

## Creating a standout CV

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A curriculum vitae (CV) is used by professionals in the fields of academia, medicine, teaching and research as an overview of accomplishments that are relevant to the academic realm. Accordingly, it should be updated frequently to reflect the development of your career.

### Differences between a CV and a résumé

There are notable differences between a CV and a résumé, including:

- Education is always listed 1st on a CV.
- A CV rarely lists an objective or has a long narrative profile. If you would like to explain why you are an ideal candidate for this position, include this as part of your cover letter.
- Name-dropping is more common in a CV than in a résumé. For example, if you performed research under a certain professor, you would include his or her name and title.
- Unlike a résumé, a CV can run for 3 or more pages; however, the length of a CV alone is not what makes it successful. You should present the most relevant information in a concise, understated manner and avoid being self-congratulatory.
- A CV should be neatly organized with clear headings and distinct conceptual divisions. Experience may be divided between headings such as “Teaching” or “Research”; education may be divided between “Degrees” and “Advanced Training” or similar.
- Bulleted points are commonly used in a résumé, but less common in a CV.

### Information to include in a CV

A good CV emphasizes the points considered most important in your discipline and conforms to standard conventions within that discipline. You can learn these conventions by finding recent examples of CVs from people in your field.

For a job candidate directly out of residency, the 1st item on a CV should also be education. The remaining items depend on the requirements of the jobs you are interested in and your individual strengths. Emphasize the most important information in your CV by placing it earlier in the document.

A CV should include the following items:

- Your full legal name: This is particularly important if you have ever changed your name. It allows prospective employers to verify that the information you provided is accurate.
- Contact information: Provide only current addresses, phone numbers or email address where you want to receive mail, calls or messages.
- Education: List the most recent 1st with the name of the institution, degree received and dates.
- Certification and licensure: List and give dates of completion for each. If you are in the board certification process but have not yet taken the final boards, state where you are in the process—for example, written boards, oral boards, awaiting results or board-eligible if your specialty board recognizes this designation.
- Postgraduate training: Cite all training that you have completed, such as internship, residency and fellowship, with name of the institution and dates. List the most recent training experience 1st.
- Practice experience: List the most recent practice experience 1st.
- Professional or teaching appointments: Include academic and professional appointments, fellowships and other unique training experiences.
- Research and publications: Cite any presentations or publications that you have written or prepared.
- Accomplishments: Provide results from committees on which you served or projects you managed, or you can highlight your clinical and nonclinical administrative or managerial skills.
- Professional society memberships: List the societies to which you belong and any leadership positions you hold.
- Personal and professional references: Include the names of the individuals who can speak to the quality of your skills or your personality for the past several years. Inform anyone whom you would like to list as a reference that you would like to include them on your reference list.

A CV is not the place to discuss anticipated compensation, reasons for leaving previous positions, personal health problems or disabilities, examination scores or license and DEA number. You should also omit references to your race, religion, age, place of birth, citizenship and marital status.

## Tips for descriptions of professional experiences and employment

Two common strategies you can use while writing a CV are gapping and parallelism.

Gapping is the use of incomplete sentences to present your information concisely.

For example, you might write:

“Composition Instructor (2000–2004). Planned course activities. Graded all assignments.”

By using incomplete sentences, you cut out unnecessary words but convey the responsibilities of the position.

Parallelism means keeping the structure of your phrases consistent throughout a document.

For example, if you use verb phrases in one portion of your CV to describe duties, use them throughout your CV. Verb phrases are a strong way to describe responsibilities. Use the present tense for roles you currently hold and past tense for former roles.

An example of parallelism could be:

- Taught a class of 20 students
- Graded all assignments
- Planned course activities

You should use both gapping and parallelism when writing a successful CV.