

FREE RESOURCE — SEO CHECKLIST

# SEO Audit Checklist

A comprehensive self-assessment for auditing your website's search performance. Cover technical SEO, on-page optimisation, off-page signals, content strategy, local SEO and analytics to identify gaps and improve your search rankings.

**93%**

ONLINE EXPERIENCES BEGIN WITH SEARCH

**75%**

USERS NEVER SCROLL PAST PAGE 1

**6**

AUDIT SECTIONS COVERED

**Fillable**

TICK & TYPE IN ANY VIEWER

TECHNICAL SEO

ON-PAGE

OFF-PAGE

LOCAL SEO

PREPARED FOR

Cloudswitched Knowledge Library

PREPARED BY

Cloudswitched Ltd.

VERSION

2026 Edition

FORMAT

Interactive PDF

# 00

## How to use this checklist

Work through each of the six sections systematically with your in-house team or your SEO agency. Tick every checkpoint that is **fully implemented and verified** — not partially, not "we're working on it", but live and measurable in your analytics today. Then award each section a score out of 10 based on how many checkpoints you can confidently tick.

Prioritise **quick wins first**, then tackle medium-effort items and finally major projects. A thorough audit typically takes **2–4 hours** depending on the size of your website. Results can inform your SEO strategy and help you brief an agency or in-house team with clear priorities and measurable targets.

### What this audit covers

- Technical site health & crawlability
- On-page optimisation factors
- Backlink profile & off-page signals
- Content quality & keyword strategy
- Local SEO (if applicable)
- Analytics & tracking setup

### Common issues found

- Missing or duplicate title tags
- Slow page speed & poor Core Web Vitals
- Broken links & redirect chains
- Thin content & keyword cannibalisation
- Missing schema markup
- Incomplete Google Business Profile

### SCORING GUIDANCE

Award one point per checkpoint where you have evidence the control is in place — a report, a screenshot, a Search Console export, a live test. Half measures do not score. Round each section to the nearest whole number out of 10 and carry it forward to the summary on page 9. Anything below 6 in a single section signals a focus area for the next quarter.

### The six sections

- **01 Technical SEO** — Core Web Vitals, mobile, security, crawlability and indexation.
- **02 On-Page SEO** — title tags, headers, keyword density, images and internal linking.
- **03 Off-Page SEO** — backlinks, Domain Authority, citations and brand mentions.
- **04 Content & Keywords** — keyword research, search intent, content gaps and calendar.
- **05 Local SEO** — Google Business Profile, NAP consistency, citations and reviews.
- **06 Analytics & Tracking** — GA4, Search Console, conversions, goals and reporting.

WEBSITE URL

AUDIT DATE

AUDITED BY

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# 01

## Technical SEO

Ensure search engines can crawl, index and render your website correctly. Technical issues can block your content from appearing in search results entirely — fix these before anything else on the list.

### Site Speed & Core Web Vitals

- Largest Contentful Paint (LCP)** is under 2.5 seconds on both mobile and desktop.
- First Input Delay (FID)** / Interaction to Next Paint (INP) is under 200ms.
- Cumulative Layout Shift (CLS)** is under 0.1 — no unexpected layout movement.
- PageSpeed Insights** score is  $\geq 90$  desktop,  $\geq 70$  mobile.
- Server response time (TTFB)** is under 200ms.

### Mobile & Security

- Site is **fully mobile-responsive** — passes Google's Mobile-Friendly Test.
- SSL/HTTPS** is active on all pages with no mixed content warnings.
- HTTP to HTTPS **redirects** are properly configured (301, not 302).

### CORE WEB VITALS MATTER

Google's page experience signal rolls LCP, INP and CLS into ranking. Use PageSpeed Insights for lab data, but trust the Search Console Core Web Vitals report for real-user (CrUX) measurements — that's what Google actually scores.

*Crawlability & Indexation checks continue overleaf*

# 01

## Technical SEO — continued

Crawlability and indexation control how Google discovers, interprets and surfaces every page on your site. Get these signals wrong and good content goes invisible.

### Crawlability & Indexation

- XML sitemap** is present, submitted to Google Search Console and up to date.
- Robots.txt** is correctly configured — not blocking important pages.
- Canonical tags** are set on all pages to prevent duplicate content issues.
- URL structure** is clean, descriptive and uses hyphens (not underscores or parameters).
- Crawl errors** in Google Search Console are reviewed and resolved.
- No **redirect chains** (more than one redirect hop) exist — all redirects go direct.
- 404 pages** are identified and either fixed or redirected to relevant content.
- Structured data / Schema markup** is implemented (Organisation, LocalBusiness, FAQ, Product, etc.).
- Hreflang tags** are implemented correctly (*if multilingual or multi-region site*).

### COMMON GAP: CANONICAL MISMATCHES

CMS-driven sites often emit a canonical pointing to the wrong URL (trailing slash, http vs https, query strings). Crawl your site quarterly with Screaming Frog and flag any page where the canonical does not equal the indexable URL.

