

# Gearing up for Grad School: Your Résumé or CV

Although not all grad schools will request that you submit a résumé or curriculum vitae (CV) with your application, many will. It is important to know what to include, what not to include, and how long the document should be.

A standard job-seeking résumé will not work for a grad school application, nor will a standard one-page academic résumé. Given the focus of graduate school on academic work, it is recommended that you create a multi-page CV with a strong focus on your academic background, achievements, and strengths. You will also include information on your most recent employment history, your activities, and your personal interests, but the focus of the CV should be academic information relevant to the program to which you are applying.

There are a number of sections your CV will include:

- **Contact Information**

Includes your name, address, phone number, and email. *Salutations* (Mr., Mrs., Ms.) are not necessary unless they denote a professional title (such as Dr., or Esq.). Your *email address* should be professional (no [poohbear123@mailservice.com](mailto:poohbear123@mailservice.com)); keep it simple and recognizable, such as [firstname.lastname@mailservice.com](mailto:firstname.lastname@mailservice.com). Your *phone number* should go directly to you. Your *address* should be your current residence, where you can receive mail in a timely fashion.

- **Educational Background**

Indicate the institutions you have attended, the years of attendance, and the degree conferred. If you have not graduated from your most recent institution, list your major and expected date of completion. You do not need to list GPA, standardized test information, or honors and awards (these last two will be listed in their own section).

- **Academic Achievements**

Here, you will list any honors, awards, and substantial papers (for example, your college thesis) that you have written but which have not been *formally* published. For *honors and awards*, list the year given, the name of the prize, and include a brief explanation of the criteria used to award it. Do not assume schools will be familiar with all academic honors and awards—there are hundreds. It is your responsibility to provide them with the necessary information. For *substantial academic papers*, include the year written, the title of the work, and a brief description of the content.

- **Teaching Experience**

If you already have teaching experience under your belt, make sure to list it here. List the course taught, the years taught, the name of your supervising professor, and the institution at which you taught. List whether you created the curriculum, whether you were the only instructor or if it was co-taught, and the number of students in your class.

Do not worry if, as an undergrad, you do not have any teaching experience. You are not expected to have any. However, make sure to highlight it if you do.

- **Research Experience**

List any formal research experience you have had working under a faculty member. List the institutions at which the research was conducted, the dates during which it was conducted, the topics researched, and any resulting papers or publication.

- **Grants Awarded**

Although unlikely that undergraduates will have information to include in this section, if you have been awarded any grants list the year granted, the dollar amount, the granting institution, and the purpose of the funds.

- **Publications**

List any publications in which you have been published in a research capacity relevant to the field in which you are now seeking a degree. Include the date, name of the publication, name of the piece, and description of the contents.

- **Professional Experience Outside of Academia**

Here you will list your employment history. Typically, you will want to go back as far as five years, although some schools may require a longer time period. Be sure to list the name of the employer, location, position you held, dates of employment, and a brief description of your duties and responsibilities. Since this is not the primary concern of your CV, the description does not need to be extensive.

- **Professional Affiliations**

List any groups or professional societies with which you are affiliated, your date of initial affiliation, and any administrative or leadership positions held.

- **References**

Although a CV typically requires the inclusion of this information, since you will be submitting letters of recommendation with your application it may not be necessary for you to add this section. It is up to your own discretion.

How should all this information be compiled? Here are a few formatting guidelines:

- **There is no required or limited length to the CV.** It typically will run between 3-5 pages. Anywhere within this range is acceptable. If your CV is only 2 pages but includes all relevant information, that is fine as well.
- **Don't feel that you need to include something for all the categories listed above.** Include information only for the ones which apply to you. If one does not apply, simply leave it out.
- **All citations should be either in MLA or APA format** (choose that which is either required or preferred in the application or your field of study). Make this formatting consistent throughout.

- **Keep margins of 1" all around the document, and keep the font to 12pt.** This will make the document easy to read.
- **Left-align the document.** The eye naturally travels down the left side of a page when reading a document of this sort—make it easy for your readers to visually scan your CV.

As a final note, make sure to have at least one person read your CV before you consider it “final.” Having a second, third, even fourth pair of eyes taking a look at your materials will help—and they may remember something about you that you didn’t include (but should have!).