

Are You 16-18?

Get your CV started here...



connexions
LEICESTER SHIRE

HOW TO CREATE THE PERFECT CV

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Profile

I am a hardworking, creative and adaptable person. I enjoy new challenges and meeting new people. Having worked in retail I have proven communication skills and the ability to provide a high level of customer care. I am enthusiastic about extending my product knowledge and in achieving sales targets. I have the desire to build myself a successful and rewarding career.

Key skills

- Proven customer care skills
- Friendly, co-operative attitude
- Strong organisational skills and attention to detail
- Team player with ability to work independently
- Able to set personal goals to manage changing priorities
- Good cash handling skills
- Confident in using IT systems

Achievements

2011 (six months)

Team member

Prince's Trust Team

Working as part of a team, this personal development programme gave me the opportunity to develop my communication skills, demonstrate my enthusiasm and positive attitude to work, and learn about health and safety in the workplace. I took part in exciting community based activities and learnt a lot about myself.

Work Experience

2010-2011

Sales assistant

Ratby Tool Hire, Leicester

In this busy tool rental shop, I was responsible for merchandising, stock control and working face to face with customers. I became comfortable in using a PC based payment/stock control system, as well as resolving customer queries.

Education

Beaumont Leys School

I achieved GCSEs at grade C in English, maths, drama and physical education, and further GCSEs in music and science.

Hobbies and Interests

In my spare time I like to go to the gym and to read sports and fitness magazines. I enjoy going out on my bike and playing football with friends.

References

Available on request.

Welcome to How to Create the Perfect CV

In this booklet you will find some useful hints and tips on how to create your perfect CV. Getting a perfect CV takes a lot of time and effort, but it will be worth it when you get the job you want.

We've included an example of what one should look like (see page 1), different types of covering letters (see pages 11 and 12) and some 'buzz words' that could describe aspects of your personality (see page 6).

The golden rules



Make sure all the information you need is included in the CV.



A CV is a personal document and the content should reflect **you**. You should arrange the sections or add or remove items according to the job role you are applying for.



Your CV should be a maximum of two sides of A4 paper in length. Keep it to one side if at all possible.



Keep a copy of it safely so you can refer to it if you get an interview, and so you can add and remove items later.



Make your CV easy to read, checking that there are no spelling or typing mistakes. Get someone else to check it too.

Get started here . . .

In order to get the most out of this booklet, follow these simple steps:



Step 1

Spend a few moments looking at the **example CV** (page 1) to get an idea of the sort of information you will need to include.

Step 2

Look at the template (page 5). You can use it to practice on. Fill in your **personal details**, such as your name, address and phone number. You can also download a word doc. version from:

www.connexions-leics.org/library. Scroll down to **WorkWise**

Step 3

Look at the list of 'buzz words' (page 6) and do the activities to help you write your **profile**. Next do the activities to list your **key skills** and describe your **achievements**

Step 4

Fill in your **employment** details (page 8). If you have worked, write down the name of the place you worked, when you worked, and describe some of the things you did as part of your job. You can write about your work experience placement, a Saturday job or voluntary work too. If you are struggling to think about what duties you did in a job, using <https://nexststep.direct.gov.uk> will help. Click on 'Browse our job profiles'.

Step 5

Fill in your **education and training** details (page 9). Write down where you went to school or college and the subjects that you did. If you didn't go to school, describe what you did instead.

Step 6

Decide what to include under **hobbies and interests** (page 10).

Step 7

Your CV is nearly ready. Check how to get **references** (page 10). While you're asking someone to be your referee, maybe they could check your CV for you too?

Why is a well presented CV so important?

Badly presented CV	Well presented CV
The most important information about yourself will be hidden	Your CV is easy to read and the key areas are easy to spot
You give the employer a bad first impression	The employer will notice it and read it the moment they receive it - before anyone else's!
The employer might start to think that you can't produce work of a high standard	You show the employer you have more skills than just the ones you describe in your CV, such as attention to detail
Your application will not get through to the next stage of the recruitment process	Your application will have more chance of getting through to the next stage of the recruitment process

Remember...

- There will be a lot of applicants sending their CVs to the employer, so the employer will not have time to look at each CV in great detail.
- The employer will make their first decision by skim-reading the CVs and throwing away any they find difficult to read.
- The employer has no idea what sort of person you are, so you need to show that in the presentation and content of your CV.

Easy reading

- Use a simple font - Arial works well.
- Don't use underlining or *italics*, or too many words in CAPITAL LETTERS
- Use font size 12 for the main text. Headings can be **bold**, and in a larger font if you wish.
- Make sure jobs and dates line up correctly

Our example CV template follows these rules. A word doc. version of this can be downloaded from www.connexions-leics.org/library. Scroll down to **WorkWise CV template** The grey parts are where you write your own information.

