A purchase order (PO) number is a reference code a customer creates when approving a purchase. When the customer asks you to include that code on your invoice, put it somewhere easy to see—usually near the invoice number and date, or in a clearly labeled field in the invoice details.

That small step can make a big difference. A missing or hard-to-find PO number may send an otherwise correct invoice back for editing, delay approval, or hold up payment. This guide explains what a PO number means, where to put it, what to put on an invoice, and how to check that your payment terms and due date agree.

What Is a PO Number?

A PO number is an identifier on a purchase order. The buyer issues the purchase order to document what they have approved, such as a service, product, quantity, price, or spending limit. The PO number lets the buyer's team connect your invoice to that approved purchase.

For example, a client might send a purchase order with the reference **PO-48217**. When you invoice them for the work covered by that order, include **PO-48217** on your invoice exactly as provided. The client may use it to route the invoice through accounts payable and confirm that the charges match the approved order.

A PO number is not the same as your invoice number. Your invoice number identifies your invoice; the PO number identifies the buyer's purchase order. If you have both, show both as separate references.

Reference Who usually assigns it? What it identifies Invoice number You, the seller Your invoice in your records PO number Your customer, the buyer The buyer's approved purchase order

Where Do You Put a PO Number on an Invoice?

Put the PO number in a clearly labeled field near the top of the invoice, where the customer can spot it without searching. A common layout places it alongside the invoice number, invoice date, and due date. For example:

- **Invoice number:** INV-1048
- **Invoice date:** November 3, 2026
- **Due date:** December 3, 2026
- **PO number:** PO-48217

You can also place the PO number in the "Bill to" or customer-details area, especially if your invoice layout has a dedicated purchase order field. The exact position matters less than making the reference easy to identify and keeping it separate from your invoice number.

Use the buyer's exact reference

Copy the PO number exactly as it appears on the purchase order or in the customer's instructions. Keep letters, numbers, hyphens, and leading zeros. If the buyer gives you **PO-0048217**, don't shorten it to **48217**. Their system may need the complete reference to match the invoice.

Include it where the customer requires it

Some organizations have specific invoice-submission rules. They may ask for the PO number in a particular field, in the email subject line, or in an online portal. Follow those instructions even if your standard invoice template puts the reference elsewhere. If you're unsure, ask the buyer before sending the invoice.

If the customer did not provide a PO number, don't invent one. You can leave the field blank or write "No PO provided" if that is acceptable to the customer. For a business that requires a PO before approving invoices, ask for it before you bill.



What to Put on an Invoice: The Essential Invoice Fields

Adding a PO number is useful, but it does not replace the other invoice fields. A clear invoice gives the buyer enough information to identify you, understand the charges, approve the work, and pay the amount due.



Invoice field What to include From Your business or legal name, address, and contact details Bill to The customer's correct business or individual name and billing address Invoice number A unique reference from your own numbering system Invoice date The date you issue the invoice PO number The customer's purchase order reference, if provided or required Line items Descriptions, quantities or hours, rates, and line totals Totals Subtotal, applicable tax, discounts, and total due Terms and due date When payment is

expected and how the deadline was calculated Payment details How the customer can pay, such as bank transfer or an accepted payment method

From and Bill to

The **From** field identifies you as the seller. Use the name and contact details your customer needs for payment records or questions. The **Bill to** field should name the customer entity responsible for paying. A company may have a different billing name or address from the person who ordered the work, so confirm the details if you're not certain.

Line items and totals

Describe each product or service in a way the customer can recognize and compare with the purchase order. For project work, you might include the project name, a brief task description, hours, and rate. For products, include the item, quantity, and unit price. Show the arithmetic clearly: line totals, subtotal, any applicable tax or discount, and the final amount due.

If the PO covers only part of a project or sets a maximum amount, check that the invoice matches the approved scope and remaining balance. A PO number helps accounts payable find the order; it does not guarantee that every charge on the invoice is authorized.

Payment Terms and Due Date Logic

Payment terms tell your customer when payment is expected. Common examples include "Due on receipt," "Net 15," and "Net 30." the-invoice-generator.net State the terms clearly, and show a specific due date as well when your invoice format allows it. The terms and date should agree.

