

Job hunting Hints and Tips:

CV writing advice and checklist

Prepared by The Jenrick Recruitment Group



A good curriculum vitae (CV) will **significantly increase your chances of getting the job you want.**

It is a brief, clear outline of your education, employment, qualifications and experience.

The ideal CV demonstrates that you are suitable for the job. It should do so with an element of originality and without any negative details.

Everyone looking for work should have an up-to-date CV, to be ready to act when that perfect job comes up. A CV is also a useful record of your details when filling in application forms.

Preparing to write a CV:

Start by writing down all the details of your career, including

- Job titles.
- Starting and finishing date of each job. Do not leave any gaps even if you were unemployed. Did you travel, do voluntary work, or raise a family during this time? Each of these activities is an achievement.
- Responsibilities.
- Achievements. Include examples with the results such as 'implemented a sales strategy which increased sales by 50%'. Stick to facts - phrases such as 'I am ambitious' and 'I mix well socially' are difficult to back up with examples.
- Skills.
- Education.
- Other training.

Write everything down - if you don't use it in the CV it may be useful at the interview.



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The content of your CV:

- A CV should be a maximum of **two sides of A4** paper, so decide which of the points you have written down are most relevant to the jobs you are applying for.
- For a job requiring specific skills it is better to send a **tailored CV**, with information relevant to that company. You are likely to have more success sending out a few tailored CVs than hundreds of general ones.
- Think carefully before you begin. Your CV should be organised, easy to read and interesting. Use headings, short sentences or bullet points to get the information across clearly.
- Use **specific terms** rather than general phrases - 'I have four years experience of' is better than 'I have wide experience of'
- Stick to your personal achievements - phrases like 'took part in' suggest that you were not closely involved.
- Use plain English, avoiding repetition of words such as 'I' .
- Be **honest and accurate** - remember this information is likely to form the basis of your interview.

The layout of your CV:

The layout can vary and is up to you, but there are certain pieces of information that you need to include. The following order is the standard layout for a CV

1. Personal details

- Name in full - use this as the heading rather than Curriculum Vitae - your name will stick in the interviewer's memory.
- Full postal address with postcode.
- Phone number with STD code (daytime and evening numbers if possible and whether each number is a direct line, switchboard or answerphone).
- Driving licence - if you have a full, clean driving licence say so.
- Nationality.



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2. Employment history

- Include a brief statement about your achievements and career aims, if you wish. Some employers like this, but remember that if you include it, your CV may go to someone who does not.
- List all employment, with the most recent job first, the dates started and finished, job title, employers name, industry, company size and key responsibilities.
- List your achievements and results for each job using bullet points.

3. Education, training and qualifications

- List all education from secondary school onwards.
- Start with college or university, then schools.
- Name schools and colleges with the location.
- List exams passed, with the dates and results.
- List any specialist training courses attended that are relevant to the job.

4. Additional information

- Skills - for example computer skills with the packages you can use, any languages, stating how well you can speak or write them.
- Interests and hobbies - try to get across something of your personality, but keep it brief and factual. Try to show hobbies that underline skills useful to the job - sports show health and fitness; chairman of a society shows leadership; secretary of a team shows organisation.

5. References

- Not generally required - only enclose them if you are specifically asked to.

Avoid asking for a specific salary or giving details of your current salary - this may rule you out at the first stage, and can be discussed at the interview.



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The presentation of your CV:

- Your CV says a lot about you. Employers are likely to receive many CVs so first impressions count.
- Take the time to lay it out clearly and check for spelling mistakes and errors.
- Read it through carefully and get someone else to read it too to check for errors.
- Do not make hand-written adjustments to a finished CV.
- It should be in black on white paper, in case the employer wants to photocopy it.
- Always send an original, not a photocopy.

Do try your CV out on your friends and family, and go through it with your Jenrick Consultant.

Covering letters:

- A CV should always be accompanied by a covering letter, even if the advertisement does not ask for one and should be a maximum of one page.
- Note whether the advertisement asks for a hand-written letter; if not, word process the letter in the same style as your CV.
- Address it to the relevant person (make sure their name and the company name is spelt correctly), rather than 'Dear Sir/Madam'.
- State what job you are applying for and where it was advertised with a reference number if required.
- Show in your comments that you have researched the company, product, market, etc.
- Outline why you want the job, expanding on skills you have that are directly relevant.
- Be polite and confident using positive statements.
- Include any relevant information that is not covered on your CV - without duplication.
- End by saying you look forward to seeing them in the near future.
- Check there are no spelling mistakes and that the letter is clearly and logically presented.
- Keep a copy for your reference.

Finally, always use first class post to send your application - it emphasises that your career is important to you.

