

Writing your first CV

Employers use your CV to decide whether or not to invite you for an interview, so it's vital that it makes the right impression. Here are a few things to consider when putting your first CV together.

Layout

- Ensure that the layout is clear. Keep sentences short and consider using sub-headings to define key areas.
- Keep it concise. Generally speaking, a CV should be no longer than two sides of A4.
- List your qualifications and achievements early on.
- Ensure your CV is legible. Avoid handwritten text and fonts that are difficult to read.

Make sure you include:

- **Contact details** - name, address, telephone number and email address. If you have a relevant website or blog, you might want to include that too.
- **Education and qualifications** - include the school/college name, dates you attended and the qualifications you achieved. List the most recent first.
- **Experience** - this might include full or part-time work, voluntary work, internships or major projects that you worked on during your education. List the most recent first.
- **Skills** - mention any relevant skills you have and explain how they will help you to do the job well. These could be practical skills such as computer software you can use, or elements of your personality (e.g. meticulous, ambitious).

Content

- Tailor your CV for each job you apply for. Look through the job description and highlight any skills or experience outlined by the employer on your CV.
- Spell-check your CV to avoid typos and grammatical errors. If possible, ask somebody else to proofread it for you.
- Read through and update your CV before sending it out to prospective employers. You may have gained new skills or experience since you last sent it out.

References

Employers generally ask for two people they can contact to obtain a reference for you. If you have no work experience, you could ask your teacher or tutor whether they would be willing to help. It's always best to ensure that you ask their permission before putting them down as a reference. You could either include reference contact details at the bottom of your CV, or you could provide them as employers ask you to.

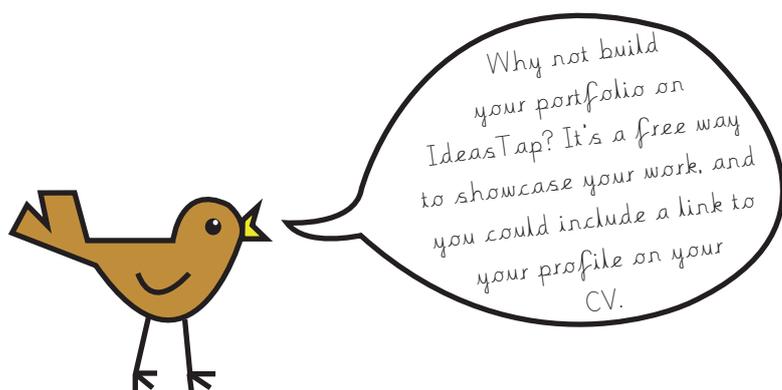
For further guidance on CV writing visit:

http://www.ideastap.com/ideasmag/the-knowledge/CV_Writing_Tips

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/YoungPeople/Workandcareers/Gettingyourfirstjob/DG_066151

<http://www.getintotheatre.org/tips-and-tricks/cv-hints-and-tips>

http://www.careers-creative-living.co.uk/cv_creative



Acting CVs

'Actors CVs are only ever one page long and are typically used in conjunction with a hard copy headshot and cover letter. Increasingly though it's okay to put your photo in the top left corner of the CV as well, just in case the headshot becomes detached from the CV. Usually they follow the format of name, contact details, personal details, training, credits and skills. As your career progresses, the training becomes less important and appears below the skills.

You don't need to put your date of birth on a CV and for an actor it is usual practice to put your playing age, for example 16 to 20 or 20 to 25. You could even put 16 to 25 as long as it's truthful. For credits don't just put the name of the role and play, also include information such as director, producer, production company/venue. Make sure you make it clear what type of credit it is for example stage, short film, music video etc. Lastly, when it comes to skills be honest and never put anything down that you couldn't do in an audition if you were asked!

Will Davies, Casting Director

Sample CV

Marco Petrucco

Contact Details
 Email:
 Phone:

Personal Details
 Location: London Eye Colour: Blue
 Height: 5'11" (181cm) Hair Length: Short
 Playing Age: 16-25 Hair Colour: Light/Mid Brown

Training
 East 15 Acting School, MA Acting (2010-2011)
 Cumbria Institute of the Arts, BA (Hons) Drama and Musical Theatre, (2,1)



Credits

Role	Production	Director
Communications Officer/Singer	Oh What a Lovely War, East 15 Acting School	Andrea Brooks
Halder	Good, Cockpit Theatre	Chris Meads
James	Retrieval, East 15 Acting School	Stephen Hudson
Hamlet	Hamlet, East 15 Acting School	Max Key
Trófimov	The Cherry Orchard, Masterclass Theatre Royal Haymarket	Sheila Hancock
Jeep	Action, East 15 Acting School	Christopher Haydon
Joey	Road, CIA Theatre Company	Robert Shaw Cameron
Trófimov	The Cherry Orchard, East 15 Acting School	Andrea Brooks/Jamie Harper
Tom	We Are Not Your Children, New Stages	Tom Mansfield
Simon	The Caucasian Chalk Circle CIA Theatre Company	Tom Mansfield

Skills:
Accents & Dialects: American-Southern States, Birmingham, Black Country, Midlands-
 (* = native) West*, RP, Italian, General Northern, Somerset
Music & Dance: Tenor
 (* = highly skilled)
Performance: Autocue, In Ear, Commedia Dell'Arte, Living History, Musical Theatre, Role Play, Story Telling, TV Presenting, Stage Combat
Sports: Badminton, Cycling, Football, Horse-riding, Swimming, Tennis
 (* = highly skilled)
Vehicle Licences: Car Driving Licence
Other Skills: Devising, Improvisation, Workshop Leader, CRB Checked

Design CVs

If you're applying for a design-led role, it's vital that you consider the appearance of CV carefully.

