



Student or Graduate CV format and Alternative CV format

You might consider using a student or graduate CV if:

- you're still at school, college or university.
- you've recently finished a full-time course.

In a student or graduate CV you highlight your qualifications first. If you've been in full-time education most of your life your qualifications will probably be your main achievement. If you don't have a lot of work experience, try to make your course work relevant to the skills you'd use in job. For example, you probably use time management, research and IT skills every day. You may also be able to say you're a fast learner, and are up to date with the latest equipment and techniques in your field.

If you went back to college or university as an older learner and have relevant work experience or skills from past jobs, you might want to highlight these ahead of your recent qualifications.

What is an Alternative CV format?

An Alternative CV uses an original and eye-catching format or clever wording to show off your creativity. You could consider using this approach if you apply for creative jobs such as graphic designer or advertising executive.

It's impossible to summarise what usually goes into an Alternative CV because all of them are original and different. But examples are: presenting your CV as an advert, maybe if you're going for a job in advertising; presenting your CV details in a story format, if you're applying for a creative writing job; printing your CV on decorative paper, if you're applying for a job in visual design.

If you're applying online and you want to create an impressive visual effect you could make use of technologies such as Flash animation or video. But bear in mind that some employers might not have the software to view this content. It could also take some users a while to download. You could get around this by also including a plain text version.

What are the pros and cons?

You might like to use an Alternative CV if:

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- you're applying for a job needing visual or written creativity and you want to show off your originality.
- you know the person you're applying to and you're sure they'll respond well to an original approach.

This CV format might not suit you if:

- you're applying for a management job
- your CV will go to the human resources department and not a person on the creative team
- you're applying for a job that's not in the creative industries.

Use your judgement when thinking about using an Alternative CV format. If you're in any doubt about whether the employer will respond well to this format, it might be wise to play it safe with a 'normal' CV.

As with all CVs, the most important thing is you get across the information clearly and prove you can do the job. If a complicated design gets in the way of this message, it's probably best to stick to a more traditional format.

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