

A CV for a Teenager

The summer is approaching and you have just finished your exams. You hope you will be successful, and eventually pass them and go to university. Getting a job might not be easy, but, armed with a degree, you should have a better chance.

Your wistful thoughts fade away, and you realise summer is approaching and you've got virtually no money. Pocket money isn't enough; you want to enjoy your summer! You need a job. Smartly dressed, hair neatly combed, you walk, head held high, into your local supermarket and ask a supervisor if there are any jobs. She tells you that, yes, there might be - just leave your CV with her and she'll be in touch. CV?

Yes, even teenagers of 16 and 17 need a Curriculum Vitae these days. The literal meaning of curriculum vitae is 'course of life'. At 17, you really haven't had much course of life at all, have you? CVs tend to be filled with two pages of skills, achievements, previous jobs and the like. At 17, yours could be fairly empty.

What Should Teenagers Put on Their CV?

Let's be clear, employers are not going to expect a long history of jobs from a 17-year-old. What they will be looking for is some indication that they are going to get someone who is keen, sensible, likely to carry out the tasks they're set, and not cause more trouble than they're worth!

A CV is a chance to promote yourself as a person someone else would like to employ. Many teenagers are a little reluctant when it comes to promoting themselves, but that's what you have to do.

Questions like: "What can you do?", "What do you like to do?", "Where do you like to go?" are likely to feel like prying to them and be met with answers like: "Nothing", "Dunno" or "Nowhere".

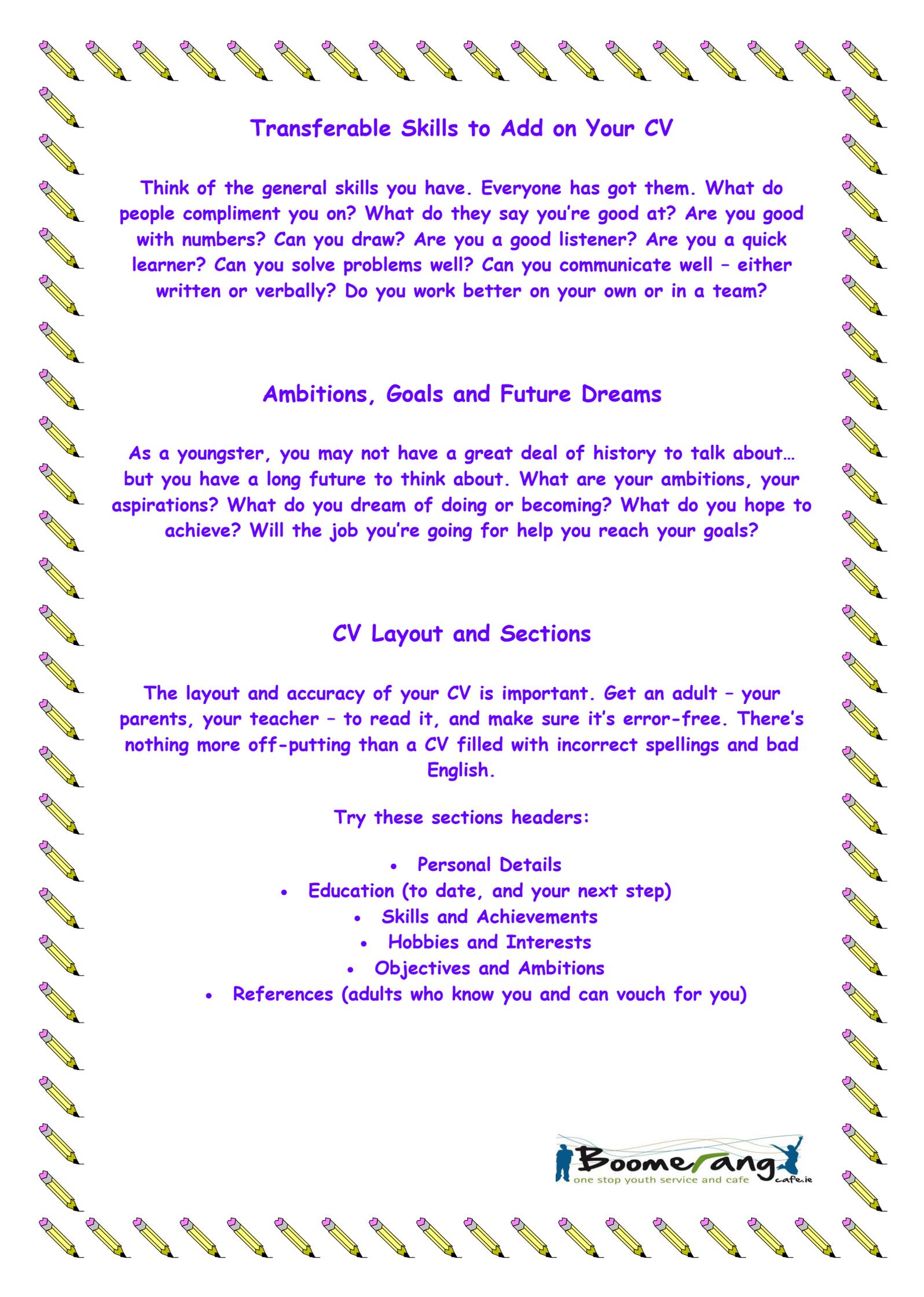
So what can a teenager say in a CV?



