

CV guide

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Curriculum vitae

The average person changes jobs 12 times throughout the course of their lifetime. That means they create at least 12 different versions of their CV during that time.

The purpose of your CV is to win job interviews.

In 1482, Leonardo da Vinci invented the CV. He listed all his abilities and send it to the Duke of Milan.

The best thing?

His approach was spot-on. He could have highlighted all his impressive projects from the past.

But he didn't.

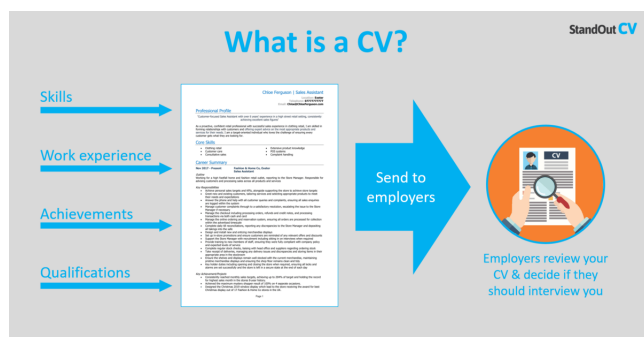
He could have provided a list of all the artillery he already made.

But he didn't.

No, Da Vinci realized that those were all HIS achievements and not the Duke's NEEDS.

He placed himself in the Duke's position and figured out what he could offer to improve HIS situation.

And it worked.



Your CV is NOT a biography anymore!

The purpose of your CV is NOT to get the job... It is to arrange an interview!

The main objective of your CV is to communicate to the recruiter that this particular job is the logical result of your career path.

Your CV has to evoke the desire to meet you!

In other words...

Your CV is NOT the place to demonstrate what YOU are looking for.

It is to show why you are the perfect candidate.

There is plenty of time to talk about yourself in the job interview.

Every CV is to be written in a defined format.

To make the CV more appealing and informative, you must know the format and different sections that are included.

HEADER

This is the top most section of your CV. The employer is often looking for your identity and the ways to contact

you here. Always use a bolder font for your name so that it stands out, and makes it easier to be remembered.

OBJECTIVE

In this section, you need to write the objective that you are seeking to achieve. Always match this objective with the company's objective.

EDUCATION

In this section, the employer is looking for the education that you have received. Just keep it as simple as possible.

EXPERIENCE

Here comes the tricky part. For most freshers, this section is often left blank, and this is the biggest issue that the recruiter faces. Develop a sense of trust in your employer by letting him know, that this isn't your first real world job experience (even if it is) with the help of mentioning your college projects, live assignments or any other achievement.

SKILLS

Another extremely important section. For this, step into the employer's boots for a while. Think what are the skills that he would be looking for. Match those skills with the ones mentioned in the job description.

Good CV format	Bad CV format
Clearly defined sections. Bold headings.	Unclear layout. Difficult to navigate.
Simple font and colour scheme.	Elaborate font and loud colours.
Text broken up and plenty of bullet points. No images or distracting design features.	Large unbroken paragraphs of text. Large photograph wasting space.

Don't forget about your CV profile (sometimes called a personal statement).

It is a short introductory paragraph at the top of your CV, and is the first thing that a recruiter will see upon opening your CV.

So, it needs to excite people and encourage them to continue reading the rest of your CV.

Brainstorming for Your CV

A company you want to apply to has asked you to send in a CV and you're thinking, "wait..what?" Don't worry! A CV is a concise document which summarizes your past, existing professional skills, proficiency and experiences. The purpose of this document is to demonstrate that you have the necessary skills to do the job for which you are applying. Literally you are selling your talents, skills, and proficiencies.

1. Know what information a CV generally contains.

Most CVs include your personal information, your education and qualifications, your work experience, your interests and achievements, your skills, and references. Also experienced people tailor your resume to the job you are applying for. Use a modern but professional format. However, there is no set format for a CV, what you include is up to you.

2. Brainstorm your hobbies and interests.

Unique interests or hobbies will make you stand out. Be aware of the conclusions that might be drawn from your hobbies. Try to list hobbies that portray you as a team-oriented individual rather than as a solitary, passive person. Companies want someone who works well with others and can take charge if need be.

