

# GUIDES TO CREATING A SUCCESSFUL CV

## I. WHAT IS A CV

### Different terms:

*résumé* : (mainly US) /'rez.ju:.meɪ/; *curriculum vitae* (usually UK): /kəˌrɪk.jə.ləm 'vi:tai/ = CV

**Definition:** A brief description of a person's **education, qualifications, and previous occupations** that you send to an employer when you are trying to get a job.

## II. PURPOSES OF A CV

- To convince a prospective employer of your employability.
- To get an interview/ meeting.

## III. LAYOUT OF A CV

- **Good layout:** simple, clear (avoid fancy fonts, colours, elaborate layouts or overusing capitalization, bold, italics, underlining, or other emphasizing features).
- **Length:** one or two pages of A4 (The USA: one page, the UK or Canada: 2 pages)
- **Margins:** 1-inch (2.54 cm) minimum: ½-inch (1,27 cm).
- **Font:** Arial, Verdana, Calibri, and Times New Roman. Font size: 11 – 12pt.
- **Spacing:** single-line spacing for the full body content, double-spacing after the major elements.
- **Section headers:** you can make these a little larger and/or bold.
- **Use of bullet points:** simple and professional bullet: a circle or square are safe choices.

## IV. WHAT TO INCLUDE IN A CV

### IV.1. CONTACT DETAILS

- **What to include:** name, address, phone number, email address.
- **What to leave out:** The words «Curriculum Vitae» or «Résumé», age, marital status, children, sex, religion, nationality, photo.

### *Example:*

## **Antoine GAUTIER**

5 avenue du Parc

95000, Cergy, France

[gautierantoine@gmail.com](mailto:gautierantoine@gmail.com)

+33 6 12 34 56 78

## IV.2. PERSONAL STATEMENT/ PROFILE/ OBJECTIVES

**Personal Statement:** a paragraph which tells the employer where you are in the career, what achievements/ skills/ personal qualities you have and what your ambitions are.

**Profile:** a brief summary of your skills, experiences, and goals which relate to a specific job.

**Objective:** a statement of your goals for employment (one or two sentences).

### **Example: Personal Statement**

A recent business economics graduate with a first class honours degree from the University of X, looking to secure a Graduate Commercial Analyst position to use and further develop my analytical skills and knowledge in a practical and fast-paced environment. My career goal is to assume a role which allows me to take responsibility for the analysis and interpretation of commercial data for a well-respected and market-leading leading company.

### **Example: Profile**

Detail-oriented IT professional with ten years of experience as a software support specialist and systems/network technician. Skilled at operating in a wide range of platforms. Excellent written and oral communication skills; capable of explaining complex software issues in easy-to-understand terms.

### **Example: Objective**

Self-motivated and diligent first-year engineering student with proficiency in handling web design and development. Looking forward to gaining a position as an intern with ABC company to acquire extensive knowledge and experience while effectively performing my duties in the company.

## IV.3. WORK EXPERIENCE

- List your experience **in reverse chronological order**.
- List **the companies/ organisations** you worked for, **location, dates of employment, the positions** you held and a bulleted list of **responsibilities** and **achievements**.
- Use appropriate forms of **action verbs** for job duties/ responsibilities (**base form or \_ing form** for current jobs, **past form** for jobs done in the past).
- Repeat sentence structure to promote **consistency**.
- **Tailor** your experience to the position.
- Include **voluntary work, projects, co-curricular or extra-curricular activities** (if not having much experience)

### **Example:**

**2017 – Present:** *Electric Al's*, Auckland, New Zealand

#### **Assistant manager**

- Planning and implementing advertising campaigns and branding strategies.
- Hiring, training and overseeing staff.
- Creating a social media presence, which saw a 25% increase in visits to Electric Al's website.
- Managed successfully the establishment of Electric Al's Porirua branch, which opened in December 2016.

2016 – 2017: *FonesRus*, Auckland, New Zealand

### Sales Representative

- Worked as part of a dedicated sales team for the independent mobile phone outlet, FonesRus.
- Kept up to date with the latest in mobile phone technology.
- Managed projects.
- Organised and oversaw weekly team meetings.
- Oversaw a major contract to provide mobile phones to a nationwide media company.

**NOTE:** If you have never had any paid employment, list any **internship experience or voluntary work, projects, co-curricular or extra-curricular activities** that you have done.

### *Example:*

Summer 2018: *Amazing Studio*, Niagara Falls, New York, USA

### Marketing Intern

- Conceptualised marketing plans for technological and real estate markets, which increased company revenue by 12% in 6 months.
- Developed 6 web advertising campaigns.

## IV.4. EDUCATION

- Give brief details of your academic and professional qualifications **in reverse chronological order**.
- List the **colleges/ schools** you attended, the **location**, the **degrees** you attained, the **major/ specialisation/ emphasis** you had, and any special **awards** and **honors** you earned.
- Give **translations, explanations** or **equivalents** for French or non-UK grading systems, qualifications, names of school, etc.
- If you're looking for your first job since leaving education, include this information **above any work experience**.

