

ATS Cheat-Sheet for Nurses

Keep your edits parseable — one page, keep it handy

An applicant-tracking system (ATS) reads your resume before a human does. Hospital systems (Workday, Taleo, iCIMS) are especially strict. The templates in this kit are already built ATS-clean — single column, standard headings, real fonts, tab-stop alignment, no tables or text boxes. This sheet keeps YOUR edits from breaking that.

Safe to change

- The words — your name, contact, summary, bullets, skills, dates.
- The accent color — it is applied through styles; change it in one place.
- Adding or removing a bullet or an optional section (certs, awards, languages).
- Switching between the 1-page and 2-page version we provide.

Do NOT add (these break ATS parsing)

- Text boxes, sidebars, or columns — many ATS drop or scramble them.
- Tables to line things up — use the tab stops already in the template.
- Your contact info in the Word header/footer — keep it in the body.
- Icons, photos, logos, or graphics in the flow of the resume.
- Fancy or decorative fonts — stick to the standard system fonts provided.
- Rows of spaces to push dates to the right — the template uses tab stops for that.

Make the ATS match you

1. Read the job posting and mirror its exact wording for skills and the EHR (Epic, Cerner).
2. Use standard section headings (Professional Summary, Work Experience, Education, Skills).
3. Spell out then abbreviate key terms once ('Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS)').
4. Save and submit as .docx unless the posting asks for PDF — both are in this kit.

Rule of thumb: if it looks like a designed brochure, an ATS probably chokes on it. Clean and boring parses; pretty and complex does not. That trade is deliberate — this kit is built to be read by the machine AND the recruiter.