



APPLICANT TRACKING SYSTEM (ATS) CHECKLIST

Everything you need to know to get your resume ATS ready



USE KEYWORDS

The Applicant Tracking System will be screening for keywords that align with those in the job description. Try a [word cloud](#) to help you see what keywords are highlighted from your chosen job description.



REMOVE HYPERLINKS

Sometimes when we add our email address or a LinkedIn URL, our document automatically sets a hyperlink. ATS software doesn't like this so it's best to highlight it, right-click and 'remove hyperlink'.



CHECK TABLES & COLUMNS

Contrary to what many will tell you, the ATS will typically take information from tables and columns, BUT it will likely appear in a disjointed format when highlighted in its results. If you really want to use tables and columns, make sure you back it up in the body of your resume too.



USE THE RIGHT FONT & SIZE

It matters! An ATS will struggle with some fonts, especially script fonts. The best option is to stick to standard fonts. Cambria, Calibri, Helvetica, and Tahoma are some of the acceptable options. For font size, it is also best to stay between 10 & 12.



SPELL OUT ABBREVIATIONS

You may think by adding an abbreviation that it will be self-explanatory, but it is always best to give the full word and then the abbreviation, for example, Certified Public Accountant (CPA).



SAVE WITH A PROFESSIONAL TITLE

You have gone to all the effort to craft a perfect resume for your future employer only to save it with a vague, or worse, inappropriate name. The ATS will often include your file name when delivering your results to the hiring manager, make sure it's professional! Example: 'Julie Vincent Executive Assistant' as opposed to 'resume version 8'.



SEND IN THE RIGHT FORMAT

Pay attention to what has been asked for in the vacancy. If they asked for you to submit a Word doc. then that's what you do. Both Word and PDF are accepted by an ATS. I favor a PDF. Once it has passed the ATS your resume will be opened by your future employer. You can't be certain of which Word version they have, which may leave your hard work all out of sync. A PDF delivers it as you send it.



DON'T CHEAT!

If you don't have the skills or experience being asked for, this likely isn't the job for you. If you feel tempted to 'stuff' keywords without actually using them in the context they are required, don't! It's not professional and it will waste the employer's time and yours when it is discovered that you actually cheated the system.

Need help crafting the ultimate resume? I've got everything you need right [HERE](#)