CV Advice

What is the purpose of a CV?
Your CV is the first impression that any prospective employer has of you - so it's important to get it right. The information you provide must be accurate, realistic and positive, and be tailored to suit the particular role you are applying for. The following format provides a guide to information you should include.

Layout
Your CV should be typed in a business-like font such as Times New Roman or Arial. Avoid fancy fonts, and formatting such as coloured backgrounds and decorative borders. Try to keep to no more than two A4 pages. Do not go into great detail about jobs you had more than 10 - 15 years ago.

Personal profile/objective statement
Start with a profile of who you are, your key achievements and your plans for your career.

Personal details
Name, home address, phone number, email address and date of birth.

Work experience
List your most recent jobs first. Include the name of your employer, your job title and the dates you started and left. Use bullet points to list your duties. You will probably be asked to explain the reasons for any gaps in your employment so you should be prepared for this.

Education
Include the name of your school, college or university and the dates you attended. If you are just beginning your career you should mention qualifications gained at school including grades. Any professional qualifications should be included here.

Interests
You should only include these if they are of interest to an employer. "Reading, shopping and socialising with friends" isn't very inspiring and is probably best left out. However, any activities where you have leadership or responsibility or which involve you working with others in a team are worth mentioning as is any voluntary work you have done.

Skills
Computer skills including the software packages you have used are essential for most jobs. The obvious ones are Microsoft Office (particularly Word, Excel). Do not make false claims of proficiency. You may be tested on it. Foreign languages, ability to drive and any other relevant technical skills should be included.

References
Supply the names and contact details of two referees, preferably previous employers and if possible, your current employer. Check with them first that they are willing to do this for you.