- *Hobbies and interests that paint a positive image:* Being the captain of your soccer (or football) team, organizing a charity event for an orphanage, secretary of your school's student-run government.
- *Hobbies that imply a passive, solitary personality:* watching TV, doing puzzles, reading. If you are going to put any of these things, give a reason why. For instance, if you are applying for a job at a publishing house, put something like: I enjoy reading the great American writers such as Twain and Hemingway because I think their writing gives a unique perspective into American culture at the time they were writing.

3. Consider the job you are applying for.

Research the company. A good CV is tailored to the specific job and company you are applying for. What does the company do? What is their mission statement? What do you think they are looking for in an employee? What skills does the specific job you are applying for require? These are all things to keep in mind when writing your CV.

4. Check the company's website for extra information about the CV.

See if there is any specific information they want you to list in your CV. There might be specific directions listed on the application page. Always double check this.

5. Make a list of jobs you have held.

These can be both jobs you hold currently and jobs you have held in the past. Include the dates that you began and ended your term at each particular job.

6. Make a list of your relevant skills.

These skills often include computing skills (are you a wiz at Wordpress? Excel? inDesign? etc.), languages you speak, or specific things the company is looking for, such as targeted skills.

- *Example of targeted skills:* If you are applying to be a writer for a newspaper, list that you are fluent in AP style. If you are applying for a coding job, mention that you have worked with JavaScript.

Taking time to brainstorm can help you to delve deeper into your career history and highlight accomplishments that



make you stand out as an applicant.

When you have collected all of the materials successfully, you can start creating your CV.

Writing a standout CV headline

A resume headline is a concise, one-line description of who you are as a candidate. A well-written headline can grab a recruiter's attention and encourage them to take a more detailed look at your qualifications.

Your headline is a short but powerful addition to your resume, often the first thing a recruiter reads. Take advantage of the opportunity to make a strong first impression.

1. Include keywords from the job posting, ideally the job title.
2. Keep it short. Try to write under ten words.
3. Use title case (capitalize the first letter of each word) and adjust your font so the headline stands out

Samuel Gerard

samuel.gerard@email.com | C: 000-000-0000 | 00000 Oak St. Orlando, FL 32789

Headline

Team-Oriented General Manager with 12 years of Restaurant and Retail Experience

- 12 years experience exceeding profitability and sales targets by 10% or more.
- Recognized for excellence in operations, people management, problem solving, and team building.
- Successful at motivating, training, and developing team members to drive profitability in high volume environments.

visually.

4. Tips for Writing a Resume Headline: 5 Questions to Ask

- a. *Is your headline compatible with the position?*
- b. *Does your headline include keywords from the job posting?*
- c. *Does your resume headline include concrete language and information?*
- d. *Is your headline concise?*
- e. *Does your resume headline stand out visually?*

- Seasoned Registered Nurse Specializing in Pediatric Care
- Award-Winning Graphic Designer
- Editorial Producer who has Co-Produced 3 Award-Winning Films
- Experienced Merchandiser with CDL License
- Executive Assistant with 6 Years Admin Experience
- Senior Creative Copywriter with Experience Writing Social Ads
- Seasoned Content Writer with SEO Knowledge

Mistakes to Avoid when Writing Your Resume Headline

1. Don't include an objective in your headline.
2. Don't lie.
3. Don't forget to tailor your headline.

Choosing a resume format

Your CV format will play a big part in it's success.

If the information in your CV is well-arranged and presented in a simple and professional style – it will be easy for recruiters to navigate it and digest the content. If the information is poorly laid-out, cramped or messy, then readers will struggle to read it, and probably skip past it.

1. Create a text document

Use writing software like Microsoft Word or Google Docs to create a Word document or PDF (you could also use an online CV builder).

2. Use a clear simple font

This makes it easy for all recruiters and hiring managers to read it.

3. Divide sections clearly

With bold headings and space to make it easy for recruiters to jump to the sections they need.

