

Before the CV

A free, gentle workbook for military spouses and partners. Your experience. Your skills. Your next chapter.

A little space for you

You do not need a perfect career history, a five-year plan or even a clear idea of what comes next. This workbook helps you gather what you have done, notice what you can offer and decide what - if anything - you would like to explore.

No pressure. No right answers. No need to share this with anyone.

Before we begin: what brought you here?

What would make this workbook useful to you?

Tip: Work through these pages in any order. You can leave questions blank and come back later.

1. The things I have done

Paid work is only one part of your story. Start by making a rough list - dates can wait.

Jobs, roles and workplaces

Think about temporary work, part-time jobs, different industries and roles held before or between postings.

Volunteering, projects and community work

Only include activities you have genuinely done, and note your role or contribution.

Training, qualifications and other learning

Courses, certificates, on-the-job training, self-study or practical skills you have learned.

You do not have to include everything on a CV. This is your private starting list.

2. Skills I can show

Look for skills you can back up with a real example, from work or elsewhere.

What do people ask me to help with?

Three skills I can demonstrate

Examples might include communication, organising, problem-solving, using digital tools, or supporting customers.

Skill 1:

Skill 2:

Skill 3:

A challenge I handled and what I actually did

A skill is strongest when you can describe a specific action and its result.

3. What matters to me

You are allowed to choose what works for you, including choosing not to pursue work right now.

What would I enjoy doing more of?

What would I rather do less of?

What would a workable opportunity look like?

Think about location, hours, pay, accessibility, family commitments, flexibility and the kind of environment you enjoy.

What am I curious about - even if I am not ready yet?

4. My next small step

You do not need to finish your CV today. Choose one useful next action - or none for now.

Things I might try next

- ☐ Gather my job dates and previous role titles
- ☐ Find a job advert that interests me
- ☐ Write down three achievements I can explain
- ☐ Ask someone I trust to help me review my notes
- ☐ Look at a training course or qualification
- ☐ Take a break and return when I feel ready

My own next step

One thing I want to remember

A different journey does not mean less potential.

When you are ready, return to the CVs, Applications & Career Gaps resource at www.btcv.co.uk/cvs-applications-career-gaps.