

Notes

¹This is an anagram of my name, Shomir Wilson. I created this CV as an illustrative rethink of what my CV should have been partway through graduate school, for the benefit of current graduate students. These footnotes provide more context for design decisions and what I was doing at the time.

Since web crawlers are likely to ingest this document, to avoid confusion, I've anagrammed my name and all other people's names throughout this CV. I've also rephrased all the titles of my papers. The rest of the content is mostly as it would have been.

²Provide a university email address instead of a personal one.

³You should have a website, even if it only provides your name, a photo of you, your affiliation history, your research interests, and a copy of your CV. In absence of your own website, provide your LinkedIn profile URL here.

⁴Some people put a career goal in their CV or resume, often just after the contact information. I don't recommend that, as it adds little value for the reader and you risk pigeonholing yourself.

⁵Avoid phrasing or formatting that tricks the reader into thinking that you've completed an in-progress degree. Inattentive readers will be misled, and attentive readers will be resentful.

For Ph.D. students specifically, at some point your GPA becomes irrelevant for your CV. You can probably remove it once you're A.B.D. On the other hand, if your GPA is perfect or near-perfect, you could consider keeping it.

⁶Wilhom's CV represents me in September 2009 (modulo changes to the names of my coauthors and of our papers), when I was four years into the Ph.D. program. In addition to recently becoming A.B.D., I had just returned from a ten-week visiting research position in Australia, and I was applying to spend ten weeks in Singapore next year. My time as a graduate student contained some metaphorical *wandering in the desert*, but late 2009 was an exciting time.

⁷A CV typically doesn't have a page limit, so you can use blank vertical space (like in the table below) to add visual appeal.

⁸I recommend resisting the urge to bold or underline lots of things in a CV. Plain text, assisted by formatting, shows respect for a reader's ability to read.

⁹There's a different school of thought that you should describe research projects in detail in your CV. My thinking is that when a CV is appropriate it's often accompanied by a research statement, personal statement, or some other artifact where you can describe your research in greater detail, and the CV serves a different purpose. Paper titles also give the reader a picture of your research to date.

Additionally, remember the CV is primarily for applications for fellowships, awards, and academic jobs. Most industry applications ask for a resume, which should be shorter (one or two pages at most) and focused more on your abilities. If an industry application asks for a CV, add a section about your technical skills.

¹⁰Remove undergraduate research experiences when applying for postdocs or faculty positions.

¹¹For CV purposes, you can count being a TA as teaching experience if you interacted with students, e.g., by leading a discussion section or holding office hours.

¹²Remove undergraduate teaching when applying for postdocs or faculty positions.

¹³For your CV, list paper titles first, before the author list. Readers can learn from your paper titles what research problems you've worked on.

Like many sections of this CV, you can break this one into multiple subsections (never just one—a subsection needs at least one sibling) when you feel you have enough items that they won't look sparse. Separating conference papers, journal papers, workshop papers, and other papers is a possible first step.

"PUBLICATIONS AND PAPERS" avoids committing to whether the venues formally published their proceedings, which is helpful when there is uncertainty.

¹⁴This permits you to include a paper in your CV as soon as you get an acceptance, and later you won't have to remember to remove "Accepted", "To Appear", or similar qualifiers.

¹⁵Don't feel confined to the list of sections in this CV if you have content for more. Possibilities include: Media Coverage (both press releases and news articles), Datasets and Tools (if you've released them publicly), and Invited Talks. However, do not include empty sections. I mistakenly did that for my very first CV, when entering college, because the instructions I read were rigid about what sections to include.