

ATS-Friendly Resume Checklist

Use this checklist to make sure your resume is optimized for Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) and ready for job applications.

Basic Formatting

- Use a simple, clean layout (no columns, tables, or graphics).
- Use standard fonts such as Arial, Calibri, or Times New Roman.
- Keep font size between 10–12 pt for body text.
- Save your resume as a .PDF or .DOCX depending on employer instructions.
- Use standard section headings like: Work Experience, Education, Skills.

Contact Information

- Full name clearly listed at the top.
- Professional email address.
- Phone number included.
- LinkedIn profile (optional but recommended).
- City and state/province (full address not required).

Keywords & Skills

- Include keywords from the job description.
- Use both spelled-out terms and common abbreviations (e.g., Search Engine Optimization / SEO).
- Add a dedicated skills section.
- Include both technical and soft skills relevant to the role.

Work Experience

- List jobs in reverse chronological order.
- Include company name, job title, and dates of employment.
- Use bullet points to describe responsibilities.
- Start bullet points with action verbs (Managed, Developed, Created, Led).

- Include measurable achievements where possible.

Education

- List degree, school name, and graduation year.
- Include certifications relevant to the job.
- Add professional training if applicable.

Final ATS Check

- Avoid headers and footers (some ATS systems can't read them).
- Do not use images, icons, or charts.
- Spell-check your resume.
- Make sure job titles and keywords match the role you're applying for.
- Test by copying your resume text into a plain text document to ensure it reads correctly.