Judith Quin, Visual Display Designer for Burberry gives her top tips below:

- It always pays to have two brilliantly designed CVs. Portrait CVs are good for sending out by post and presenting in person, but landscape CVs work best for email as computer screens are landscape in format.
- Include a paragraph to introduce yourself. It doesn't need to be as detailed as a covering letter, just a couple of sentences to act as a preview. Employers receive so many CVs; adding an 'About me' section to yours can add personality and make you stand out from the crowd.
- Applying for a creative company calls for a creative CV so consider designing something special to accompany yours. This could be a beautiful paper object that folds out to show a selection of teaser images from your portfolio, or a product that directs people to your website. Just make sure that the finish is perfect to show that you are willing to go the extra mile.
- Always, always follow up with a phonecall(s). Make that secretary your new best friend!

For further guidance on design CVs visit:

<http://www.cvinside.co.uk/designer-cv-and-cover-letters/>

<http://www.creativepool.co.uk/content.php?url=employee/winningcv.php&mnu=14>

Sample CV



Journalism CVs

Journalism CVs are, in most ways, no different to most professional CVs. Stick to a clean, simple design – Microsoft Word has lots of good templates. Never, ever go over two sides of A4. Don't include a photograph or your age/date of birth. Also, unless you're just starting out, scrap any experience that isn't relevant to the role. Other media careers, such as marketing, advertising and PR are definitely relevant – and experience in your area of journalistic expertise, such as politics or travel – but working in a bar is not.

More importantly, don't lie about your experience. If you did an unpaid internship at a news desk, don't insinuate that you were employed as a reporter there for a month – employers will see straight through that. However, do promote your bylines and always list your computer skills – being familiar with publishing programs is incredibly important.

Mention your different journalism skills – these days, you can rarely get away with just being a writer or just being an editor; if you can do both, tell your prospective employer. Moreover, whatever job you're applying for, sub-editing skills show that you're generally good with words.

If you have enough experience under your belt, stick to work rather than academic references. If you've got decent A-levels and a degree, listing your GCSEs is not necessary.

If you have extra languages, shout about it. Equally, let the employer know if you have a website – but only if it's professional, rather than a messy blog or Tumblr!

Luiza Sauma, Deputy Editor, IdeasTap

Sample CV

43 SHAKESPEARE ROAD • LONDON • XXX XXX
 PHONE XXXXX XXX XXX • E-MAIL JOHN.BROWN@MYEMAIL.COM
 HTTP://WWW.JOHNROWNJOURNO.COM

JOHN BROWN

EXPERIENCE

2009-present **Music Mag**
Assistant Editor at online music magazine

- Overseeing the reviews and news sections.
- Commissioning, editing, writing and sub-editing interviews, news and reviews.
- Managing a team of writers and freelancers.
- Looking after editorial budget.

2008-present **Freelance Journalist**

- Bylines in The Daily News, Men Today, Music World and The Enemy. Sub-editing shifts at The Daily News and Men Today. I specialise in writing about music, fashion, men's interests, film and travel.

2008 **The Daily News – news desk**
Work Experience – two weeks

- Research, reporting and writing.
- Had two news pieces published in the newspaper and online.

2008 **Music World**
Internship at online music magazine – one month

- Research, interviewing and writing.
- Wrote two 2,000-word features for the site – interviews with xxxx and xxx – and several smaller pieces.

2008 **Men Today**
Two-month Internship

- Research, reporting, administration and writing.
- Had several reviews and interviews published online and in the magazine, including a 2,000-word feature interview with the singer xxxx.

2007-2008 **The xxxx Student**
Music Editor of student paper

- Managing team of freelance writers.
- Writing, editing and sub-editing reviews and interviews.
- Won xxx Award for Best Student Paper.

IT SKILLS

Online and offline CMS, Photoshop, basic HTML, InDesign, blogging programs, social media, SEO and Microsoft Office.

EDUCATION

2008-2009 **University of xxxxx**
 Journalism MA (Hons) 2.1

- Winner of XXX prize in feature writing.

2005-2008 **University of xxxxx**
 English BA (Hons) 2.1

1993-2000 **Joe Bloggs college**
 A-levels in English (A), History (A) and Physics (B)

INTERESTS

Going to gigs, playing drums in my band, film, reading books, running, travelling, playing and watching football.

LANGUAGES

Fluent French

Intermediate Spanish

REFERENCES

Karen Smith
 Editor
 Music Mag
 Email
 Phone number

Max Jones
 Deputy News Editor
 The Daily News
 Email
 Phone number