

# How do CV's differ from country to country?

For any questions, don't hesitate to contact Student Career Services at [tisem.studentcareerservices@tilburguniversity.edu](mailto:tisem.studentcareerservices@tilburguniversity.edu)



COUNTRY	NO. OF PAGES	PHOTO	PERSONAL DETAILS	PERSONAL SUMMARY	EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND	WORK EXPERIENCE	CV OR RESUME
Holland & Belgium	1-2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (after education)	CV
Scandinavia	1-2	Yes	No	Yes	Yes (after work experience)	Yes	CV
Germany	1-2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (after education)	Resume
United Kingdom	1-2	No	No	Yes / No (depending on type of company)	Yes (after work experience)	Yes	CV
France	1-2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (after work experience)	Yes	CV
Italy	1-2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (after work experience)	Yes	CV
Spain, Greece & Portugal	1-2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (after work experience)	Yes	CV
United States	1	No	No	No	College and graduate degrees only (after work experience)	Yes	Resume
Australia	2	No	Yes	No	Yes (after work experience)	Yes	Resume
Japan	2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (after education)	Resume
China	2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (after education)	Resume
Singapore	2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (after work experience)	Yes	Resume

## FORMAT & WRITING STYLE

The format of the CV should be *tailored* to the job or internship you are applying for. For example, within finance a more plain format is generally expected, while within marketing a more creative format is generally appreciated. Via the website [canva.com](https://www.canva.com) you can find multiple CV formats that you can use for free.

The writing style of a CV should, in general, be formal.

However, the format and writing style of the CV differ from country to country. It is therefore very important to do more research yourself when you are applying for an internship or job abroad. On the next page, we mention some of these deviations per country.

## What should your CV look like if you want to work or do an internship abroad?

There is no unambiguous answer to that question, because it all depends on what your intentions are with your work abroad, on the company, and on the country you are applying in. There are quite a few differences between countries as you have seen on the previous page. Below, we will discuss a number of these countries in more detail. Just keep in mind that the tips presented below are examples. If you are applying for a job or internship abroad, you should do more research on the application process of the specific country yourself.



### Holland & Belgium

- **A professional photo at the upper part of the CV:** many European firms consider a CV or job application to be more appealing with a professional pic.
- **Arrange your CV in reverse chronological order:** education comes first, followed by qualifications, and lastly work experience. Once you gain more work experience, you should put work experience above education.
- **CV length of 1-2 pages.**
- **Writing style and format (Holland):** personal and formal. You can find an example of a Dutch CV format on the [Tilburg University Career Portal](#).



### Scandinavia

- **A professional photo at the upper part of the CV:** many European firms consider a CV or job application to be more appealing with a professional pic.
- **Arrange your CV in reverse chronological order:** the relevant and recent work experiences come at the top, followed by qualifications, and lastly education.
- **CV length of 1-2 pages.**



### Germany

- **Use a simple format for the resume:** apart from a photo, most firms in Germany require a 2-page application document. Regarding work experience, it is important to state the month and year. In addition, an extensive explanation is expected for a gap in a resume.
- **Education and language skills are important:** you must write your school credentials in detail and place them before work experiences. They expect copies of diplomas, if available a copy of your thesis, your publications, your references, etc. This means that many attachments are expected.
- **Arrange your CV in reverse chronological order:** education comes first, followed by qualifications and then work experience.
- **CV length of 2 pages.**
- **Add a date and signature at the bottom.**



### United Kingdom

- **Do not use a photo or personal information:** unlike its neighbours in Europe, many firms in the UK prefer a different resume writing format. They discourage the inclusion of photos and personal information besides contact information.
- **Arrange your CV in reverse chronological order:** the relevant and recent work experiences come at the top, followed by qualifications, and lastly education.
- **CV length of 1-2 pages.**
- **Writing style and format:** plain and formal.



