

How to Write an Artist's CV in 10 Steps

1. Personal details.

- Often, more established artists will keep it simple. This is because their CV is usually referenced as a biography rather than a resume.

Damian Hirst (b. 1965, UK)

- However, you can include contact information if you are sending out your CV to galleries in the hope that they will reply:

Damian Hirst, (b. 1965, UK)

info@damianhirst.com | <http://www.damianhirst.com> | 604.555.1234

- Either of these formats is appropriate for an artist's CV. Just keep in mind that you should only include your website if it directly relates to your artistic practice.

2. Education.

- Generally speaking, this section of a CV relates to institutional education specifically in the field of visual arts. If you do have post-secondary education in the arts field, include the school(s), the year(s) that you graduated, and the degree(s):

Swansea College of Art, UWTSD, BA hons Photojournalism & Documentary Photography 2019

- The only thing to note is that generally you should **not** put down any other type of education (high school graduation, degree in business management), unless it very directly relates to the artwork that you make. Leaving this section off of your CV is perfectly acceptable.

3. Exhibitions

- Beginning with your most recent, you should list your exhibitions in a manner similar to this:

2011 *Title of Show*, Museum of Modern Art, NY

2010 *I've been showing a lot lately*, Galerie Espace, Montréal

- If you have a large number of exhibitions, you can split them into two or more categories: solo exhibitions, group exhibitions, and even duo exhibitions. This helps define in what capacity your work was shown (you don't want to undersell your *solo* show at Tate Modern.)
- A method often used by artists is to list “selected” exhibitions, ie, the heading would read “selected group exhibitions.
- If you don't have a lot of exhibitions, you are assuring the reader that they are not looking at a short list, but rather your most relevant history.

4. Bibliography

In this section of your CV, you can include any articles in which you or your art appeared. If it is an article, it should include the author, title, publication, volume, publication date, and page number:

- Coupland, Douglas: “Why I Love This Artwork”, Canadian Art Magazine, vol. 12, February 2011, p. 55-60

If your work appeared on the cover of a publication, you can format your information like this:

- Canadian Art Magazine, Cover, vol. 12, February 2011

If writing about your artwork or your artwork itself appears in a book, the formatting should read:

- Schwabsky, Barry (Compiler), *Vitamin P: New Perspectives in Painting*, Phiadon Press 2004, p. 78

5. Collections

- Entering a competition to paint banners for a city's Christmas celebration. The banners are kept by the council so you can say "City of _____" under the public collections section of CV.
- Generally, the "collections" portion of your CV is to list public institutions which own your artwork. This could be museums, corporate collections, or even municipalities or agencies. They can simply be listed under the heading collections:

The Vancouver Art Gallery
The Canada Council Art Bank
The Colart Collection

- If you only have artwork in private collections and you wish to include this section on your CV, you should not list the name of the collector unless 1. they are well-known as important collectors of art, **and** 2. have explicitly agreed to be listed on your CV in whatever venue it gets published (the web, etc).
- If several people own your artwork in private collections and you would like to note that, you can list them like this:

Private collection, Calgary AB
Private collection, Vancouver, BC

- Don't go to overboard with the list– if you really have lots, you'll look more understated and impressive by inserting something like this:

Works held in private collections in Canada, the United States, Germany, and New Zealand.

6. Texts

- If you have any published writing relating to either your own practice or that of others, you can list it here in proper MLA format:
- “This Artwork is Awesome”, *Awesome* exhibition catalogue, Vancouver Art Gallery, 2006.

The above points are the most common and usually the most notable elements which artists include on their CVs.

However, depending on your practice, there may be a number of other professional and artistic points of interest to list.

Here are some examples:

7. Teaching

- This is a space to list any teaching positions you may have had, either as a faculty member or as a guest lecturer or speaker. You should only include those related specifically to your practice or to visual arts:

2009, Guest lecturer, Cardiff University

2007, Sessional instructor, SFU

8. Curatorial projects

- If, as well as being an artist you have also undertaken curatorial projects (as so many artists seem to do now), you can list them simply as the exhibition itself, or, add on a *brief* explanation:
- 2011, “Drawings”, Richmond Art Gallery
2010, “Paintings”, Or Gallery, co-curated by Damian Hirst

9. Awards and Grants

- Some artists choose to list awards and / or grants they have received. If you decide to include this, the list should all be specifically related to your artistic practice, unless it is extremely notable, such as the Nobel Peace Prize:

2011, Arts Council Wales grant

2010, BC Arts Council grant

10. Residencies

- Artist's residencies you may have attended are good to include on your CV as they show a dedication to your practice and to your professional development:

2010, Studio residency, School of Visual Arts, New York

NOTES

- One of the best ways to start writing your CV is to see how other artists do it. In addition to the categories listed above, there are many different professional practices or ways of organizing your information. Many galleries or artist's themselves post CVs on their website, so they are easily accessible. A few to check out:
- [Catriona Jeffries Gallery artists](#)
[Georgia Scherman Projects artists](#)

How to Write an Artist's CV When You Don't Have Much (Or Any!) Professional Experience

If you don't have a lot of other material and experiences to add to the rest of the CV, this is a good opportunity to tell your reader about yourself.

