

## Section 3:

# Writing a CV

### What is a CV?

A CV is a short list of facts about you and your work history, skills and experience. A good CV is essential when looking for work and it is worth spending time getting it right so it sells you to an employer.

Your CV should:

- be neat – typed if possible and to the best standard you can achieve in content and layout
- be short – two sides of a sheet of A4 paper is normally enough
- be positive – it should emphasise your achievements, strengths, successes and how you have contributed to your employers making a profit (add figures to support facts whenever you can and use positive action words, for example ‘consulting’, ‘negotiating’, ‘managing’ and so on), and
- make a good impression. This means presenting the facts about yourself in a clear and positive way.

### How to use your CV

- **To apply to companies to see if they have any jobs available** – You can send your CV with a covering letter or e-mail asking if they have any current or future vacancies in your trade. You can find names and addresses of companies in newspapers or in trade or telephone directories.
- **To remind you what you’ve done** – You can use your CV to help you remember all the dates and information each time you have to fill in a different application form.
- **To help with applications by phone** – Having your CV handy when applying for jobs by phone can help if you are asked to give more information about previous jobs. If you have hearing or speech difficulties and use textphone or Typetalk, having a copy of your CV can cut down the length of time you spend making a call.
- **At interviews** – Having your CV with you while you’re waiting to be called in can help you refresh your memory. It is also handy to leave a copy with the interviewer if they do not already have one.
- **Registering with recruitment agencies** – Agencies may sometimes ask to see your CV before you can register with them.



### What to include

There is no set format – how you present your CV is up to you. However, you should include at least the following:

- your name
- your address
- your phone number
- your e-mail address (if you have one), and
- your career history – put your most recent job first and include dates. Employers will be more interested in what you have done recently. Don't leave gaps between dates, because employers will want to know what you did during those periods. If you don't have much work experience, you could include temporary, holiday, part-time or voluntary jobs too. If you've had many different jobs, emphasise the skills and experience you have gained across those jobs (for example, skills in dealing with customers, or communication skills).

**New laws on age discrimination mean that you do not need to put your age or date of birth on your CV.**

Here are some examples you may want to include.

- **A personal profile** – this is a short statement at the beginning of your CV to sell yourself – your skills, experience and personal qualities. You could include positive words such as 'competent', 'adaptable', and 'conscientious'. You should also tailor the statement to the requirements of each job that you apply for, so that you make it clear to the employer that you're the right person for the job.
- **Achievements** – mention things you did well in your past jobs which could be relevant to the job you're applying for.
- **Qualifications and training** – include any qualifications and training from previous jobs (for example, training in health and safety or a certificate in food hygiene). Again, put the most recent first. You can also include qualifications you got from school or college.
- **Interests** – these can support your application if your hobbies and leisure activities highlight responsibilities and skills that are relevant to the job you're applying for. Perhaps you belong to a club or society which you organise activities for, or you use leadership skills or teamwork as part of the activity.

## Section 3: Writing a CV

- **Other information** – it is up to you whether to include this, but it can be helpful if there are gaps in your CV. If you had a career break because you were caring for children or elderly relatives, make this a positive thing and think about the skills you used doing this. If the job you are applying for is different from what you have done in the past, explain why you are interested in the new type of work. If the gaps are because of time in prison or hospital, please see the ‘Other resources’ section of this pack for help on what to say about this.
- **References** – you may not want to include these details on your CV but it’s good to have two or more people who can provide a work or personal reference. Ideally, one should be your most recent employer but if you haven’t worked for a while it could be someone who has known you for a long time who can comment on your qualities in relation to the job. You should ask the person to agree to this beforehand.



Tip – ask a friend or relative to read through your CV to make sure it is accurate and that it shows your skills in a positive way.

Here are two example CVs as a guide and a template to help you write your own CV.

### Curriculum Vitae

Mark Sample  
51 Sample Close  
Samplewell  
Sampleshire  
SA21 5SA

Tel: 01000 123456

### Profile

I am a keen, conscientious, hard-working and reliable person. I am a good timekeeper and enjoy meeting people. I get on well with people and can work well either on my own or as part of a team. I can adapt to any environment and would like to use my skills to contribute positively to any work situation.

### Achievements

- I set up my own fish-and-chip shop business, and recruited people to work for me.
- I became competent in dealing with accounts, paying wages and handling cash.
- I became a skilled machine operator in a printing firm.

### Work history

(Dates) **Self-employed.** Ran a fish-and-chip shop in Harton. Duties included running the shop every day, serving customers, handling cash, operating the till, paying wages and banking money.

(Dates) **Halley's Printers**, Liddon Street, Harton. Machine operator. Duties included changing rollers on printing machines. Responsible for ordering paper and keeping records of stock.

(Dates) **Birkton Boiler Foundry**, Birkton, Leicestershire. Boiler grinder. General duties included grinding boilers, which is a responsible job that involves checking for leaks. Operated a grinding machine.

### Education

Attended Pemborough Secondary School and gained qualifications in English and maths.

### Spare time activities

I enjoy reading, gardening, listening to music and spending time with my family.

### Curriculum Vitae

Name: Melanie Sample  
Address: 5 Sample Street  
Samplewell  
SA9 4SA  
E-mail address: melaniesample@hotmail.com.uk  
Telephone: 000 0000 0000

### Education

(Date)	Trinity School Sample Town LZX 1XX	GCSEs: English, maths, art, geography, domestic science
--------	--	--

### Employment

(Dates)	Popular Pizzas Sample Town LZX 2XX	Senior assistant In charge of seven staff, organising work rotas, ordering stock, cashing up, recruiting and training staff, dealing with sales representatives.
(Dates)	Popular Pizzas Sample Town LZX 2XX	Catering assistant Helping to prepare fast food, general kitchen work, waitressing and handling cash.
(Dates)	Newgate Inn Sample Town LZX 3XX	Kitchen supervisor In charge of a busy kitchen, planning menus, cooking, cleaning, controlling stock, bookkeeping, banking and supervising staff.
(Dates)	Newgate Inn Sample Town LZX 3XX	Kitchen assistant Helping out with serving, preparing food and running special events.

### Qualifications and training

GCSE maths and English, Certificate in food hygiene.

### Interests

Entertaining, playing pool and darts. I arrange darts and pool matches to raise funds for the Multiple Sclerosis Society.

### Other information

I am punctual, reliable and work well under pressure, either as part of a team or alone. I am straightforward and positive with a friendly manner and a good sense of humour. This has helped me supervise staff and deal with clients and the public.

I have been in positions of trust, handling money on behalf of others. My aim is to find employment in an environment with high standards and productivity.

### References

Dick Nye, Manager The Newgate Inn Sample Street Sample Town LZX 3XX Phone: 000 0000 0000	Desmond Cook, Area Manager Popular Pizzas Sample Street Sample Town LZX 2XX Phone: 000 0000 0000
---	---

## Section 3: Writing a CV

### CV Template

Use this template as a guide for writing your own CV

Name:	
Address:	
Telephone:	
<b>Profile</b>	
[Put in a summary of your skills, experience and personal qualities. 'A personal profile' section of this fact sheet will help you.]	
<b>Achievements</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• [First achievement]</li><li>• [Second achievement]</li><li>• [Third achievement]</li></ul>	
<b>Work history</b>	
[List the dates here]	[Employment – include the details of your previous employment with the most recent first. Include your job title, your role and responsibilities and any achievements.]
<b>Education</b>	
[List your school, college or university qualifications here.]	
<b>Hobbies and interests</b>	
[Include hobbies and interests that are relevant to the job you're applying for.]	