4. Use a calm colour scheme

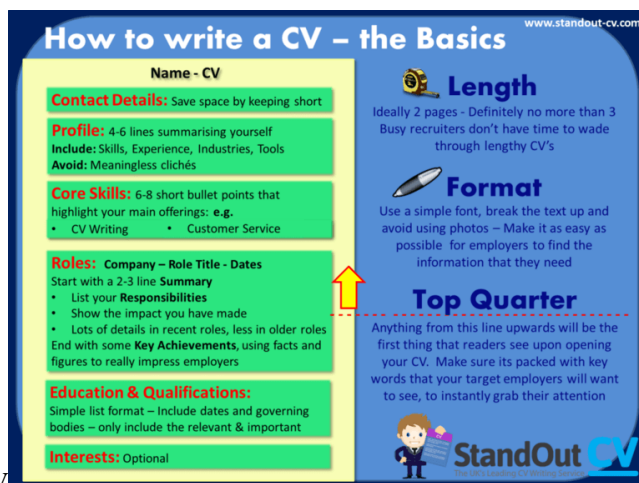
Loud colours can be off-putting and look unprofessional, so keep it muted.

5. Avoid photos and images

They take up valuable space and do not add any value to the CV (unless you are a model or actor)

6. Use plenty of bullet points

To break up information and provide a pleasant reading experience.



This is an overview of what to include in your CV

- Name and contact details
- Profile / Personal statement
- Core skills section
- Work experience
- Education and qualifications
- Hobbies and interests (maybe)

Adding Your name and contact information

It might seem obvious, but job seekers sometimes forget a key piece of contact information in this section. Double check and make it as easy as possible for recruiters to contact you for a job interview.

The top of your resume should

ELIZABETH WALLACE

Seattle, Washington 98101 • (555) 555-1234 • elizabet

include:

1. Name
 2. Phone number
 3. Location
 4. Email Address
 5. LinkedIn profile URL
1. Include a personal phone number, never a work number.
 2. You don't need to include your full address but do add your city, state, and zip code. Recruiters often search for local candidates first.
 3. Use a professional sounding email address. Consider creating a free Gmail account for your job search if you currently use a more outdated email service.
 4. Create a strong LinkedIn profile and be sure to include the URL on your resume.

Adding Your summary statement

A resume summary statement is a short paragraph or section of bullet points at the beginning of a resume that highlights your professional skills and experience.

Your summary should expand on your headline and communicate to recruiters and hiring managers why you are a good fit for the job.

Summary statements are not ideal for all job seekers. If you don't have much job experience or are changing careers, you might use the space to expand on your work history section, skills section, or write a strong resume objective statement instead.

ELIZABETH WALLACE

Seattle, Washington 98101 • (555) 555-1234 • elizabethwallace@e

Human Resources Manager with 5 Years Experience

- o Certified diversity and inclusion specialist
- o Over 5 years experience successfully leading teams of up to 8 HR
- o Implemented changes towards a positive and inclusive culture, in percent

**Note:**

Career experts rarely recommend including a resume objective statement, but these summary alternatives can work in special circumstances such as in the case of career changes.

1. Look for patterns in your work history and include a concise overview.
2. Include your most important and relevant skills.
3. Mention your most impressive achievements.
4. Incorporate keywords from the job description.

The goal of a summary statement is to demonstrate the job seeker's unique value through their skills and accomplishments.

Detailing Your work experience

The work experience section is the heart of your resume. Employers look at this section closely to determine whether your job history and prior accomplishments make you a promising candidate.

That's why it's important to detail not only your job responsibilities but also your competence in prior roles. The work experience section is your chance to show recruiters and hiring managers how you have added unique value to other companies.

The first things a recruiter looks for on your resume are the job titles you've held and the caliber of companies you've worked with. Make this information easy to find by sticking to a familiar format.

List each job in reverse-chronological order. Each job should have its own subheading that includes the following information:

- Company
- Job location
- Your job title
- Start and end dates

Table 1: Resume work experience dos and don'ts

DO	DON'TS
List your work experience in reverse-chronological order (most recent first)	Get hung up on every last job duty; put more emphasis on your most transferrable work experience and skills
Use consistent heading formatting	Outright lie in your resume work experience; tailor your actual experience without making things up
Focus on what will get you this job rather than everything you've ever done	Use long sentences or big block paragraphs if you can help it; think short sentences, strong verbs, and bullet points
Include strategic resume keywords to catch a recruiter's eye and come up in search results	Go include over 10-20 years of work experience (in most cases—exceptions for federal, law, and other industries exist)
Mix accomplishments in with your duties to show that you're successful and results-driven	Use the word "was"
Try to illustrate why you've gone from one job to the next	List every little thing you've ever done

1. Use a traditional section title, like "Work Experience," "Professional Experience," or "Job History."
2. Include measurable results where possible.

