



## Your CV Checklist



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Some estimate that up to 90% of resumes are rejected before they ever fall into the hands of decision-makers. Will your CV survive the cut?

The beginning of a new year is a busy time for recruitment agencies and HR departments, as CVs from hordes of job seekers flood in during the months of January and February. The recruiter and HR representative's role is to sift through these CVs and present only the best candidates to be interviewed by prospective employers.

Use the following checklist to ensure that your CV lands you an interview – and hopefully – the job.

**Does your CV have an eloquent cover letter?** Most recruiters will not even consider a CV that does not include a cover letter. An effective cover letter should be coherent and free from spelling and grammar errors. Furthermore, it should make a good case for why you would be the best fit for the role. Do not write more than a page, and ensure that you have it proofread and edited before sending it through.

**Is your personal information detailed clearly and succinctly?** The first section of your CV should detail your personal information – name, surname, date of birth, ID number, address, contact number, email address and relationship status. The latter only applies if you are married. If you aren't married, you are considered single in the working world. Including your relationship of two months or an "It's Complicated" Facebook status on your CV is not the best way to make an impression. Another consideration is your salary expectation. You may decide to detail your expectations or you could leave this information out, depending on whether the potential employer has requested it. Sometimes detailing your salary expectation may take your CV out of the running immediately or you may end up short-changing yourself by requesting less than what the role offers.



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**Have you offered an accurate reflection of your education and skill set?** After outlining your personal information, you should detail the highlights of your school and tertiary education, as well as any other skills that you may have acquired throughout your career or academic life. The subjects you completed or majored in and any short courses that showcase your diversity will demonstrate to an employer that you have the ability to work hard and realise your goals. Do not lie or stretch the truth when it comes to your education, as this information can be verified, and you may risk tarnishing your reputation in an industry at large.

**Is your employment history outlined with references?** Once you have detailed your education, you should list your employment history. For each employer that you have worked for, provide the name of the business and the timeframe that you worked there, for instance, April 2011 to December 2012. Underneath each employer, list the core responsibilities that you undertook while at the company. It is also wise to include your reason for leaving, as this will help any potential employer understand your reasons for making any career moves. For every employer who you have worked for, include a reference, either in the form of a letter or contact numbers. It is standard practice to include at least three references on your CV.

**Have you highlighted industry-specific skills?** Any skills that you have acquired over the years that may be relevant within the industry that you are applying are worth highlighting. For instance, if you are applying for a writing job and you have basic Photoshop or HTML skills, this would be seen as proficiencies that complement a writing role.

**Is your CV no longer than three pages?** Including a cover letter, your CV should be no longer than three pages. If you include a longer CV, you run the risk of it being cut immediately. Recruiters have to sift through hundreds of CVs, and there is only so much time that they can dedicate to reading each application. Keep it short and punchy.

**Does your CV look professional?** Fancy fonts and colourful highlighting will not do you any favours. Ensure that your CV is neatly formatted and uses an unobtrusive font. The information you include should speak for itself. An excess of colour or imagery can be seen as desperation.



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If you feel as though you lack skills to detail on your CV, you should look to get involved in community or side-line projects, or take part-time courses. The more diversity you can showcase, the better. The 21<sup>st</sup>-century world of work has changed considerably from that of 10 years ago. Employers are looking for multi-talented individuals who can be used in a number of different roles. Take the time to research the current job market and pursue skills and opportunities that are relevant to your industry. Make sure that your CV checks all the right boxes so that next time it makes the cut.

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Resource documents sourced and collated in collaboration with:  
RDLB Digital Design House  
Personal & Corporate Branding Solutions  
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