

JOB SEARCH CHEAT SHEET



the career plan

Tailored CV's

One CV won't fit every job, but you don't need to start from scratch each time. Create one strong master CV with a clear skills section and a short, focused summary. These two areas are the easiest to adapt for different roles. Save tailored versions and build a small CV bank you can reuse. Each application should have small, intentional edits not a brand-new CV every time.

Stop Repetition

Create a word document or notes app with strengths, achievements, motivations, and examples of your impact. These can be copied into online application forms and lightly edited to fit each question. It saves time and keeps your messaging consistent across multiple applications.

Beat AI

AI recognises AI, so if you rely on ChatGPT to write your CV or application answers, you risk being filtered out before a human ever sees your application. Imagine waiting weeks for a response when you never stood a chance. Use AI to brainstorm, then rewrite everything in your own words. Go one step further and mirror the language and tone used in the job advert it makes it easier for screening tools to recognise you as a strong match.

Be Strategic

List your highest qualification, but remember it isn't always an advantage. For some roles, a higher-level degree can make employers assume you're overqualified or likely to move on quickly. That's why you should keep different versions of your CV and choose the one that best matches the level of the job you're applying for. Show the education that supports this role, not every qualification you've ever earned.

Digital footprint

Have you ever googled yourself? If an employer did what would come up? Old social media posts? Embarrassing pics? Details of a dispute with a former employer - audit your online presence (and privacy settings!) to make sure employers see only what you want them to.

Expand your search

Don't rely on one job board. Use industry-specific sites, company career pages, and professional networks to find better-matched roles.

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Personal Details

UK guidance is clear: you should list your name, phone number, and email, and you may include your general location but age, date of birth, marital status, NI number, full address, or any other sensitive information can trigger unconscious bias and are not required at application stage. It's also completely acceptable to use an initial for your first name (e.g., J. Smith) if you want to reduce gender bias.

Trial V. Error

Don't keep reusing the same CV if it isn't working. If you've sent a good number of applications and you're getting no interviews, stop. Review your CV, tweak your approach, or get guidance. A CV that isn't performing won't magically start working. Small, strategic changes can save you weeks of wasted effort.

UK Standard

Modern UK CV's are minimalistic, easy to skim and should only include the most relevant details. They must be no longer than 2 pages (may be cut off if you go over so why bother!) include your personal details, your key skills, experience and education. Leave out the hobbies unless relevant and no need for "references on request" clean simple and impactful is the goal.

Keep it relevant

When it comes to your employment history the rule is 10 years or your most relevant. CV's are not a biography and should be achievement focused. There is also a chance for age bias if your history goes back far or you could simply be wasting space including every little detail when you should be focused on highlighting the skills and experience relevant to the job you are applying for.

10 Second Rule

Once your CV reaches a human employee they skim your CV for just seconds - usually around nine. If you skim a page for ten seconds, you'll see how little actually registers. This is why your most relevant skills and experience must stand out instantly. Front-load what matters. Make it impossible to miss.

For More help



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