3. Add as many relevant skills and keywords from the job description as possible.
4. Tailor the information provided in this section to each job you apply to.

Ideally, your work experience trajectory will show things like increasing responsibilities or a narrowed career focus. For example, moving up from assistant to individual contributor to manager in the same field, or starting your career as a full stack developer but using new jobs to move towards front-end specialization.

Listing relevant skills

It's important to incorporate important skills throughout your entire resume, beginning with your headline which should, when possible, include the most important keyword, the job title. You can also list skills in a dedicated skills section of your resume if using a hybrid format.

Whether you're trying to catch a recruiter's eye or rise to the top of an applicant tracking system's rankings, seeding your resume with relevant resume keywords should be a top priority. One simple way to do this is through a resume skills section.

A designated skills list is an optional resume section and not part of a traditional resume format. Find a good hybrid/combination or functional resume template if you want a skills section on your resume.

Here are four ways to show off what you can do with a resume skills section.

1. Create a simple bullet list resume skills section

The most straight-forward way is to make a list immediately following your contact information and summary statement.

Hitting all the top job requirements with your skills list will make a recruiter's ears perk up. It will also help you rank highly for a keyword search within an applicant tracking system. It's an attention-getter, but don't stop there. Just because you list these job skills on your resume doesn't mean a corporate recruiter will believe you.

If you use this type of resume skills section, be sure to add context for every skill elsewhere in your work experience. If a recruiter is excited by "Product Adoption" in your skills section, the first thing they'll do is skim your work experience to figure out when, how, and how much you used that skill.

The same goes for resume skills sections with rating systems. Giving yourself a 5/5 or "expert" rating on a skill doesn't matter if that expertise isn't communicated in other ways. Context is everything.

2. Create a skills list with expanded bullets

One way to add context is by lengthening.

For example: CRM – 4+ years leveraging Salesforce on a daily basis. Earned Salesforce Certification in January 2017. Also have experience with Pipedrive (1 year) and Highrise (6 months). This approach is more impactful than only listing the skills, however it takes up more room at the top of your resume. Consider trimming down your bullet list to your most important four or five skills when using this method. Then, work your remaining skills into your work experience. the bullet points.

3. List additional skills after each job

If you'd like to stay closer to a reverse-chronological resume format, consider adding shorter skill lists to each work experience section.

Fitting all the skills into the bigger text block might make it awkward for the recruiter to read, but removing them all would make the descriptions overly vague. By working some hard skills right into the work experience and listing others afterwards, you can make your experience easier to read while still covering all your bases.

4. Break resume skills sections into categories

If you're applying for a role requiring a broad skillset and your work history lends itself to it, consider categorizing your skills into multiple lists.

This often works best for people transitioning into management roles where they need to prove that they can work with people from multiple disciplines.

The Digital Marketing list would include specifics like search engine optimization, pay per click advertising, affiliate marketing, and so on.

This approach can also be used to show off both technical know-how and softer leadership skills. Some even advocate for having a dedicated soft skills section on your resume.

You can also combine bullet points into a single section to better categorize skills.

For example:

- Software development (php, Javascript, CSS, HTML, Ruby)
- Data Science (R, SQL, MySQL, Excel, Modeling)
- Project Management (Agile, Scrum, Cost Management)

Desired soft skills vary by role, but here are 10 soft skills recruiters love to see: **Adaptability. Communication. Creativity. Customer Service. Leadership. Organization. Problem Solving. Teamwork. Time Management. Work Ethic.**

Adding Your education

It's common to include your education on your resume, especially if you are applying to a job that requires a degree. If you're a few years into your career, your resume's education section can be minimized at the bottom of your resume.

Unless you're applying in a career that puts extra emphasis on education (like academia, law, or medicine), most job seekers can get away with providing only the following information on their resume:

- Name of Institution
- Degree
- School Location
- Years Attended

If you've recently graduated college, your education section goes above your work experience and includes more detail. Skills developed in school are real skills that have value in the professional world. Recent grads can include relevant coursework, societies, organizations, and extracurriculars that strengthen their candidacy.

