

# How to Create and E-Mail a Plain Text Resume



By Christopher Jones

Unlike Microsoft Word and other word processors, plain text does not allow bold, italics or different fonts. While it may seem boring, this simplicity allows recruiters to view resumes the same way regardless of the software they use.

## Tools You'll Need

If you don't already have a text editor (and most people with computers do), you can get one for free online.

As far as text editors go, I like two in particular:

1. **Notepad:** If you're running Microsoft Windows software on your computer, chances are you have Notepad, which is Microsoft's default text editor.
2. **NoteTab Light:** If you don't have Notepad or can't find it on your computer, you can download NoteTab Light for free here: <http://download.com.com/3000-2352-8235248.html?tag=lst-0-4>

## Creating Your Plain Text Resume

There are two ways you can enter your resume into a text editor.

- **From scratch:** Once you've found a text editor, start it up and begin typing in your resume. Keep the organization clean and simple as you will not be able to use bold, italics or fonts in different sizes.
- **Copy and paste:** If you cut and paste a formatted resume into a text editor, you'll notice that a lot of the formatting will be lost. Your font will be uniform and any text with bold or italics will be replaced with plain text.

If you are using a text editor, your document should automatically be saved as text. Double check this by making sure your document has a ".txt" file extension.

Also, text editors do not typically have spell check. So, copy and paste your text resume into Microsoft Word or another word processing program with spell check. Spell check the document. Be sure to make any necessary changes to the text document and save it again.

## Creating a Plain-Text E-Mail

If a job description asks you to include a plain-text resume in the body of an e-mail, make sure your e-mail software is set to send plain text. Otherwise, your e-mail browser will add formatting to your resume and the

recruiter may assume you didn't follow instructions.

The method for sending a plain-text e-mail depends on the e-mail program you're using. I've included directions for some major e-mail programs below. If your e-mail program isn't listed, look in the "help" section of your e-mail or consider calling your Internet Service Provider.

- **Yahoo! Mail:** Create a new e-mail. At the bottom of the e-mail, click the "plain text" button. Then, simply copy and paste your resume into the e-mail. You may have to make some minor formatting changes.
- **Hotmail:** Create a new e-mail, in the pull-down field labeled "Tools" make sure the "Rich Text Editor" is off. You'll be able to tell if you've successfully turned the Rich Text Editor off as all the formatting options will disappear from your composition screen. You may have to make some minor formatting changes.
- **Microsoft Outlook:** Create a new e-mail, click on the "Format" button and choose the "Plain Text" option. Then, simply copy and paste your resume into the new e-mail. You may have to make some minor changes, but most of your formatting should remain intact.

### Helpful Formatting Tips

- Use all caps to make headers stand out from body text. Since plain text does not allow for bold and italics, it can be difficult to distinguish between resume sections. I use all capital letters for "OBJECTIVE," "WORK EXPERIENCE" and "EDUCATION" to give them prominence.
- You can use bullets in a plain-text document, but it's not as easy as clicking a button. If you want to use a bullet point in your plain-text resume, copy and paste this bullet (
- ) without the parentheses into your resume. Otherwise, you can use an asterisk (\*) or dashes (--).
- Avoid using the "Tab" key, because plain text when saved may not retain the tab command. Instead, use the space bar.
- Always e-mail a copy of your plain-text resume to yourself before sending it to a recruiter. This gives you a chance to see the resume as the recruiter will see it.