

ATS Optimization Checklist

A six-part checklist for improving resume readability and keyword alignment without stuffing or misrepresenting experience.

1. File & Layout

- ☐ Use employer-requested PDF or DOCX format.
- ☐ Use clear section headings.
- ☐ Avoid putting critical information only in headers/footers.
- ☐ Use simple reading order.

2. Role Alignment

- [] Reflect target title naturally when accurate.
- [] Show required skills in relevant experience.
- [] Include industry/domain terms where truthful.
- [] Do not hide qualifications only in a skills list.

3. Keyword Quality

- [] Use exact tool names where applicable.
- [] Use common synonyms naturally.
- [] Avoid copying entire job-description phrases.
- [] Do not add skills you cannot defend.

4. Experience Bullets

- [] Show outcomes, not only duties.
- [] Use keywords in real context.
- [] Make scope and impact clear.
- [] Prioritize strong achievements.

5. Parsing Check

- [] Copy/paste into plain text and inspect reading order.
- [] Verify dates/employers remain understandable.
- [] Check symbols do not replace letters/numbers.
- [] Verify URLs and contact details.

6. Final Submission

- ☐ Tailor resume to the role.
- ☐ Use professional file name.
- ☐ Match application fields to resume details.
- ☐ Remove unsupported claims.

Final ATS improvements