For example, if an invoice is dated **November 3, 2026** and the agreed terms are **Net 30**, a straightforward calendar-day calculation makes the due date **December 3, 2026**. The invoice date is day zero; count 30 days forward. Don't assume that "Net 30" means the end of the following month.

However, customers may define terms differently. A contract could specify business days, a particular start date, or payment on a certain day of the month. Follow the written agreement or the customer's policy if it differs from a simple calendar-day calculation. If the due date falls on a weekend or holiday, check whether the agreement or billing system changes the deadline.

Make the terms easy to act on

- Write the term in plain language, such as "Payment due within 30 calendar days of the invoice date."
- Enter a specific due date and verify it against the terms.
- Include any early-payment discount or late-payment provision only if it was agreed and is permitted where you do business.
- Show payment instructions so the customer knows how to pay.

How to Prepare an Invoice Without Missing the PO Number

1. **Check the approval details.** Find the purchase order, contract, or customer instructions. Confirm the PO number, billing entity, approved work, and any submission rules.
2. **Fill in the core invoice fields.** Add your From and Bill to details, a unique invoice number, the invoice date, and a PO number field if needed.

3. **Describe the charges.** Make each line item specific enough for the customer to match it to the approved work.
4. **Check the math.** Verify quantities, rates, subtotals, tax, discounts, and the amount due.
5. **Check the due date.** Compare the displayed date with the payment terms and the agreement. For Net 30, count 30 days from the correct starting date.
6. **Review and send.** Make sure the PO number is readable, the invoice number is unique in your records, and the customer's submission instructions are followed.

Choosing a Simple Invoicing Workflow

If you invoice occasionally, a browser-based invoice tool can be faster than adjusting a document template by hand. Look for a workflow that lets you enter the invoice fields, preview the result, and export a PDF without forcing you to create an account first. For instance, the-invoice-generator.net may be one option to consider when comparing browser-based invoice tools; check its current features and terms before relying on it for your process.

Fast PDF export matters because many customers accept invoices as PDF attachments or through an accounts-payable portal. A **Download PDF** option gives you a file you can inspect and save before sending. A **Save & Send** option can be useful when you want to keep a copy and send the invoice through the tool, provided its sending process meets your needs.

For privacy, find out where a tool keeps your invoice data. Some browser tools may keep drafts locally in your browser rather than saving them to an online account. Local drafts can be convenient, but they may disappear if you clear browser data, switch devices, or use a different browser. Download important PDFs and keep your own records. If you're preparing confidential invoices, read the tool's privacy information and avoid entering sensitive information unless you understand how it is handled.

No-signup invoicing can also make it easier to create a one-off invoice or test a layout before committing to an account. If a service offers account features, check whether signing in is optional for creating and exporting an invoice. An option such as **Continue with Google** can simplify sign-in when you choose to use an account, but it should not be confused with a requirement to register if the tool also supports a no-signup workflow.

Businesses evaluating an invoicing tool may also ask about analytics. If a service uses Google Analytics, review its privacy notice and cookie information to understand what activity may be measured. Analytics is separate from the invoice itself; it doesn't replace checking where invoice drafts and PDFs are stored.

Compare the actual cost before subscribing

Look for clear pricing and confirm what is included before paying. For example, a plan might be shown as: **Pro: $39 a year ($3.25 a month, 35% off) or $5 a month. US dollars, plus tax where it applies. Cancel any time.** Check whether the annual amount is charged upfront, what features require Pro, and whether the displayed price includes any limits or conditions.

PO Number Invoice Checklist

- The PO number matches the buyer's document exactly.
- The PO number is labeled clearly and is separate from your invoice number.
- Your invoice number is unique in your own records.

- The From and Bill to details are correct.
- Line items match the approved products or work.
- Totals and any applicable tax are calculated correctly.
- Payment terms and the due date agree.
- The PDF is readable and follows the customer's submission instructions.

The Short Answer

A PO number is the buyer's reference for an approved purchase. Put it in a clearly labeled "PO number" field near the invoice number and date, or wherever the customer's invoicing instructions require it. Keep it distinct from your own invoice number, copy it exactly, and include the other important invoice fields—especially From, Bill to, line items, terms, and a correctly calculated due date.

A quick final review can prevent a simple reference or date error from slowing payment. Make the PO number easy to find, make the charges easy to verify, and keep a copy of the invoice you send.