Firstname Lastname

Number and street
 Rest of your address
 POSTCODE
 (code) home phone mobile phone

youremail@any.net

Profile

I am

Key Skills

- Your key skills here
- Your key skills here
- Your key skills here
- Your key skills here
- Your key skills here

Achievements

Describe what you did and what you gained from it.

Work Experience

Job title

monthyear - monthyear

Company Name, Place

Explain what the company does..... I was responsible for

Education

Name of last school or college

List all the exams you got grades in.

Hobbies and Interests

In my spare time I like to.....

References

Available on request.

How to write about yourself

Personal details should include:

- Your first and last name
- Your home address
- Your home telephone number and your mobile number
 - Not got a phone number? Arrange with a friend/neighbour to use theirs
- Your email address - make sure it's one you actually use regularly

Profile

Take a look at the following list of words that people often use to describe themselves. Circle the ones which best describe you. Limit yourself to 5 or 6.

Reliable	Organised	Resourceful
Enthusiastic	Determined	Hardworking
Dedicated	Careful	Flexible
Friendly	Adaptable	Patient
Responsible	Motivated	Trustworthy
Understanding	Honest	Creative
People-orientated	Ambitious	Physically strong

Buzz words

Use the ones you've circled to write your profile, which can be 2 or 3 sentences.

Example

Profile

I am a hardworking, friendly and responsible individual. I am currently looking for a full/part time position in Retail where I can use my strong communication skills. I enjoy meeting new people, taking on new challenges, and working as part of a team, and am looking to make a positive contribution to the workplace.

At the end of the profile you may want to add further comments, for example:

I have recently completed a course inwhich has prepared me to work in thesector.

Key skills

A close look at any job description or advertisement will reveal the key skills the employer is looking for.

Look at the following 'buzz words' of key skills which people often use on CVs. Tick all the key skills **you have used in responsible situations** such as at work, college, school, work experience, volunteering, home life, playing sport.

Now pick between five and ten which are **relevant to the job** you might be applying for. These can now be added to your CV in order of priority.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Problem solving | <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to learn quickly |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Team working | <input type="checkbox"/> Drawing/visual communication |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Time management | <input type="checkbox"/> Willingness to train/study for qualifications |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Self motivation | <input type="checkbox"/> Organising my own work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Customer care | <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation/display skills |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Answering queries | <input type="checkbox"/> Checking information for accuracy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Writing letters, memos
and reports | <input type="checkbox"/> Working on my own initiative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Planning ahead and
setting goals | <input type="checkbox"/> Following written instructions or diagrams |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Using physical strength | <input type="checkbox"/> Thinking of improvements or alternatives |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Researching
information | <input type="checkbox"/> Making accurate
measurements/calculations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Speaking confidently | <input type="checkbox"/> Willingness to take on a challenge |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Using hand tools to cut/shape/make things |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caring skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting young children in literacy and
numeracy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Listening skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Using IT programs (state which, ie
Microsoft Excel) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Keyboard/typing skill | <input type="checkbox"/> High standard of literacy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Driving license | <input type="checkbox"/> Handling money/card transactions |

Remember – You might need to change the focus of your CV for each different type of job you apply for. Look at these two examples.

Same person, different job:

Care assistant

- Caring skills
- Using physical strength
- Listening skills
- Ability to learn quickly
- Willingness to train

Retail sales assistant

- Customer care
- Ability to learn quickly
- Handling money/card transactions
- Answering queries
- Willingness to train

Achievements

This is the section where you write about the things you have achieved or with which you have been particularly pleased.

Go through the following list and tick which examples apply to you. Choose the most appropriate ones to include in your CV. Write the details of **what you did** and **what you gained from doing it** in one or two sentences.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Selected for a responsible position |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting targets | <input type="checkbox"/> Winning prizes or awards |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fund-raising activities | <input type="checkbox"/> Member of youth council/focus group |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Successful completion of a course | <input type="checkbox"/> Running or helping to run a club |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sporting achievements | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting someone else who needed help |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community involvement | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working in a team to reach a goal | |

Employment details

This section is for you to list the jobs you have done. Put the most recent first.

Example

Dec 2011 – March 2012	<p>BHS Retail Assistant</p> <p>Duties include:- Dealing with customers' queries, cash handling, stocktaking</p>
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What if.....

I'm applying for my first job?

You can write about your work experience placement or any unpaid voluntary work you've done.

I've had gaps between jobs?

If the gaps include voluntary work, training or relevant experience such as travel, put these down as part of your skills, qualifications and achievements.

