

Tips for Mastering Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS)

Many employers use applicant tracking systems (ATS). They are the computer systems used to manage application materials. The ATS will read your resume and then rank and score your qualifications vs. the job descriptions. Stay cognizant of the **resume content** for each position.

Get your resume to stand out by writing job specific resumes that highlight your most relevant skills, knowledge and experiences. One resume will not work for all positions of interest!

Top Tips

Do:

Save as a .docx or .pdf file, spell everything out (do not use acronyms).

Name the resume your first and last name.

Use simple formatting. Do not use headers (including for contact information), footers, templates, borders, lines, symbols (bullet points are fine) or shading. **Use a common font** (Times New Roman, Arial, Calibri).

Use keywords and phrases *in context*. Incorporate them into descriptive achievement-oriented bullet points; do not just include them as a list of skills or competencies.

Edit carefully: The ATS will not recognize misspelled words. And a recruiter could review it so it must be error-free!

DON'T:

Use resume templates, insert tables, textboxes, graphs or columns or use abbreviations.

Include skills you do not possess on the resume. Anything on your resume could be a topic during an interview, or increasingly in a skills-based test before your interview.

Mix different fonts and sizes in your resume.

Create a completely stripped-down document. Keep some simple formatting such as bold, caps and bullet points to keep your resume attractive.