Have a think about these points:

- **What do you enjoy doing at school?** No, not nothing! If you don't have a favourite subject, then it's usually easiest to enjoy what you are good at. So what's your best subject? Art, PE? No problem. "I'm interested in art"; "I enjoy taking part in sport". If you like geography, say so.
- **What clubs are you a member of at school?** The answer to this may indeed be none. However, have you ever been in a club at school? Have you ever been on a committee (e.g. the Prom committee)? Have you been a prefect, or a monitor of some sort?
- **What trips have you been on?** Calais, Isle of Wight, London, the local museum, the nearest Roman villa? Most school children go on a trip or two while at school. Get them written down.
- **What do you enjoy doing outside of school?** Not nothing! How about: playing football, playing computer games, watching Eastenders, socialising with your mates. Some of these are a good start point. Translate into: member of the school/local football team; interested in computers; enjoy TV drama; member of local youth club. Only ever tell the truth however; if you're not a member of a club, don't say you are.
- **Where have you been with your family?** Have you been on holiday abroad? If so, what did you find interesting (apart from the sun and the pool!)? You've probably been on days out with your family. Where did you go? What did you enjoy?

The point is to try and draw out things from your experiences that may be of interest to a potential employer. No, it's true: they're not particularly interested that you've been to the Isle of Wight. However, they are keen to see that it was of some interest to you, and what you enjoyed and what you learnt. That may be a person they could use in their business.



Transferable Skills to Add on Your CV

Think of the general skills you have. Everyone has got them. What do people compliment you on? What do they say you're good at? Are you good with numbers? Can you draw? Are you a good listener? Are you a quick learner? Can you solve problems well? Can you communicate well - either written or verbally? Do you work better on your own or in a team?

Ambitions, Goals and Future Dreams

As a youngster, you may not have a great deal of history to talk about... but you have a long future to think about. What are your ambitions, your aspirations? What do you dream of doing or becoming? What do you hope to achieve? Will the job you're going for help you reach your goals?

CV Layout and Sections

The layout and accuracy of your CV is important. Get an adult - your parents, your teacher - to read it, and make sure it's error-free. There's nothing more off-putting than a CV filled with incorrect spellings and bad English.

Try these sections headers:

- Personal Details
- Education (to date, and your next step)
 - Skills and Achievements
 - Hobbies and Interests
 - Objectives and Ambitions
- References (adults who know you and can vouch for you)