### *Example:*

2017 - Present : *EISTI (Graduate School in Computer Science and Mathematics Engineering)*, Cergy, France  
Major in Applied Mathematics  
Expected graduation date: May 2020

2015 - 2017: *Lycée Charlemagne*, Paris, France  
Preparatory class: A two year post-secondary programme in preparation for nation-wide competitive entrance exams to French engineering schools.  
Major in Mathematics and Physics

2012 - 2015: *Lycée André Boulloche*, Livry-Gargan, France  
Baccalauréat (equivalent to A levels) in Sciences

**NOTE:** Some necessary French-English equivalents/ translations or explanations:

**EISTI:** *Graduate School in Computer Science and Mathematics Engineering*

*(or: Top/ One of the leading French engineering schools awarding Master's degrees in computer science and mathematics engineering.)*

**Classe Préparatoire/ CPGE MPSI/MP:** *A two year post-secondary programme (or a two year post A programme, or a two year scientific curriculum) in preparation for nation-wide competitive entrance exams to French engineering schools.*

**Lycée:** *Six form college (UK)/ High school (US)*

**Baccalauréat:** *equivalent to A levels (UK)/ equivalent to high school diploma (US)*

**European section:** *a programme offering higher-level language instruction, intended to better integrate French high school students into a multilingual European environment.*

**Licence:** *Bachelor's Degree*

**Diplôme d'Ingénieur:** *Engineering Degree: a postgraduate degree in engineering awarded by the French Grandes Écoles in engineering.*

**Master:** *Master's Degree*

**Master 1/ Maîtrise:** *MA (Master of Arts) / MSC (Master of Science) (UK)/ Master's degree (US)*

**Master 2 / DEA:** *one-year degree before postgraduate studies (UK and US)*

**Master dans un domaine littéraire:** *MA (Master of Arts)*

**Master dans un domaine scientifique:** *MSC (Master of Science)*

**Master dans les affaires:** *MBA (Master of Business Administration)*

**Mastère Spécialisé:** *Specialised Master/ Advanced Master (a full-time, one-year program aimed at professionals who already have a Master's degree, but would like either to specialise or expand their knowledge and experience in a domain where the private sector has identified a real need.)*

**Doctorat:** *Phd (Doctor of Philosophy) (UK and US)*

**Mention très bien:** *with first-class honours (1<sup>st</sup> or 1) (UK)/ with highest honors (or summa cum laude)*

*(US); Mention bien:* *with upper second-class honours (2:1) (UK)/ with high honors (or magna cum*

*laude) (US); Mention assez bien:* *with lower second-class honours (2:2) (UK)/ with honors (or cum laude) (US).*

#### **IV.5. SKILLS**

**Language skills:** mention the languages you know and their levels ( mother tongue/ native speaker, fluent/ proficient, excellent command, advanced, upper intermediate, very good command, good command/ good working knowledge, intermediate/ conversational, basic communication skills/ basic working knowledge, basic, elementary, beginner)

**Example:** French: native speaker; English: advanced (Toeic score: 950); Chinese: basic

**Computer skills:**

- Customize the skills to match the job requirements.
- List them in separate categories: operating systems, software/ applications, languages and

scripts, hardware, certification, etc.

**Example:**

- Programming Languages: HTML5, Javascript, React, CSS, PHP, R, C, Python, Java, NodeJS, J2EE, LaTeX
- Framework: Django, Bootstrap
- Database: SQL, NoSQL, MongoDB
- Software: Eclipse, Microsoft Office, RStudio, Scilab, StarUML, Sublime Text, TexMaker
- Operating Systems: Windows, Linux, Mac OS
- Project management: Git, Microsoft Project

**Mathematics Skills/ Mathematics Knowledge:**

**Example:** scientific algorithms, numerical analysis, digital analysis, data analysis and statistics, linear optimization, graph theory, differential and integral calculus, inferential statistics.

**IV.6. HOBBIES AND INTERESTS:**

- Optional.
- If mentioned, they should be relevant to the job requirements.
- Aimed to give the interviewer a more rounded picture of you and, perhaps, something more personal to discuss at an interview.

**Example:**

**Sports:** Swimming (regional level, 8 years of practice); tennis (5 years of practice).

**Travels:** England, Spain, Italy, Egypt, the USA, Japan, Indonesia.

**Association Activities:** Vice President of BDE (Eisti's Students' Union), member of ATILLA (Association of Internet Technologies and Open Source or Alternative Software).

**Note:** If you include hobbies and interests, then they had better be there to improve your attractiveness as a job candidate. Here are good examples for hobbies and interests to put on your CV

- Endurance sports - sports such as swimming and running show that you have perseverance and drive.
- Creative hobbies - such as painting or writing which suggest you have a creative mind and can come up with new solutions to complicated problems.
- Team sports - football, basketball, volleyball, etc. suggest that you are good at working together with people in order to achieve a common goal.
- Strategic games - chess for example will show that you enjoy thinking strategically.
- Community involvement - which demonstrates that you are a person who is comfortable to collaborate with others.
- Archery - shows that you are a precise and focused person.
- Yoga - shows that you are a calm person and have control over your actions.
- Travelling - Shows curiosity and an understanding of different cultures

**IV.7. REFERENCES:** Not necessary to include references in your CV.

**V. SOME OTHER GUIDES**

- Tailor your CV: Read job adverts and job descriptions carefully and choose skills, qualifications and experience that match the employer's requirements.
- Do a final check (for spelling, grammar errors), get someone to look over the CV before submitting it.

**Sources:**

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