

Curriculum vitae

A CV is a summary of the key skills and experiences you have gained through education, employment and life. This includes activities such as work experience, a gap year, part-time work, a Saturday job, holiday work (even if it is with a family member) and voluntary work.

Many employers, and some college admission tutors, use CVs to help them make a quick decision about who to invite for interview. If they can't easily see that you have the skills and experience they are looking for, your CV will probably end up on the 'No' pile.

If you have been asked to supply a CV in reply to a job/course advert you must make sure it focuses on what the advert says. Pick the advert apart and build your CV to meet the criteria.

A CV can also be used to contact employers who aren't currently advertising – this is called a 'speculative' contact. If your CV makes the right impact they might put it 'on file' for when a suitable vacancy does come up.

Your CV should change over time to reflect any new qualifications and skills you gain.

You would normally send a covering letter with your CV. See *Covering and Speculative letters* for how to write one.

CV Styles

There is no one perfect style of CV. Use your Connexions centre, public library or the internet to see a range of alternatives. Choose the one you feel happiest with – and get some opinions. This section includes two styles you might want to experiment with.

CV Checklist

Use the checklists 1–5 to ensure your CV makes the right impact.

1: Find out what the employer or college is looking for

- * Have you picked the job/course advert apart?
- * Have you listed all the skills, experience and qualities essential for the job/course?
- * Have you done additional research about the employer/college to ensure you are using the right language?
This is particularly important if you are making 'speculative' contacts.
- * Have you spoken direct to the employer/college about the opportunity?

Think about:

Brochures/prospectuses, websites and publicity materials can give you some useful key words to use.

Your CV should fit on one side of A4

Speaking to the employer/college shows you are really interested; it can give you some useful additional information and means your CV doesn't arrive cold.

2: Sell what you can offer

- * Are you using short, snappy, positive statements?
- * Have you shown how your skills and experience match those in the advert?
- * Have you clearly stated what you can offer to the company/college?
- * Is it clear that you are committed to developing your existing skills and learning new ones?
- * Are you being truthful?

3: Make your CV easy to put straight on the 'Yes' pile

- * Have you word processed your CV on good quality paper?
- * Are you using a **sensible** email address like s.jones@mymail.com?
- * Have you checked your spelling?
- * Have you given the following information:
 - * A **personal profile** summarising suitability for the job/course
 - * **Personal details** such as name, address, postcode, phone number(s), sensible email address.
 - * **Education:** Show the schools or colleges you have attended with dates – putting the most recent first.
 - * **Qualifications:** List all those you have taken (or will take in the near future) with the grades – include things like first aid certificates.
 - * **Experiences of work/employment:** Part-time work, Saturday jobs, holiday work, gap year, voluntary work and don't forget any work experience. Give dates and a brief overview of your role making sure to mention the skills you used.
 - * **Interests and hobbies:** Employers like interesting, motivated people who do things in their spare time.
 - * **References:** It's useful to offer the name of someone who knows you from an educational setting and one from a work or private setting – but don't use a member of your family.

Hotstuff@ and sonoframbo@ will not make a good impression and could cost you the opportunity. Set up a separate email account for applications if necessary.

One spelling mistake could make the difference between getting an interview or losing an opportunity.

Ask potential referees first before giving their name and contact details – you want them to be able to say positive, enthusiastic things about you.

4: Get other people's opinion of your CV

- * Have you shown your CV to someone who knows you well?
- * Have you asked for feedback on your CV from friends, colleagues or your Connexions Personal Adviser?
- * Have you considered the feedback and made the necessary improvements?

5: Deal positively with rejection

- * Have you contacted the company/college to find out why you weren't successful?
- * Have you revised your CV in the light of this feedback?
- * Do you accept that rejection can happen for a number of reasons?
- * Are you being realistic and persistent enough?
Get advice from your Connexions Personal Adviser or a teacher. They will be able to advise if you are going for the right opportunities in the right way.

On the next two pages are example CVs.

1. A **Year 11 student**, who is just about to take her GCSEs, applying for an apprenticeship in engineering.
2. A **college graduate** looking to progress in the health and leisure industry.

Think about:

Your Connexions Personal Adviser, your teachers, parents, carers and friends can help to make sure you are not 'under selling' yourself.

Don't take rejection personally – internal candidates usually have an advantage and it can take time to build up your CV writing skills.

