



Building a CV

Your CV can help you make a great first impression on a recruiter or potential employer. Here are some key points to keep in mind.

CV Setup

Whether you're starting from scratch or updating your existing CV, a clear and consistent format is key. If you don't have a CV, or want a stylish new layout for your current document, you can find a variety of free templates in Word or online by doing a simple search.

Select a template that appeals to you and fill it out with the basics before moving on to the information below.

Check Your CV Against These 10 points

1. Top Section = Your General Information

- Your Name
- Location
- Mobile number
- Email Address
- LinkedIn/Professional Twitter Account/Personal Website (if relevant)

2. Personal Statement

The personal statement for a CV, otherwise known as a personal profile, professional profile, or personal summary, is a key part of a CV that many job seekers get wrong.

Your CV's personal statement is a short paragraph that sits at the top of the document, just below your name and contact details. Its purpose is to offer the recruiter or hiring manager a powerful overview of you as a professional, diving into three key aspects:

- Who you are
- Your suitability for the role and the value you can add
- Your career goals and aims

An impactful and interesting personal statement should be clean and concise. It's typically around four sentences long – that's about 50 to 200 words. Guidelines for writing this:

- Think of three attributes they would want
- Write with passion
- Never use clichés and buzzwords

3. Work Experience

Put the most relevant/recent job at the start.

- Note start and end dates
- State company name
- Add your job title
- Include a one liner introducing the company
- Enter bullet points about your key responsibilities and skills developed

4. Gaps

Try not to leave any gaps in employment. If you leave a gap, add a short explanation.

5. Education

- Include the name and location of the institute
- Show your start and end dates
- Include final grades you achieved

6. Key Skills

Choose your top transferable and adaptive skills, as well as any that are technical or job-specific skills (relevant to your career). Avoid cliches.

7. Interests and Activities

- Highlight specific personality traits
- Don't include 20,000 hobbies (two or three is fine)
- Try to convey how your passion for these things could relate to work

8. References

Include these if you can. Stick to two former employers, teachers, or professionals who know you. Use the most relevant/recent employers.

9. The Intangibles

- Showcase your personality. Keep the tone friendly and positive.
- Attention to detail—remove any mistakes! Watch your spelling and grammar.
- Passion and relevance. Customise your CV to the specific job by editing your personal statement and showcasing required skills that were included in the job advert.

10. General Admin

- Change any silly/humorous email addresses.
- Name the file something sensible. (For example, your name - CV - current year)
- Layout and format. It matters. It must be relevant.
- Ask a friend or family member to proofread your CV.
- Use bullet points to highlight key skills and relevant information, but don't overdo them.
- A CV should be either one or two pages long for someone at your stage of career. But don't make it one and a half; fill the pages with information or change spacing to do so.
- Keep consistent font and font size throughout.
- Don't experiment with crazy colours.

No Mistakes!

Having mistakes in your CV can essentially negate it no matter how much great information it contains. In addition to having someone else proofread it, there are some free online tools that can help improve your writing. This is key when you're trying to make a great first impression in written documents.

- **Grammarly** is a comprehensive writing tool that helps build writing skills while correcting grammar, spelling, and punctuation mistakes as well as sentence structure problems, misused words, and typos. You can download a free version [HERE](#)
- **Hemingway** is another tool that can be used to ensure your writing is bold and clear. It can be accessed [HERE](#).

Remember that your CV is one of the very first things a recruiter or potential employer sees about you, and first impressions count. Do everything you can to craft a standout CV.