

The 42-point submittal checklist

You build the package, and the rejection lands on your desk. This is the pre-send discipline that ends the Revise-and-Resubmit cycle. *Written by a structural engineer who has been the reviewer.*

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A rejected submittal costs a second review cycle, hours of reassembly, and the schedule that was waiting on the approval. The project engineer who runs a checklist is the project engineer who stops chasing resubmittals.

A Before you assemble - 7 checks

Most rejections are decided before the first page is scanned.

☐ **Read the spec section's PART 1 submittal paragraph line by line.**

List every required item: product data, shop drawings, samples, certifications, warranties, O&M, LEED. Reviewers check this list first.

☐ **Read Division 01 (01 33 00) for the general submittal rules.**

Copies, electronic format, file-naming convention, stamp requirements. Breaking a Division 01 rule rejects a technically perfect package.

☐ **Confirm whether the item is "for approval" or "for record."**

Submitting record items for approval clogs the log and slows the whole register.

☐ **Match the submittal number to the register and the spec section.**

☐ **Check lead time + review duration against the procurement date.**

Flag long-lead items now. A perfect approval that arrives after the install date is still a failure.

☐ **Identify deferred and delegated-design submittals early.**

Anything needing a specialty engineer's stamp has its own clock.

☐ **Confirm who actually reviews it.**

Architect, EOR, MEP engineer, owner's rep. A package routed wrong loses a full review cycle.

B The transmittal and cover - 5 checks

The first page decides the reviewer's mood for the next fifty.

☐ **Submittal number follows the project convention (section–sequence–revision).**

☐ **Description matches the spec section title exactly.**

☐ **The contractor's review stamp is signed and dated.**

Many reviewers reject an unstamped package without reading page two. It says nobody on your side looked first.

☐ **Resubmittals state how every previous comment was resolved.**

Point to the page. Making the reviewer hunt for their own comment is how a second rejection happens.

☐ **One submittal, one spec section.**

Mixed sections force a partial review and an automatic "revise and resubmit."

c Product data - 8 checks

The reviewer's core question: can I find the specified value on your page?

☐ **The exact model is arrowed or highlighted** on any catalog page showing multiple options.

☐ **Every specified performance value is locatable in the data.**

R-value, PSI, gauge, flame spread, wind rating. If the spec names a number, your page must show that number.

☐ **The manufacturer is specified or a named acceptable equal.**

Anything else is a substitution and needs the form, not a quiet swap.

☐ **Options and accessories are selected, not left as ranges.**

☐ **Finish and color selections are marked.**

☐ **Compliance with referenced standards is shown, not claimed.**

ASTM, UL, AISC, NSF: the listing or test data appears in the package.

☐ **Required certifications are attached.**

Mill certs, test reports, ICC-ES reports. "Available upon request" reads as "not checked."

☐ **The cut sheet is current.**

A discontinued product line found by the reviewer ends the package's credibility.

d Shop drawings - 7 checks

☐ **Field dimensions are verified, or honestly marked "field verify."**

☐ **Details reference contract drawing numbers and grid lines.**

☐ **Connections, anchors and embeds are fully shown.**

These are what the EOR is actually reviewing. A missing connection detail is a guaranteed comment.

☐ **Conflicts with the contract drawings are clouded and flagged.**

Never silent. A conflict the reviewer finds is a rejection; a conflict you flag is a conversation.

☐ **Scales, section marks and text survive at print size.**

☐ **Delegated-design sheets carry the specialty engineer's stamp.**

☐ **Adjacent-trade coordination is noted.**

Openings, blocking, clearances, power requirements. The reviewer checks whether you talked to the other trades.

E Cross-document coordination - 6 checks

The rejections that hurt most hide between documents, not inside one.

☐ **Product data agrees with the shop drawing.**

The same model number on both. It is astonishing how often it is not.

☐ **Dimensions agree across architectural and structural references.**

☐ **Electrical characteristics match the electrical drawings.**

Voltage, phase, MCA. Equipment approved at the wrong voltage becomes a change order.

☐ **Equipment weights were checked against the structure.**

Rooftop units and suspended equipment: the EOR will ask.

☐ **The physical sample matches the finish schedule.**

☐ **Addenda and ASI changes are incorporated.**

Confirm you are reading the current spec, not the bid set.

F Deviations and substitutions - 4 checks

☐ **Every deviation is listed on a deviation sheet.**

A hidden deviation discovered later costs the rejection and the trust. You never get the second one back.

☐ **Substitutions use the project's form with a side-by-side comparison.**

☐ **Cost and schedule impact is stated, even when it is zero.**

☐ **"Or equal" is proven with data, not asserted.**

G The last pass - 5 checks

Ten minutes here saves three weeks there.

- ☐ **Every page is legible, right-side up, in a bookmarked PDF with a contents page.**

 - ☐ **The file name follows the project protocol.**

 - ☐ **Page count sanity check.**
Merges silently drop pages. Count what went in against what came out.

 - ☐ **Someone who did not assemble it reads it cold for ten minutes.**

 - ☐ **The final question: "Can the reviewer approve this without asking a single question?"**
If the answer is no, you already know what the comment will be. Fix it now, while it is free.

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Want to know your package's rejection risk
before you send it?

The free **Red Markup Risk Score** asks 14 questions about how your packages actually get built and shows exactly where the exposure lives.
Free, two minutes, engineer-built. redmarkup.com

Red Markup · Engineer-built submittal & document review. This checklist is free to print, share and use on any project. It is general good practice, not engineering advice for a specific project.