Example CV 1

Samantha Jones

135 Bridge Road, Greendale, New Town, NT3 5HJ.
Telephone: 00123 546 2468 Email: s.jones@mymail.com

I am a well-organised, hard working student who enjoys a range of subjects. I'm really enthusiastic about all things mechanical and electrical and take every opportunity to expand my understanding and knowledge. I have thoroughly researched the Apprenticeship programme and feel positive that this opportunity would allow me to work and study effectively and develop my skills in an exciting and hands-on way.

Education

New Town City Academy, 2002 – 2007
Priory Hill Primary School, 1997 – 2002

Qualifications

GCSEs to be taken in May/June 2007 with anticipated grades:

Engineering: B	Maths: C	Science (Triple Award): C
ICT: C	Music: D	History: D
Religious Studies: C	Art and Design: B	English Language: D

Experiences of Work

December 2006 – present: Clips & Bits Cycle Shop. Saturday sales assistant. This job involves serving customers, displaying new stock, helping customers choose the right bike for their needs, booking in bike repairs, carrying out minor repairs.

May 2006: work experience fortnight at Tubolt & Worthing Aerospace Engineering Limited. This company provides precision engineering to the aerospace industry. I spent time with an Apprentice Maintenance Fitter and helped strip and rebuild engines. I attended a number of design meetings and worked with a Design Engineer on the development of a new fuel delivery system.

2005 – present: during the school holidays I spend time with my uncle who renovates vintage cars. I help strip engine components, clean them and reassemble them. I enjoy learning how things work and why they sometimes fail.

Interests

Cycling: I'm a member of the New Town U18 Cycle Club. I enjoy speed trials, mountain biking and customising bikes for friends and family.

Vintage car rallies: I enjoy talking to the owners and having a good look under the bonnets!

Hockey: I've played for the school team for three years. We are currently second in the county league table.

References

Mr. B. Carter
Head of KS4 Engineering
New Town City Academy
Bellvue Road
New Town
NT2 8TM

Mr. D. Henderson
Clips & Bits
23 Long Road
New Town
NT1 3BZ

Example CV 2

Julek Pawlak

29 London Road, Norwood, N21 3QY. Telephone: 00122 794 2453. Email: j.pawlak@newmail.net

I am a fit and enthusiastic young person who is dedicated to the field of health and fitness. I enjoy working with customers and helping them make effective use of their time and the equipment. I am very keen to continue my training and take on additional responsibilities.

Education & Achievements

- | | | |
|---|---|------------------------|
| 2006 – 2007 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sport (Exercise & Fitness) | City College (<i>full-time</i>)
BTEC First Diploma | Distinction |
| 2005 – 2006 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sport & Leisure• Youth First Aid | City College (<i>part-time as part of Year 10/11 programme</i>)
BTEC Introductory Certificate
St. John Ambulance | Merit
Pass |
| 2006 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• National Pool Lifeguard | Wick Swimming Pool
Life Savers UK | Units 1 & 2 |
| 2006 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Swimming Challenge | Wick Swimming Pool
Amateur Swimming Association | Bronze & Silver Awards |
| 2002 – 2007 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• English, ICT, Art & Design• Maths | St. Michael's Secondary School
GCSE
GCSE | D
E |
| 1997 – 2002 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personal Survival | Elm Grove Primary School
Amateur Swimming Association | Level 1 & 2 |

Employment

- **2007 – present:** part-time leisure centre assistant at Bridge Road Leisure Centre. Checking sports equipment, setting up the sports hall, handing payments and taking bookings on reception.
- **2007 – present:** part-time pool supervisor at King's Bridge Water Centre. Advising on water safety and monitoring the pool activities.
- **2006 – 2007:** Saturday job at Bellmore's Builders' Merchants. Unloading and shelving stock, stock control, advising customers and customer service.
- **2006:** holiday job at Ashton's Garden Centre. Watering plants, displaying new stock, helping customers, packing goods and plants.
- **2006:** work experience (one week) at Wick Sports Centre. Working with groups of primary school children helping them with basic coordination exercises.
- **2005:** work experience (one week) at Barrett's Lane Fitness Studio. Setting up equipment for classes, showing new members how to use the equipment safely and effectively and helping the instructors with fitness assessments.

Interests

- Keeping fit and active through team and individual sports - football, weight training and swimming.
- I'm a keen supporter of Wick FC and also enjoy going to the cinema.

References

- Details of two referees are available on request.