

CV Guidance for School Leavers

A CV is your personal advert — it shows employers what you can do and why they should pick you. Keep it short, tidy, and focused on your strengths.

The essentials

- Maximum 2 pages
- Keep it clear, simple, and easy to read
- Employers skim CVs quickly — you want to make a strong first impression
- You do not need to include your age, gender, or photo
- Use the same font and layout throughout

Work history

- List your most recent experience first
- If you don't have much work experience, include:
 - Volunteering
 - School responsibilities (e.g., prefect, sports captain)
 - Part-time jobs
 - Work experience placements
 - If you have gaps, briefly explain them (e.g., Full-time education, Caring responsibilities)

Skills

- Use skills that match the job advert — but only ones you genuinely have.
- Examples include:
 - Customer service
 - Communication
 - Teamwork
 - Organisation
 - IT skills
 - Problem solving

Education

- As a school leaver, this section is important. Include:
 - GCSEs
 - A-levels / BTECs / vocational courses
 - Predicted grades if you haven't received results yet

Interests (optional)

Include interests that show positive qualities — e.g., teamwork, commitment, creativity.