Adding a very brief bio / artist statement can be good if you would like to talk about experiences which don't fit into the rest of the CV. If you are going to do this, just remember to keep it brief and concise.

- **DO** have a website set up, and include the address
- **DO** add where you live and work (and when you were born, if you want to)
- **DO** add professional contact details where someone can actually contact you
- **DO** add a short bio or artist statement, concisely and professionally describing your practice
- **DON'T** use a non-professional or obscure email like metallover@saucy.com
- **DON'T** use your work phone number or your Mum's phone number
- **DON'T** oversell yourself: you will look like a professional, dedicated emerging artist if you are honest. You will look desperate if you pretend to be something you are not.

Example of bad contact details:

Vincent van Gogh

~Sometimes called the world's most famous artist~!!!

Check out my work here

<http://www.ibiblio.org/wm/paint/auth/gogh/>

Email me! fancypants@yahoo.com<

Example of good contact details:

Vincent van Gogh

Born March 30, 1853

Currently lives and works in Paris, France

vincent@vangogh.com | www.vangoghgallery.com



Vincent van Gogh is an emerging artist, working primarily in oils. He often employs bold colours and emotive tableaux in a post-impressionistic manner.

EDUCATION

- highlight any casual mentorships, art classes, workshops, and schooling that you have had.

EXHIBITIONS

- One way to add exhibitions to your CV is to list any which are forthcoming. If you've got something lined up, you can include it on your CV before it's happened. Just add "(forthcoming)"
- *"Another trick for plumping up your exhibition history is a little bit cheeky. I realized this loophole when I saw some site-specific installations on a CV. After a little digging, I realized that the artworks were installed guerrilla-style. In other words, someone made art and put it somewhere without invitation or the formal facets of a traditional exhibition. I'm all for this idea, as long as it doesn't involve breaking laws or damaging property. It's a great idea to show your artwork (though, you might not be able to get it back), and certainly an artistic project that can be added to your CV under your exhibition history. Just make sure you classify it properly, as to not mislead anyone!"*

- **DO** list all of your exhibitions, even if they aren't in a gallery
- **DO** list all of your forthcoming exhibitions and projects
- **DON'T** make anything up.

Example of a good exhibition list

- 2014 Group exhibition, Vancouver Art Gallery (forthcoming)
2012 Site-specific installation, "*Alleyway*", Vancouver, BC
- 2010 Solo exhibition, Moon Cafe, Vancouver BC

Example of a bad exhibition list

- 2017 Planned gallery exhibition (forthcoming) ← if you don't have any solid details, don't include it
- 2012 Solo exhibition, Museum of Modern Art, NY ← you made that up!

COLLECTIONS

- If you are a new or emerging artist, you probably do not have your work in any public collections. Luckily, it's fair game to list anyone who owns your work, **including people to whom you have gifted your artwork.**
- Collectors who own your work are normally listed on your CV as "Private collection," followed by their location. You should not actually name someone unless they have explicitly agreed to be listed as a collector of your work, and / or if you have some other reason to do so (for example, they are a very well-known collector).

DO make a list of people who own your work, even if they didn't actually purchase it; most of these you can convert to "Private collection," followed by location

DON'T put your Mum's name on the list, or anyone with the same last name as you.
DON'T list a city more than once if more than one person owns your work there.

Example of a good collection list

Collections:

Private collection, Vancouver BC

Private collection, Winnipeg MB

Private collection, New York NY

Example of a bad collection list

Collections:

Anna van Gogh

Theodorus van Gogh

Elisabeth van Gogh

Theo van Gogh

Private collection, Paris France

Private collection, Paris France

Private collection, Paris France

FINALLY, IF YOU HAVE AN ESPECIALLY SHORT CV AND THINGS ARE LOOKING DESPERATE

- You can think of some creative ways to visually enhance your CV:
- Include an image of your artwork (not usually recommended, but between that and the blank page, **one** image is better).
- Centre your text with large margins. Yes, this is cheating when you're writing an essay. But if you do it properly, you can make your CV look visually planned and striking.
- Include an artist statement and CV on one single page. Often these are asked for separately, but if you are able to combine them, it's a great way to make your presentation look great.