

Having a good CV is vital when looking for work. Our simple guide will help you get started on yours.

Before you start, gather your information.

There's no set style, but your CV should include the following 6 sections:

1. Contact Details

These go at the top: include your name, address, phone numbers and email if you have one.

A cautionary note on security: you probably intend to distribute your CV widely. It may be wise not to include your house number; just your street name is fine. Likewise, you may decide not to include your landline - people cannot tell from calling your mobile whether you may be at home or not. You could include these details in your covering letter, if need be.

2. Personal Profile

A few lines about yourself. This is your chance to sell yourself to the employer: use positive language to let them know what sort of person you are and what you can do.

3. Employment History

Start with your most recent job and work backwards. Usually you only need to go back 5 or 10 years. Also include voluntary work.

4. Education and Training

As with employment history, start with your most recent qualification and work backwards. Include any training you've received - whether at work, college or elsewhere. Also include any personal or work-related achievements.

5. Interests

Give a few examples of your interests and hobbies, especially if they are relevant to the job you're applying for.

6. References

Ideally two or more, including a recent employer. On your CV, it is fine to put 'available on request' if you prefer.

Key points to remember:

Keep it short and simple: ideally no longer than 1 or 2 sides of A4 paper. You should only include what's really needed to gain the employer's interest, without overloading them.

Use positive language: focus on your strengths and achievements and try to give examples of how you've demonstrated these abilities.

Think about how it looks: there are no definitive rules, although standard fonts (such as Arial) look neat and are easy to read.

Check your spelling and grammar or get someone to check it for you.

Tailor your CV to fit the role of the job you are applying for. You could prepare more than one CV if you like – the Universal Jobmatch website lets you upload up to five different versions.

Keep an electronic copy: save it to your computer if you have one, or use a USB drive. Another option is to have your CV saved to your email account as an attachment. It's a good idea to have back-up copies saved in different places.

Sample CV template

Your Name

Your address Postcode
Telephone Mobile Email

Profile

Your personal profile should contain a few sentences that give employers an overview of what sort of person you are, what you can do and what you're looking for in your next job.

Employment History

Name of organisation, Location

Job Title January 2007 – December 2012

- Main skills/achievements - give examples
-

Name of organisation, Location

Job Title January 2002 –December 2007

- Main skills/achievements - give examples
-

Name of organisation, Location

Job title January 1997 – December 2002

- Main skills/achievements - give examples
-

Training and qualifications / skills

Interests

References

Available on request

Need some help?

All Wigan libraries have free access to computers and the internet. Although we can't type up your CV for you, we can show you how to use computers and can offer you lots of help in making your CV look good. Please speak to a member of staff if you would like to attend one of our **free weekly sessions at your local library:**

WorkClub: support and guidance from friendly, trained staff

Get Online three week computer course - internet; email; online forms

Computer drop-in sessions: available at Wigan and Leigh libraries