Awards, Accolades, and Certifications can be embedded in the work experience and skills sections of your resume. However, if you would like to highlight them, they could warrant a section of their own. Either way, relevant certifications and honors will increase your credibility.

1. Format is key

The reverse chronological format is the best choice for most education sections. Start with your recent academic achievement. College students pursuing a degree should write "anticipated completion date."

2. Include keywords

Write about your academic credentials using specific keywords listed in the job description. Hiring managers and applicant tracking system software will discard resumes that lack them.

3. Avoid aging yourself

Your writing shouldn't immediately show your age. Just include the type of degree and university. Your GPA is not relevant. If you've attended several schools, focus on education that is pertinent to the job.

4. Include your honors

Write about earned honors, such as summa cum laude, or leadership roles. Many recruiters value this type of experience over the specifics of your degree. This is important for recent college graduates and high students with little work experience.

5. Pay attention to required credentials

Include required credentials in writing of your resume education section. Many industries, such as finance, healthcare, social work, and IT, require specific education and certifications.

6. Industry dictates section placement

If you seek employment in education, science, or law, place your resume education section near the top of the page. Remember to begin with your highest degree attained.

7. Advanced degrees require more information.

When writing about a doctoral degree, include the name of your academic advisor, dissertation subject, and the date it was published that name of the scholarly journal.

8. No degree, mention training

If you don't have a degree, write about your continued learning, special training or certifications. For example, if you've completed an apprenticeship relevant to the job title, place this information in your resume education section.

9. Never embellish

Never embellish the writing in your resume education section. A hiring manager may verify your credentials, so be honest about colleges attended, academic achievements, training, and certifications.

10. No flippant writing

Skip the cutesy, flippant writing workarounds, such as "recent graduate from the school of life." If you don't have formal schooling to include, beef up your skills and work history section.



Note:

Adding a study abroad semester or year to your resume can show employers that you're a go-getter. This information doesn't need to take up much space, and should be included in the education section as well.

The correct place to put study abroad on your resume is just below the university you graduated from.

Including Your hobbies and interests

Your hobbies and interest are an entirely optional section and should only be added if they are somehow relevant to the jobs or companies you are applying to.

Generally speaking, they work best for candidates with no experience, to help demonstrate skills outside of the workplace.

1. Which hobbies to add to your CV

- **Volunteering** – Any volunteer work is normally a great addition to your CV, especially if it's for a good cause, or it directly relates to your target roles. Either way there should be plenty of work-related skills you can highlight from volunteer work.
- **Writing** – Writing is a great communicative skill that is required in plenty of jobs, so if you have any personal writing hobbies (such as a blog or writing classes) then it can be worth mentioning them.
- **Sports** – Involvement in a fairly serious sports team or individual sport involves dedication, teamwork, and shows you have the ability to commit yourself to a cause.
- **Strategy games** – If you play in a chess league or similar equivalent, this can be a good way of showing recruiters that you are bright and tactful.
- **Charity and events** – If you have any involvement in the organising and planning of events in your spare time, it should definitely get a mention in your CV. Maybe you help to run an after-school club, or support the promoting of a local music event – lots of workplace skills can be drawn out of event planning hobbies.
- **Travel** – Some employers really love to see travel on a CV, especially the more modern trendy employers like Google and Facebook. Travel involves lots of planning, bravado, and teaches you a lot about different cultures and lifestyles.
- **Practical work** – This one applies mainly to candidates applying to engineering or trade roles, but if you have any hobbies that involve building or fixing things, it can be a great way to prove your ingenuity and technical know-how.

2. Which hobbies to keep out of your CV

- **Common pastimes** – Common pastimes are essentially hobbies that 99% of the population take part in. Things like eating out, going to the cinema, reading or socialising. These hobbies will not set you apart from other candidates, so there's no need to waste space on your CV by writing about them.
- **Sensitive subjects** – If you have hobbies that involve any subjects that could be considered sensitive (topics such as politics or religion) then I would advise leaving them out to be safe and ensure you don't encounter any discrimination.
- **Passive hobbies** – Hobbies such as supporting a football team or watching television don't require much input from you personally, so they will not impress employers.

