



Writing a Curriculum Vitae (CV)

Information accessible online by logging into Careers in Medicine (<http://www.aamc.org/students/cim/>).

- Click on "Getting into Residency"
- Click on "Writing a Curriculum Vitae (CV)"

The first of many supporting documents you'll need for the residency application process is a curriculum vitae (CV). A CV is concise summary of relevant information about your background and accomplishments, particularly relating to your academic and work experience. Since much of the application process is electronic, the use of a CV to apply to programs is limited. The ERAS system will generate a CV for you automatically, but the format is very basic. While you may not need to send a separate CV with your applications, it's helpful to have one prepared anyway. Most of the information you include on a CV will also be required for the your residency application - having it all in one place on a CV will make writing your application and personal statement easier. Your school may also request a CV to aid in the preparation of your Medical School Performance Evaluation (MSPE). Lastly, you should provide a CV to faculty members who will write your letters of recommendation.

Creating a CV takes time, but it's a tool you'll use throughout your professional life. You'll need to present complete but succinct information that will provide an overview of your qualifications. A CV is a living document that represents you -- properly constructed and with periodic updates, the CV you develop now can be used throughout your career.

CV Components

When considering information to include in your CV, ask yourself

- Does this help? Will this piece of information help select me for a residency interview?
- If I were reading this for the first time and without knowledge of myself as an applicant, would this information be useful?

If you answer "no" to either of these questions, leave the information out. If you're unsure, consult your advisor and/or a specialty contact for advice. The basic categories your CV should contain are listed below. Not all of these elements may be relevant to you, so choose what will work best for your background and experience.

Contact and Personal Information - Give your formal legal name (no nicknames) and your complete and current contact information. Make sure you can be reached easily at the address, e-mail, and phone numbers you list. Include a pager number or cell phone, if appropriate.

You can include other personal information such as birth date, marital status, or names/ages of children but these are optional. Only include them if they'll help your candidacy. For example, if you're applying



for residency in the town where your spouse is located or is from, including that information may be helpful to establish ties and commitment to a community. While federal law prohibits employers from discriminating on the basis of age, sex, religion, national origin, and disability status, providing personal information may invite bias so it's up to you whether or not you choose to provide it. You may elect to include it if you feel it's pertinent to your candidacy for the position.

Education - List all colleges/universities you have attended with the most recent first. Include name and location of institution, degree sought or completed, and the date of completion (or expected completion), and major/minor field of study. Include medical school, graduate, and undergraduate education. If you don't have an Honors section on your CV, you may include that information here. If you completed a thesis or dissertation as part of one of your degree programs, you may wish to add this distinction along with the title of the paper, particularly if it's relevant to health care or science.

As you move forward in your professional life, you will add further achievements including postgraduate training (residencies and fellowships), academic appointments and certification and licensure.

Honors and Awards - Include any awards and/or scholarships received during medical school (election to AOA, biochemistry prize, etc.) If you did well in medical school or on the boards, list your honors and board scores. Include only the most important awards and scholarships from undergraduate or other programs. If you have numerous items, you may want to separate them into subsections: undergraduate and medical school. Keep in mind how relevant and useful each item will be and cut any that may not be valued by the reader.

Work Experience - List your work experience in reverse chronological order. List all major or medically related work experiences. Include position title, name of employer, location, and dates. For medically related work, add a brief description of your responsibilities, achievements, and competencies gained. Be specific, skill-focused, and relevant. Include volunteer experience while in medical school and any leadership experiences. If there are gaps of time in your history, make sure to include ANY work experience, medical or non-medical, which accounts for your time out of school (e.g. time between undergraduate studies and medical school).

Research - Sentence or title describing research. Include mentor (including professional title), location and dates. Include your title, if applicable; e.g., research assistant, fellow.

Professional Memberships - List any professional organizations of which you are a member (dates optional). Include any leadership positions you may have held. This section may be combined or redefined to include student organization involvement.

Presentations - Include any research, professional, or poster presentations conducted at conferences, lectures, symposiums, specialty association meetings, etc. List the title of the presentation, authors, audience, and any other relevant details. This section may be easily combined with publications to create a single, more attractive section.



Hobbies and Outside Interests - Include a list of your outside interests or extracurricular activities. You may be surprised at how often you will be asked about these items - interviewers frequently use them as a means to keep an interview conversational so be prepared to talk about any hobby or interest that you put here. This section is optional and should be brief.

Formatting and Production

You want your CV to have a clean, distinctive appearance that attracts attention. The final product should be well organized, look professional and be easy to read. Use the following tips for formatting and production:

- Keep margins at 1 inch.
- One-to-two pages is standard length at this point in your career, but don't reduce the font size, change your margins, or leave important info out just to shorten it.
- 11 or 12 point font is preferable.
- Stick with one font, or two similar fonts (one for headings, the other for everything else) - use only conservative, common fonts.
- Headings should be consistent in style, size, and formatting.
- Use bold, italics, capitalization, and bullets to organize your CV - but use sparingly.
- Check text for misspellings and poor grammar - have someone help you proofread.
- Keep sentences short and succinct while using active verbs and vivid, precise language.

Sample CV's

Your student affairs office or advisor may have a number of sample CV's to assist you in writing. Here are some samples to get you started.

[Sample CV #1](#)

[Sample CV #2](#)

[Sample CV #3](#)

[Sample CV #4](#)

[Sample CV #5](#)

CV samples adapted and used with permission from the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine, and the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston.

Preparing your CV should help in your next important task, [Writing a Personal Statement](#)