



Even the best CV in the world can be let down by poor presentation...

A CV has to be both well written and presented professionally in order to catch a recruiter's eye. And although your formatting may change depending on your industry, there are a few simple rules which you should always follow – and could dramatically increase your chances of success.

We've already covered some excellent CV layout examples, but here's our list of CV layout dos and don'ts:



CV layout dos

Keep it short and sweet. The most effective CVs aren't just informative, they're also concise. Try and get straight to the most pertinent points, and ideally take up no more than two sides of A4.

Choose a professional font. A professional font ensures that your CV can be easily read and simply scanned. Remember: Comic Sans is not your friend.

Present things in a logical order. Use sufficient spacing, clear section headings (e.g. work experience, education) and a reverse chronological order to keep things clear and easily legible. And always make sure you highlight your most recent achievements.

Play to your strengths. Format your CV to maximise the impact of your application. For example, if you feel a lack of experience is holding you back, lead with education instead. As long as you can relate it back to the role in question, how you order the sections is up to you.

Use bullet points. They're a great way to draw attention to any key facts or relevant information, allowing a hiring manager to skim the document easily and find your significant achievements without having to wade through the hyperbole.

Other things to do: Include contact details, keep email address professional (madforit33@email.com does not count), maintain consistent formatting, ask someone to check for common spelling and grammar mistakes.



CV layout don'ts

Be afraid of white space. Don't fear the gaps. Even if you think your CV looks quite bare, as long as you've included all the relevant information and applicable, quantifiable achievements, you needn't worry. Remember: Sometimes less is more.

Try to include too much. The ideal CV should be a checklist of all of your accomplishments. It should not be your life story. Tailoring your CV to the role is a great way to skim some of the fat and keep all waffle to a minimum.

Include irrelevant information. Before including any points in your application, ask the same question: will it help you get the role. If the answer is no, take it out. **Hobbies and interests** are a great example. If they don't help you stand out, don't waste valuable space.

Forget your cover letter. Although it is often seen as a different entity all together, your **cover letter** is attached to your CV and both are vital in helping you clinch the right role. Utilise yours properly, and your CV becomes the perfect document to reinforce your talent. Oh, they didn't say include one? Still do. Every extra opportunity to sell yourself should be taken.

Experiment with size. You may think that changing font size is a great way to fit your CV onto two pages. But whether you're using large font to make your application seem longer or you're using smaller font to make sure everything fits, you're not fooling anyone. See also, margin size.

Other things not to do: Use crazy colours, use crazy fonts, include unnecessary references, include a selfie.