### France

- **Use a good title at the top of the CV:** the title should immediately stand out when a recruiter takes your application from the pile.
- **Apply in French:** even if it is an international company or a company that is originally Dutch, it is expected that you apply in French.
- **Competences are important:** keep this in mind in both the CV and your interview. Use examples to support what you have achieved.
- **Arrange your CV in reverse chronological order and arrange it functionally (activities arranged schematically):** for each application you make an inventory of what is relevant for the position, so that you can adapt your CV to your vacancy.
- **CV length of 2 pages**
- **The style of the CV is short and direct**
- **Emphasize your language skills:** French often do not speak other languages, so you can use this to your advantage.
- **Add personal data:** mention information such as name, address, telephone number (landline and mobile), place of birth, and email address. Indicate your age instead of your date of birth.
- **In France, a so-called 'Projet Professionnel' is often added:** you describe the career you would most like to make. Describe the position, responsibilities and your own wishes and qualities.
- **Writing style and format:** short and direct.



### Spain, Greece & Portugal

- **A professional photo at the upper part of the CV:** many European firms consider a CV or job application to be more appealing with a professional pic.
- **Arrange your CV in reverse chronological order:** the relevant and recent work experiences come at the top, followed by qualifications, and lastly education.
- **CV length of 1-2 pages.**



### Italy

- **If you're able to speak Italian, then write the CV in Italian. Also, always indicate your level of Italian:** when writing the resume in Italian, use the formal third person "lei" form of "you" rather than the informal "tu" when you address the recruiter directly.
- **Use your name as the title header.**
- **Keep your CV to the point:** cut out any extraneous information that doesn't apply to the role you're targeting. Mark each section clearly out. Put contact information, such as your phone number, email address, and your name on your CV. Recruiters in Italy also want to see your date of birth.
- **Work experience is the most important element:** it is becoming more common (thanks to services like LinkedIn) to mark a few key skills on the CV, but this is not totally essential.
- **Do not add hobbies and interests:** while the recruiter will be drawn to your personal traits such as your reliability or interpersonal skills, your hobbies and interests will not be expected from an Italian hiring manager. Instead, focus on your talents, personal goals and any additional details regarding your ability to relocate or travel for work.
- **Add your grade or level when listing degree achievements:** this is common practice in Italy. It is often assumed that candidates who do not state their exact grade, didn't achieve high grades.
- **Arrange your CV in chronological order:** most hiring managers in Italy prefer a standard chronological resume.
- **CV length of maximum 2 pages.**



### United States

- **Use a concise format:** In America, time stands for money and the culture is results-oriented. It is not customary to include personal data such as date of birth or marital status in your resume. The resume may be more narrative than you're used to, but don't use the word "I". Briefly describe personal achievements.
- **Do not use a photo:** unless you are applying for a modelling job.
- **When writing your educational details, include only your university and graduate school degrees:** also send copies of your diplomas.
- **CV length of 1 page.**



### Australia

- **Do not use a photo.**
- **CV length of maximum 2 pages.**
- **Highlight your studies and previous training:** this attracts employers.
- **Indicate your 'Career Objective' after your contact details:** this is a brief description of your career goals and how you expect to achieve them. In Australia, this is hugely important: they are looking for people who can achieve the goals in the job in question.
- **Put your 'Employment Skills' on your resume:** which skills have you developed that are relevant to the job?
- **Focus on spelling:** make sure you use Australian English or English UK to avoid misspellings in your resume.



### China

- **Personal information is important:** highlight a professional photo of you on the top right corner of your resume.
- **Educational info is important:** place it before your work experiences section.
- **Writing style and format:** persuasive.



### Japan

- **Format - Handwrite your resume:** many Japanese firms still prefer a handwritten resume. Employers believe that handwritten resumes are more personal and direct and reflect a person's personality and character.
- **Use the "Rirekisho" format:** this is the standard resume format in Japan. Don't exaggerate, stick to the facts. On the first page you put your details (including age, nationality and sex), your qualities (in less than 3 lines) and your education with as much information as possible. On the second page your work history with as much information as possible. Japanese like references, but make sure that the people you mention have known you for at least 2 years and that their details are up to date. (References on request is a phrase that is also accepted).
- **Use a passport type photo.**
- **CV length of 2 pages is ideal.**



### Singapore

- **Start your resume with your name and contact details.**
- **Write a well-crafted job objective:** followed by a summary of your qualifications. Likewise, you must highlight your professional skills together with your career fears.