

Writing a Curriculum Vitae 101

A curriculum vitae (CV) summarizes your experiences and accomplishments as it relates to your academic and relevant work experience. You'll likely need it for scholarships, away rotations, and residency applications. It will showcase your educational, volunteer, research, and clinical experiences in addition to any honors and awards you received.

Pro tip: It's always a good idea to keep a running list of your medical school experiences and update it throughout your time as a student, so that by the time you need it for something, you aren't trying to remember everything you've done over the past several years.

What's included in a CV?

Before we get into the commonly seen categories, consider the following questions suggested by the AAMC when debating whether or not to include information:

- *Does this particular piece of information help explain who I am and what I've accomplished?*
- *Will this piece of information encourage programs to select me?*
- *If I were reading this for the first time and without knowledge of myself as an applicant, would this information be useful?*

If you answered, NO, to any of the questions, leave the information out. If you are unsure, consult your Advisors and Specialty Advisors for advice.

Here are some commonly seen categories for CVs, though not all of them may apply to you. Choose what best fits your experiences and include those categories. Contact information and Education come first since that applies to everyone, the rest you can reorder to show your best side.

Pro Tip: Always list the most recent experience first, CVs are chronological.

Contact Information

At the very least, include your email. You do not have to include your full contact information. You should be easily reachable for any contact information you choose to provide.

Education

Include all colleges and universities attended for medical, graduate, and undergraduate education.

Language

If you speak multiple languages, include your proficiencies for reading, written, and spoken language.

Honors and Awards

Include any awards and scholarships received in medical school. This also includes letters of distinction, clerkship honors, and the Medical Student Research Fellowship. For awards prior to medical school, only include the most important ones. Remember the three questions to consider when adding information!

Clinical Service

Include any clinical care you provided through your undergraduate years. This does not include curricular requirements, but experiences outside of what is required to graduate.

Research

Include medical and science relevant research projects. Describe the project with a sentence and include the research mentor's name, location/organization of project, and your title. If you didn't have an official title, use a generic title like "Medical Student Researcher." If you choose to include details about your research, list your major responsibilities in bullet points (i.e. "Analyzed data set for ABC" or "Created survey for XYZ"). Any publications or presentations should just be cited in "Publications" and "Presentations" sections, no need to double-dip.

Local and National Service

"Local and National Service" is just a fancy term for "Community Service." Some students may even add "International" if it's relevant. Include the most important and long-term activities from medical school through undergrad. Short-term and less significant experiences may be helpful, but be prepared to talk about them in an interview. When in doubt, include it on the CV and let your Advisor review it.

Institutional Service

Include student organizations and UC Davis specific initiatives (admissions committees, CEP representatives, etc.).

Teaching Service

If you were a tutor, Doctoring facilitator, or a TA include that here.

Publications

Cite published articles you have authored. If your work has been accepted but not published yet, include "in press" and omit the publication year. If your work has been submitted but not accepted, it's *not common* to include it on the CV. If you really want to add it, be truthful and say "submitted" with the date of submission. If your submission was rejected, do not include it.

Presentations

Include research, professional, and poster presentations at conferences, lectures, symposiums, and specialty association meetings.

Work Experience

Include medically relevant employment of substantial length here. For example, if you were a scribe for one year, you'd probably put that under clinical service. But if you worked in healthcare for 5 years, or had a long employment between degrees, that's pretty significant. Include that in your work experience.

Professional Memberships

List any professional organizations you are a part of and any leadership positions held in them.

Leadership

Few students include this section on their CV, though it is one way to pull your significant leadership roles from your other categories to highlight experiences you feel are more important because of your leadership role. Not every leadership position has to go into this section, only ones that you wish to highlight.

Licensure and Certifications

Aside from CPR, include if you have other medically relevant licenses or certifications (i.e. you were a social worker, nurse, or counselor)

Interests

List outside interests or extracurricular activities as interviewers may ask about these things to keep things conversational. Be prepared to discuss anything you put here!

Formatting

- Use 11-12 point font, and keep the font type conservative
- There's no expected number of pages. A CV is as long as it needs to be to accurately share information about your experiences
- Keep style consistent throughout in formatting headings, titles, etc.
- Use bold, italics, capitalization, and bullets to organize your CV
- Start with action verbs and use precise and concise language. A general rule of thumb is to keep details to 3 bullet points, and 1-2 lines per bullet point

Things to keep in mind

- Accurately represent your skills and qualifications. You are responsible for presenting a truthful and accurate CV.
- Proofread it! Have your advisor(s) proofread it! Have your friends proofread it!
- There is overlap between categories. Choose the best category for each experience. Don't double-dip.
- It's OK to include some undergraduate activities and honors, particularly those that were highly selective or highlight relevant skills or qualifications.
- If you are unsure about something talk to an Advisor or Specialty Advisor.