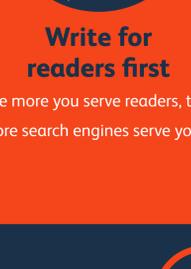


Your 21-Point Checklist

for Optimizing Blog Posts for Search

Great blog content must be **useful for readers** and **discovered by search engines**.



Write for readers first

The more you serve readers, the more search engines serve you.



Speak the reader's language

Use language that resonates with your audience and avoid jargon.



Cover your topic thoroughly

Find topics your audience is interested in and cover them in-depth.

4 PHASES

to creating optimized blog post to improve your search engine rankings



PHASE 1:

SELECT KEYWORDS

1.



Identify a primary keyword

Perform research to identify a primary keyword phrase that captures the theme of your content, is searched often, and you can rank for — based on your website's authority and competitive strength.

2.



Identify secondary keywords

Help search engines understand your content by choosing and using 2-4 secondary keywords that are semantically related to your topic.

PHASE 2:

WRITE YOUR POST



3.

Focus on the reader's needs

Never create content strictly for search engines. Write for human consumption.

4.



Create substantial posts

Lengthy posts have proven to outperform short posts in search. Aim to create posts from 500 and 2,500 words.

5.



Use the primary keyword throughout the text

Use the primary keyword often, but naturally, throughout the text to help search engines understand the content and index your page accurately.

6.

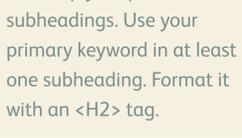
Use secondary keywords too

Include your secondary keywords to help search engines understand the context.

7.

Use the primary keyword in the first paragraph

Whenever possible, include your primary keyword in your first sentence, paragraph, or early in your post.



8.



Use the primary keyword in a subheading

For readability and SEO, break-up your posts with subheadings. Use your primary keyword in at least one subheading. Format it with an <H2> tag.

9.

Use the keyword in your conclusion

Wrap-up your post with a conclusion that includes the primary keyword. This helps "bookend" the post with signals that define the page.



10.

Write original content

Do not copy content from other pages on your website or pages on other websites. Duplicate content is a red flag to search engines.

11.

Check your grammar and spelling

Carefully check your copy before publishing it to ensure it's error-free. Readers (and search engines) value well-written content.

12.

Make your post easy to understand

Effective blog posts are easy to read. Write for an 8th grade reading level avoiding long, complex, or confusing sentences and paragraphs.



13.



Include internal links

Include hyperlinks to existing posts and pages on your website. Internal links help search engines understand pages and guide users to the information they need.

14.

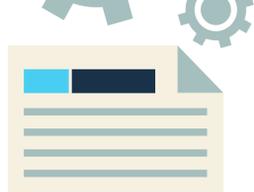


Add external links

External links are hyperlinks to posts or pages that exist on other websites. Use these links to source information in your content and guide readers to relevant resources.

PHASE 3:

OPTIMIZE YOUR POST



15.

Use the primary keyword in the page title

Create a page title that uses the primary keyword. If possible, try to put the keyword toward the beginning of the title.



16.

Use the primary keyword in the permalink

A permalink is your URL. It must be unique for each webpage and post. To create an SEO-friendly URL, include the primary keyword and extract all unnecessary words.



17.

Use the primary keyword in the SEO title

The SEO title is a secondary title for the page that is a backend description of the page. Your SEO title should include your primary keyword and not exceed 70 characters.



18.

Use the primary keyword in the meta description

A meta description describes your webpage and often appears in SERPs. Write it to convince readers to click-through to your page. To enable it to appear in its entirety, try not to exceed 155 characters.



19.

Assign appropriate categories and tags

Tags and categories are taxonomy systems used to organize blogs posts. Assign categories and tags to each page to connect them to specific topics.



20.

Use the primary keyword in image alt tags

Use images in your blog posts and assign an "alt tag" to each one making sure to include relevant keywords.



PHASE 4:

DOUBLE-CHECK YOUR SEO



21.

USE ALEXA'S ON-PAGE SEO CHECKER

Check your work with Alexa's On-Page SEO Checker. The tool will reveal if you've selected a useful keyword phrase and indicate how well you've optimized your post.

