

Who needs a CV?

Sooner or later, everyone needs a CV. Usually to apply for a job, but you could also be asked for a CV when you apply for

- apprenticeships
- voluntary work
- internships or work experience
- sixth forms or sixth form colleges.

Even if you're not planning on making any of these applications right now, it may happen sooner than you think. What if a brilliant weekend job comes up that's just right for you? You won't be the only one applying for it. You may have to move fast to get your application in before everyone else. If you've got a CV ready to be printed off or emailed in, you're more likely to be the one who gets the job!

How long should a CV be?

The general rule is: no more than 2 pages. And that's for all CVs - even for people who've been working for years. You may be able to get all your information onto one page.

You do need to make sure it's a good fit on the page, though. Better to alter the margins a little so you can get everything onto one page, than have a few lines on the next page. Alternatively, spread it out carefully over 2 pages, rather than squashing it up too much to fit it on one side.

Remember, as you get more experience, your CV will change over time so you can always start with one page and gradually expand it onto the second page!

What needs to be in your CV?

Your CV has to tell the person reading it all about you. They will want to know

- who you are – full name
- how to contact you – address, phone number(s), email address
- your qualifications – exams and certificates (school and elsewhere)
- your experience – jobs, work experience, activities in and out of school/college, volunteering.

Don't worry if you feel you haven't a lot to put on your CV, but make sure it **is** all on there. As well as jobs, you should include

- positions of responsibility at school/college or elsewhere (prefect, class, rep, team captain, etc)
- sports you regularly take part in
- one-off achievements – awards, trophies, 'employee of the month', for example
- group activities – team challenges, charity events, drama productions, etc.

What to leave out

When you try and decide what to include, ask yourself the question:

Will this help me get a job?

So, if you're trying to decide whether to include your hobbies, for example, it will depend what they are!

If you like 'socialising with friends and family', that's fine – we all do. But it doesn't need to go on your CV. If you are a Cub Leader, a conservation volunteer, captain of the gymnastics squad, playing regularly in a band or caring for a family member, that's different. That can go on your CV, especially if it's relevant for whatever you're applying for.

Getting started

If you're wondering where to start, have a look at the ***CV template*** to see how a CV can be laid out. It can be easier to work from a template than trying to fill a blank screen or page.

Good luck!