.
- Consistently maintain a professional attitude and appearance.
- Use initiative to find tasks when the restaurant is quiet and consistently ensure a high standard of cleanliness.
- Develop time-keeping skills through always being punctual for work.

Red Cross Charity Shop, Whitchurch

January 2019 – March 2019

Volunteer

- Worked as part of a team and helped staff sort through donations of clothes, toys and other items.
- Displayed the items and created attractive window displays to entice customers.
- Developed strong customer service skills by serving customers and helping them find items.
- Received training on the cash register and trusted by the manager to process payments.

RJAH Orthopaedic Hospital – Physiotherapy, Oswestry (Work Experience)

July 2018

- Shadowed physiotherapists and occupational therapists to gain an undertaking of duties involved in rehabilitating patients.
- Developed good interpersonal and communication skills through interacting with a several patients.
- Used initiative to maintain high standard of cleanliness across different areas.

Achievements

This is a very important section and will help you stand out when you are applying for jobs. Include sporting, musical, performance accomplishments, extra responsibilities at work, team events, fundraising you may have been involved in, projects you have worked on, art you've created, prizes you have won etc. If you have completed DofE, add details about your new skills learnt and the expedition you completed. Any volunteering can go in the Work Experience section. If you really can't think of anything to go in this section, you can go straight to the next one.



ACHIEVEMENTS

- Member of u18s Whitchurch Football Club since 2014 and won numerous football tournaments.
- Completed Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award which involved navigating routes across Snowdonia on a four-day expedition whilst carrying all camping gear and food supplies. Volunteered for Red Cross, achieved a brown belt in karate and learnt how to cook.

Last heading

Think about what you're interested in, what you enjoy doing in your spare time, what books you read or videos, TV programmes you watch. Think about subjects you enjoy and what you like about them. If you are interested in graphic design, IT, photography, web development etc. you need to include any specialist computer programs you have used e.g. Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, Python, HTML.



HOBBIES AND INTERESTS

I help coach Whitchurch Football Club u11s on a Saturday. This involves organising all the equipment, teaching basic skills and helping them to become a better team. I am First Aid trained and support the club First Aider in dealing with any injuries sustained during a match. I also love mountain biking and often go to dedicated mountain biking centres.

Things you don't need to include

- Age
- Date of birth
- Gender
- Religion
- Nationality
- Weird colours, designs and fonts - keep it simple and professional and use a sensible font such as Arial, Calibri or Tahoma.
- A non-professional email address - ilovefairies@gmail.com gives employers the wrong impression.
- Lies - never lie on your CV. You can emphasise your good points, but never lie, you will get caught out.
- References - There is no need to add references. These details can be provided at interview. Someone who gives you a reference is someone who can vouch for you when you are applying for a job. You could ask a teacher to be a reference or if you have done any part-time work, work experience, volunteering or charity work you could ask the team leader or the person who supervised you to be your reference. You will need their name, position and contact details. You can then pass these on when requested.

Finally

Double check spelling and grammar and ask at least two other people to proofread it before finalising the CV.

Check spacing and margins, view as one page to make sure the CV looks neat, tidy and professional.

Your first CV should fit on one page but two is acceptable. If you do go on to two pages, try and make the second page at least half a page, otherwise try and use spacing to keep it on one.