Otherwise, giving the year of employment, rather than the month and year will cover short employment gaps.

I've had lots of jobs

If you've moved from one job to another a lot, shorten your employment record, focusing attention on the skills you have achieved through your experiences, and only giving details of your most relevant jobs.

If you have a period of unsettled employment, or you've only ever worked by picking up casual jobs, it may be helpful to place all the jobs together under a particular heading:

Example

2009 – 2011	Catering work Various roles including food preparation, serving and delivery
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I have a criminal record?

You do not need to put it on your CV. However, you will be asked on an application form or in the interview if you have any previous convictions. You may say 'no' if your conviction is spent. Spent convictions must be disclosed if you are to work with children, vulnerable adults, health profession, pharmacy, law, senior banking or anything to do with national security. You must disclose all unspent convictions.

Education and training

Example

2009–2011 GCSEs	Fullhurst Community College English grade C Science grade D Further GCSEs in maths, Art, PE and Design Technology
2011–2012 GCSE BTEC	Leicester College Maths (retake) awaiting result Engineering Level 1 Diploma

If particular grades have been asked for in the job advertisement, and you've got them, include them on your CV.

Training days are also worth including on your CV.

Examples:

- 2010** 6 week beginners for French
- 2011** Sports Leadership course
- 2012** 1 day Health and Safety

Hobbies and interests

This is to give an employer an idea about what type of person you are. Think of things which show a skill or talent, or that prove you can stick at things. Good examples of these are:

- Sports/fitness
- Your taste in films/books
- Being an active member of a club or organisation
- Community involvement
- Things you like collecting, making or fixing

References

You do not need to name referees on your CV. 'References available on request' may be suitable if you are not sure who to put down. The advantage of a statement like this is that should your referees change you do not need to update your CV.

It is usual to have two referees, one from your most recent workplace or from your school/college if you have been in education. For your second referee you may like to ask someone who has worked with you in another situation, such as a voluntary work coordinator or a youth leader. They need to be a person who is able to be professional in the way they communicate about you. It is not a good idea to ask personal friends to provide references.

If you decide to name your referees on your CV, remember to include the position of your referee and their preferred contact details. Their telephone number could be included, but check that your referee is happy to receive phone calls about you.

Need more help?

Our advisers can help you with any aspect of writing a CV or looking for work. Visit your local Connexions centre. www.connexions-leics.org/centres



All our other information to help you find work can be found online at www.connexions-leics.org/library. Scroll down to WorkWise.



A booklet to help you start looking for jobs, apply for work, and prepare for interviews. Pick up a copy from a Connexions centre or from a Connexions adviser.

You can also download it from www.connexions-leics.org/library

Covering letter

You often need to include a covering letter with your CV when applying.

Example of a covering letter

29 Finton Crescent
Anytown
Leicestershire
LE3 2PT
(0116) 264 5321

Mr R Taylor
Taylored to you
London Road
Anytown
Leicestershire
LE3 9PT

21st January 2012

Dear Mr Taylor

With reference to your advertisement in the Leicester Mercury on 14th January for the post of Retail Assistant, please find enclosed a copy of my CV in support of my application for the post.

I am 17 and have just completed the Access to Retail programme with Anytown Training Group. On this course I undertook placements within the retail industry. I am now looking for a position where I can use the skills I have gained. These include customer care and stock control. I would be keen to work towards a NVQ 2 qualification in retail.

My hobbies are reading science fiction books and playing football.

I believe I possess the necessary skills and experience you require. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss my application with you in more detail.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Name

Name

Speculative letter

Sometimes it's a good idea to make a speculative enquiry in person by calling at the employer's premises with a copy of your CV and a speculative letter. This can be viewed as showing initiative.

Example of a speculative Letter

15 Red Terrace
Anytown
Leicestershire
LE4 5PE
(0116) 298 7654

Personnel Manager
Anytown Council
Corporation Mews
Anytown
Leicestershire
LE3 2BE

21st May 2012

Dear Sir/Madam

I am 16 years old and will be leaving Bridge Community School at the end of June this year. I am writing to enquire whether you are likely to be recruiting within your IT Department at this time.

Currently I am working towards 8 GCSEs, including Computer Studies, and would welcome the opportunity to gain further IT qualifications whilst working.

In October I undertook a two weeks work experience placement at Clock Brothers where I worked on reception dealing with customer enquiries and booking appointments. I also undertook some clerical duties such as inputting onto their computer database. I really enjoyed the opportunity to gain new skills, increase my experience and to work as part of a team.

Please find enclosed my CV for your reference and a stamped addressed envelope for your reply. If you have any further questions or queries please contact me.

I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Yours sincerely
Signature

Name