

## ATS Checklist

The résumé:

- Is saved in an approved format — résumé is submitted as a DOC, DOCX, or TXT (PDF, RTF, and JPG formats are not ATS-friendly).
- Does not use templates, borders, or shading.
- Is in a single column format (no tables, multiple columns, or text boxes).
- Uses simply formatted text of a reasonable size (10 point size or above).
- Includes standard fonts (Arial, Georgia, Tahoma, and Verdana are all “safe” choices).
- Does not contain complex formatting (condensed or expanded text) — that is, don’t use extra spaces between letters, because the ATS can’t “read” it.
- Includes a few, clearly defined sections: Summary, Work Experience, Education, Training, Certifications, Skills, etc.
- Does not contain images or graphics — or, if they do appear, they do not affect the single-column formatting (Be warned, however, that the simple inclusion of *any* graphics may be enough to “choke” some applicant tracking system software.)
- Does not include any information in the headers or footers of the document (if saved in Microsoft Word format).
- Has been thoroughly edited and spellchecked and there are no errors. (The ATS will not recognize misspelled words).
- Does not include any special characters or accented words.
- Contains proper capitalization and punctuation. Both of these can affect how information is parsed and assigned within the ATS database.
- Uses the full, spelled-out version of a term in addition to abbreviations and acronyms [i.e., Certified Public Accountant (CPA)].
- Incorporates relevant, specific, targeted keywords and phrases for the type of position being sought (i.e., “Photoshop” instead of “image-editing software”).
- Has been customized for the position being sought. “One-size-fits-all” does not work with applicant tracking systems.