

MY CV

...guidance notes



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Introduction

Setting out your skills and experience for a cv or completing a job application form can be daunting. Some of us think we have too much to say, while others, especially those just starting out in the world of work, believe they don't have enough! There is a happy medium, and we hope this guidance will help you find that.

Once you have a good cv, you have instant access to the records you need online or in print! Your continuous professional development journey is off to a great start!

- ✓ Create a concise, stand out cv to help you get that job you're after
- ✓ Aim to draft a 'standard' cv template which you can easily update or 'tailor' as needed
- ✓ Use your 'standard' cv to save you time if you need to submit a job application form
- ✓ Provide evidence for farm assurance schemes, scholarship applications etc

Where to start?

You're faced with a blank screen or piece of paper, so where do you start?

It seems almost too elementary, but begin with an online search.

Look up 'cv template' for the type of job you would like e.g. cv template for 'farm worker', 'forestry manager' or 'stockperson'.

There is plenty of free online advice available, so do your research and you will soon start to recognise what content and style would work best for you.

Do I need an application letter/application form too?

You might need a personal application letter to accompany your cv or application form. If so, keep this to no more than two thirds of A4.

- **DO NOT** repeat information already included in your cv or job application form
- **DO** include some of the wording in the job description

This letter is your chance to get your personality across, talk about why you want the job on offer and set out what you believe you could contribute to the role/business.



REMEMBER...

If the job you want requires you to complete an application form in place of a cv, save time by copying and pasting the appropriate content on your cv directly on to your application form. Very few employers will require both – so make sure you read the advert!

Formatting your cv

Aim to set out your skills, academic background, continuous professional development and all work experience in a **concise, well laid out, chronological way**, starting with the most recent dates.

You need your cv stand out from all the rest – your aim is to get on that shortlist. Once you have a strong cv, you'll be more confident about presenting these facts in a logical manner that leaves a positive impression if, or hopefully when, you get to that all-important interview stage.

- Choose a clear typeface such as Arial
- Use font size 12
- Aim for no more than two pages of A4. (If you're reducing the font size to achieve this do not go smaller than font size 11.)



What to include and the ordering

There are no hard and fast rules, but make sure you keep it concise, honest and informative.

What most employers want is to see early on in a cv is...

- **Your name** (the name you are addressed by and surname are sufficient)
- **Your contact details** (email and a telephone contact are essential. If you're looking for work outside your locality, address is not always critical.)
- **Personal profile** or two short bulleted lists of 'Key skills' and 'Key characteristics'

Focus on this very important opportunity which tells an employer what sort of person you are, and how motivated, conscientious and reliable a worker you will be. In other words, how likely you are to perform the job they want done and contribute to the success of their business.

- Experienced stock person is a skill.
- Good communicator in English and Welsh is a characteristic.

This early section is your opportunity to 'hook' in a busy person, who may have dozens or even hundreds of CVs to go through. A bulleted list or lists (*around five bullets in each*) usually works best.



REMEMBER...

Black font, no fancy graphics, just the key facts/achievements in two pages! Our template will show you what to aim for.

Remember that where you went to college or school, what you studied and the grades you got are not necessarily going to provide any insight into your characteristics, skills and strengths. They are an essential part of your cv, but they don't need to come first! Your A* in photography at A-level may not be particularly relevant if you want to work as a dairy manager, although it certainly demonstrates your aptitude for learning, focus and achievement!

- **Date of birth** – always insert this unless you are sensitive about giving your age away and/or it doesn't seem relevant for the post applied for.
- **Core skills and/or professional qualifications** – list, prioritising most important and relevant.
- **Academic background** – university/college/schools attended (*no further back than GCSEs*). Name the schools, years attended and key qualifications.
- **Work experience** – start with your current role i.e. employer/start and end dates. Keep each job or role short by having one introductory sentence which explains the role and key responsibilities, adding a bulleted list of achievements/outcomes for each one. It's not always necessary to include your earliest or most junior jobs, but if you feel they are relevant, consider grouping a few together to reduce the wordcount.
- **Additional information** – bulleted list which could include e.g. driving licence, Welsh speaker, school governor, YFC roles which demonstrate your aptitude and skills, key hobbies etc.
- **References** – insert the words: Available upon request. These are not usually expected at the application stage. If references are required, make sure you get in touch with your referees to ask their permission first.



REMEMBER...

Bullet points can help you reduce the wordcount in a cv. Keep them concise, relevant to the job you want and prioritise the ordering.

- ✓ Less for you to draft
- ✓ Less wordy text for an employer to plough through

Keep them all industry and work specific i.e. relevant to the job you are applying for.



TOP TIPS...

- 1 Always cross reference your cv or job application form (*and application letter if appropriate*) with the job description to ensure you have covered all key skills/experience required without repetition.
- 2 Make sure you can tick off all employer requirements i.e. use the same or similar terms in your cv to demonstrate that you understand and/or have experience of the skills required to do the job.
- 3 Always run a spelling and grammar check – sloppy mistakes may cost you an interview.
- 4 Keep it short! Less is more in most cvs, because these are the ones which get read.
- 5 Always try and turn your role/responsibilities into an outcome for the employer. Don't merely say what you have done, but what you have personally achieved e.g.
 - *Responsible for customer sales and aftercare, increased turnover of widgets by 40% in six months and promoted to senior assistant.*
 - *Sole responsibility for the health of 120 dairy cattle, achieving a 20% reduction in lameness*



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