

The ATS Resume Checklist

12 checks before you hit Apply

Nearly every large employer runs your application through an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) before a human sees it. The ATS doesn't reject you — it parses your resume into a database that recruiters search. If your resume doesn't parse cleanly or doesn't contain the terms recruiters type, you're not rejected; you're invisible. These 12 checks make sure you actually surface in that search.

| LAYOUT & PARSING

☐ 1. Single-column layout

No tables, text boxes, or multi-column designs. They scramble the ATS text extraction, so ten years of experience can land in the database as fragments.

☐ 2. Standard section headers

Use "Work Experience", "Skills", "Education", "Certifications". Clever headings ("My Journey") don't map to the database fields the ATS is trying to fill.

☐ 3. Contact info in the document body

Not in the page header or footer — many parsers skip those areas entirely, and your phone number and email vanish with them.

☐ 4. No graphics, icons, photos, or charts

An ATS reads text only. Skill bars, logos, and portraits are invisible at best — and at worst they corrupt the text extracted around them.

☐ 5. Safe file type

A cleanly structured .docx or a text-based PDF (never a scanned or image-only PDF). If the posting names a preferred format, follow it.

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KEYWORDS & SEARCHABILITY

☐ 6. Keywords aligned to the posting

Mirror the exact titles, skills, and phrasing used in the job ad. Recruiters search the same terms they wrote into the posting.

☐ 7. Spelled-out AND abbreviated forms

Include both: "Search Engine Optimization (SEO)", "Project Management Professional (PMP)". A search for either form should find you.

☐ 8. Exact certification, tool, and methodology names

Recruiters filter on precise names — PRINCE2, Workday, Salesforce, Six Sigma — not on descriptions of them. Name what you actually hold and use.

☐ 9. Role-specific phrasing, not keyword stuffing

A human reads whatever surfaces to the top. Stuffed, unnatural resumes get discarded at that step — accurate, role-specific wording of real experience wins.

CONTENT & CONSISTENCY

☐ 10. Quantified bullets

Team size, budget, percentages, volumes. Numbers are searchable evidence of scope, and they survive a recruiter's six-second skim.

☐ 11. Dialect consistency

US spelling for US roles, UK spelling for UK roles. "Optimization" and "optimisation" are different search strings — match the market you're applying in.

☐ 12. Your resume and LinkedIn tell one story

After finding you in the ATS, recruiters almost always cross-check LinkedIn. Mismatched titles, dates, or skills between the two are a red flag.

Want this done for you — for your exact job title?

We rewrite your resume and LinkedIn profile with structure that parses cleanly and keywords matched to how your specific industry and job category are actually searched. Verified by an expert ATS reviewer, delivered in 72 hours.

[Get started at bookmyjobinterview.ai](https://bookmyjobinterview.ai)