

Finding a Job or Apprenticeship

Preparing a CV



What is a CV?

It's one or two clearly set out pages of A4 size paper which you use to tell an employer about yourself and your skills. It needs to be easy to read, so keep it simple.



Before you start it's important to get yourself organised:

- Get together the details of your education, qualifications and work history (including work experience and any voluntary work).
- Use a computer to produce a CV, don't handwrite it.
- Use A4 white paper.
- Use a simple font like Arial or Times New Roman, 12 or 10 point.
- Keep it short – two sides of A4 maximum.
- Don't use exactly the same CV every time. Make changes depending on the requirements of the job you're applying for. Your CV should reflect what the employer is looking for.
- Always check and re-check and get someone else to check it before you send it.



What to put in a CV:

- Full name, address, postcode and a phone no.
- An email address suitable for an employer to see.
- You can include a couple of sentences about yourself. Look at the 'Selling Yourself' leaflet for tips.
- Education: most recent school/college first.
- Current course (the subjects and exams you are taking)
- Work history: most recent first, not forgetting part-time jobs, voluntary work or work experience.
- Any qualifications you have achieved from school and/or work.
- Include any other skills or interests you have, particularly if they are useful for that job.
- Names, addresses and email contact of two people who will give you a reference. Remember to ask them first.

Job description and person specification:

If you are applying for an advertised position you may be sent or have to download an application pack which includes a job description and a person specification. These are both really useful to find out what the job is about and what the employer is looking for.

- a **job description** describes the job and the tasks and responsibilities you will be expected to carry out.
- a **person specification** outlines the kind of person the employer is looking for to do the job. It includes the knowledge, experience and skills the employer would like you to have, separating those which are essential for the job from those that are desirable.



Where to look for help and advice on preparing your CV:

- The National Careers Service at <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk> has lots of information on getting a job and also has a CV builder which you can save online.
- Monster at www.monster.co.uk has several articles on writing CVs and CV templates you can use.

Your first CV - how to order your information:

Your CV needs to be organised into clear sections and in a logical order. Here's an example:-

1. **Personal details** - name, address, telephone numbers and email.
2. **Personal statement** - a couple of sentences summarising your main skills and personal qualities.
3. **Skills and achievements** - focus on ones that are relevant to the job.
4. **Education and qualifications** - start with your most recent school or college. List the subjects/courses you took, the type of qualification (e.g. GCSE) and grade.
5. **Work experience** - list the most recent first. Include any work experience, part-time jobs or voluntary work. Give the dates, employer's name and location, your job title and briefly describe the duties and skills you developed.
6. **Interests** - include hobbies and interests that show your strengths and any that are relevant to the job.
7. **Referees** - names and contact details of two people (not relatives). One could be an academic reference from your tutor or head of year and the other could be a current or previous employer or a neighbour or family friend. Remember to ask their permission first.