Interests are optional and in many cases, they won't make a huge difference – but if you feel that they could make you appear more suitable and benefit your application, then you should include them.

Useful Tips

To ensure your CV makes a positive impact on recruiters, try to avoid the following mistakes.

Avoid cliché phrases

- I am a hardworking team-player
- I always go the extra mile
- I am a strong communicator
- I think outside the box

These phrases do not impress employers.

The problem with these cliché phrases is that they are vague, overused and don't tell recruiters anything specific about you.

Focus on describing your industry specific skills, experience and achievements, because they are what recruiters will be looking for.

Dealing with gaps in employment

Long periods of unemployment can be off-putting for employers because it simply appears as though you have not been doing anything during that period – unless you state otherwise.

So, if you have any periods of unemployment that lasted over a month or so, then try to fill them with constructive activities to make yourself look proactive and positive. For example:

- **Studying** – With details of qualifications gained or working towards
- **Travel** – Great to demonstrate planning, organisation and people skills
- **Volunteer roles or personal projects** – e.g. caring for a family member, working for a community initiative

If you've had time out for personal reasons such as a serious illness, then don't be worried about including it on your CV – employers should not discriminate against you for it. Just keep the detail light and focus on highlighting your value throughout the rest of your CV.

CV Language

The language used in your CV should be professional, persuasive, descriptive and grammatically perfect throughout.

It should read like a sales brochure for a luxury product; leaving the reader desperate to call you, just in case they miss out on the opportunity of hiring you.

The language used in your CV gives recruiters an insight into your written communication skills and your professionalism, so make it count.

Avoid using basic language, because it makes you look like a basic candidate, when you need to look outstanding.



Note:

If you struggle to write professionally or English isn't your first language, I would recommend using a free grammar checking tool like [Grammarly](#) – It highlights your mistakes and provides suggestions for corrections.

Checklist

Even if you're someone who's confident in putting together a job application, it's still incredibly easy to miss something. To make sure this doesn't happen use a quick CV checklist to help you to make sure you've not missed anything.

If you can tick off all of these points then you're good to go!

1. Review all your contact information, and make sure they are up to date.
2. The employer has been addressed and the employer details mentioned are correct.
3. The resume looks good and is well formatted.
4. There are no typo and grammatical mistakes in the CV.
5. The keywords have been highlighted.
6. There is no irrelevant information included in the resume.
7. The CV doesn't exceed two pages.
8. There should be no expected salary.

Table 2: Resume format

Chronological. Best if:	Functional. Best if:	Hybrid. Best if:
You're applying for a job in your current field or industry.	You want to change careers	You're a mid-career professional or higher.

Chronological. Best if:	Functional. Best if:	Hybrid. Best if:
Your work experience and skill set are intimately linked.	You have large work gaps that you want to cover up.	You're an expert in your field.
You're an entry-level candidate or a student with some work experience.	You're applying for a job where the skill requirements are emphasized more than work experience.	You're applying for a job that requires a lot of technical skills and expertise.

CV glossary

Chronological CV

It's the CV that organizes information chronologically, starting with the oldest achievements and ending with the most recent ones.

Combination or mixed CV

It's the kind of CV that combines parts of the chronological CV and the functional one. It always starts with the functional format, organizing information by areas or topics, to continue with organization according to time-dates.

Cover letter or application letter

It's a document that usually goes with the CV where, in a much more personal way, the candidate's skills are explained for a particular job position.

Curriculum Vitae

It's a document that summarizes the working experience, education and skills of a candidate for a job search.

Functional CV

It's the CV that organizes information by topics or areas instead of doing it chronologically. A quick glimpse of the most important information.

Human resources

A term used in reference to the organisation and management of people within an organisation.

Letter of recommendation

Document where a person, most of the time a former boss, names the candidate's skills and mentions he or she is ideal for the job offer. It doesn't usually go with the CV.

Resume

Usually its meaning is the same as the CV (resume in the US, CV in the UK) but with some differences.

Video resume – Video CV

It's a type of CV that's on the increase, particularly in English-speaking countries. It consists in a video recording where the candidate explains his or her skills for a job position in particular.

Web CV

It's a personal website, designed as a CV, including the candidate's skills and achievements. Being on the internet, any company or employer in the world can have access to it.