Library Helpsheet

Writing a CV

What is a CV?

CV stands for **Curriculum Vitae** which is a document you can send to potential employers with your personal, educational and previous employment details to apply for a job. You should use your CV to present your **skills, relevant experience** and **knowledge**. Remember to be honest and do not claim to have skills etc. which are untrue. Your CV should be typed, eye catching, uncluttered and easy to read.

CV Formats

There are 2 main CV formats which you can use:

➢ A **traditional/performance CV** – good to use if you are applying for a job where you have had **previous experience** – even part-time
➢ A **skills/functional CV** – good if you are leaving school and have **no direct job experience.**

What information should I put in a traditional/performance CV?

This type of CV is in **chronological** order i.e. date order with the most recent first.

Your name	Full name
Your full address	Include your postcode
Your telephone number	Use your mobile number if that is the best number on which to reach you
Your email address	Create a new one if yours is overly complicated or unprofessional e.g. fluffyducks@hotmail.co.uk
Personal profile (heading)	A couple of sentences to summarise your achievements and grab the attention of the prospective employer
Work experience (heading)	List any part-time work and the responsibilities you have at present. If you have had more than one job, list them in chronological order; put the most recent first and work backwards in time. Match your experience to the job specification
Education and training (heading)	List your exam results and any training you have completed out with school e.g. sports coaching, Duke of Edinburgh, leadership roles in chronological order
Other information (heading)	Use this section highlight interests, hobbies, voluntary work experience, etc. especially if it relates to the job specification
References (heading)	You can add "References available on request" or include contact details of 2 referees (people who will provide character or work references) at the end of your CV – choose carefully and ask permission first

What information should I put in a skills/functional CV?

This type of CV is not in chronological order and uses **sub-headings** instead (under the main heading of **Skills and Achievements**) which you can choose to highlight your skills and achievements. Choose **3-6 sub-headings** from:

- **Communication** – written, verbal, presentations, people skills
- **Numeracy** – maths, statistics, data handling, estimation, money and time
- **Leadership** – leading a team and decision making, delegation
- **Teamwork** – as leader and as part of a team; negotiation skills; interpersonal skills; mentoring and coaching skills
- **Administration** – organisational skills; dealing with paperwork
- **IT literacy** – using Microsoft packages and other IT systems
- **Project management** – seeing a project through from start to finish; planning
- **Innovation** – creative thinking; new ideas and implementing them.

Choose those which link closest to the **job specification**.

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Your full address	Include your postcode
Your telephone number	Use your mobile number if that is the best number on which to reach you
Your email address	Create a new one if yours is overly complicated or unprofessional e.g. fluffyducks@hotmail.co.uk
Personal profile (heading)	A couple of sentences to summarise your achievements and grab the attention of the prospective employer
Skills and achievements (heading)	This is a main heading. Choose your **sub headings** from the list above. Make sure you choose headings closest to those in the **job specification**, focusing on the **essential** skills required for the post. Give examples of how you have used your skills in practical situations e.g. developed your leadership skills as a house ambassador.
Education and training (heading)	List your exam results and any training you have completed out with school e.g. sports coaching, Duke of Edinburgh, leadership roles in chronological order
Other information (heading)	Use this section highlight interests, hobbies, voluntary work experience, responsibilities e.g. house ambassador, etc. especially if it relates to the job specification
References (heading)	You can add "References available on request" or include contact details of 2 referees (people who will provide character or work references) at the end of your CV

Tips
- You **don't** need to write CV at the top – the employer knows what it is
- Use a clear layout and fonts (such as Arial, Verdana or Tahoma)
- Make your headings a **larger** sized font in **bold** or underlined
- Make sub headings **bold** or underlined
- Keep your CV short – **2 pages** maximum – but keep font size at least 11 point
- Use **short sentences and bullet points**
- Be positive, concise and don't use "I" too much
- Make sure your **spelling and grammar** are correct
- **Amend your CV** for each application – change it to suit each job specification.