**TECHNICAL SEO SCORE** \_\_\_\_\_ / **10**

*Aim for 8+. Below 6 = crawl & index risk.*

# 02

## On-Page SEO

### Title Tags & Meta Descriptions

- Every page has a **unique title tag** between 50–60 characters with the primary keyword near the front.
- Every page has a **unique meta description** between 150–160 characters with a clear CTA.
- No **duplicate title tags** or meta descriptions exist across the site.

### Header Hierarchy & Content Structure

- Each page has **exactly one H1** tag containing the primary keyword.
- Header hierarchy** follows logical order (H1 □ H2 □ H3 □ H4) with no skipped levels.
- Keyword density** is natural (1–2%) — primary keyword appears in first 100 words, headers and throughout.
- LSI keywords** and related terms are naturally incorporated throughout the content.

### Images & Media

- All images have **descriptive alt text** that includes relevant keywords where appropriate.
- Image **file names** are descriptive and keyword-rich (*e.g. seo-audit-checklist.webp*).
- Images are **compressed and optimised** (WebP format, lazy loading for below-fold images).

### Internal Linking & URLs

- Internal linking strategy** is in place — 3–5 contextual internal links per page.
- Internal link **anchor text** is descriptive and keyword-relevant (not “click here”).
- URL slugs** are short, descriptive and contain the target keyword.

ON-PAGE SEO SCORE  / 10

*Aim for 8+. Below 6 = page-level gap.*

# 03

## Off-Page SEO

Off-page factors measure your website's authority, trustworthiness and reputation across the web. These are the signals you earn rather than control directly — and they move the slowest, so start the work early.

- Backlink profile** has been audited — toxic or spammy links identified and disavowed.
- Domain Authority (DA)** / Domain Rating (DR) is tracked and benchmarked against competitors.
- Active **link building** is underway (guest posts, digital PR, resource links, directories).
- Local citations** are consistent (NAP: Name, Address, Phone) across all directories.
- Google Business Profile** is claimed, verified and fully optimised.
- Social signals** — active social media profiles link back to the website.
- Brand mentions** are monitored and unlinked mentions are converted to backlinks.

### QUALITY OVER QUANTITY

Ten links from relevant, high-authority sites beat a hundred from low-quality directories. Use Ahrefs, Moz or SEMrush to grade incoming links on Domain Rating and topical relevance, and disavow anything that looks paid, irrelevant or compromised.

### WATCH OUT FOR

Cheap "link packages" and PBN (private blog network) offers. Google's Penguin and SpamBrain algorithms identify and penalise unnatural link patterns — the damage from a manual action takes months to recover from.

**OFF-PAGE SEO SCORE** \_\_\_\_\_ / 10

*Aim for 7+. Below 6 = authority gap.*

# 04

## Content & Keywords

Content is the foundation of SEO. Ensure your keyword strategy is data-driven and your content meets search intent — every page should answer a real question better than the ranking results do today.

- Keyword research** has been conducted using data-driven tools (Google Keyword Planner, Ahrefs, SEMrush).
- Search intent** is mapped for each target keyword (informational, navigational, commercial, transactional).
- Content gaps** have been identified — topics competitors rank for but you do not.
- Competitor keyword analysis** reveals opportunities for differentiation and targeting.
- A **content calendar** is in place with a regular publishing schedule (blog, guides, case studies).
- No **keyword cannibalisation** — each keyword targets a single, dedicated page.
- Thin content** pages (under 300 words with no unique value) have been improved or consolidated.

### INTENT MATCHING BEATS KEYWORD STUFFING

Google’s helpful-content systems reward pages that satisfy the searcher’s underlying question. Before writing, look at the top 5 results for your target term — if they’re all how-to guides and you publish a product page, you’re fighting the algorithm. Match the format, then beat the depth.

### SPOTTING CANNIBALISATION

Use Search Console’s Performance report and filter by query. If two or more URLs from your site appear for the same query, you have cannibalisation. Consolidate by 301-redirecting the weaker pages into the strongest one and updating internal links accordingly.

**CONTENT & KEYWORDS  
SCORE**

----- / 10

*Aim for 8+. Below 6 = content strategy gap.*

# 05

## Local SEO

If you serve a local area or have a physical location, local SEO is essential for appearing in Google Maps and local search results. Skip this section only if you operate fully online with no service area.

- Google Business Profile** is fully completed: categories, description, photos, hours, services.
- NAP consistency** (Name, Address, Phone) is identical across all online directories and citations.
- Local citations** are present on key directories (Yell, Thomson Local, Bing Places, Apple Maps).
- Reviews** are actively managed — positive reviews encouraged, negatives responded to professionally.
- LocalBusiness schema markup** is implemented on the website with correct structured data.
- Location pages** exist for each area served (if multi-location), with unique content per page.
- Local keywords** (e.g. "SEO agency London") are targeted in titles, headers and content.

### REVIEWS ARE A RANKING SIGNAL

Volume, velocity and recency of Google reviews all feed the local pack algorithm. Build review requests into your post-sale workflow — an email or SMS within 48 hours of a positive outcome converts at 10–15× the rate of asking weeks later.

### NAP DISCIPLINE

Even small differences ("Ltd" vs "Limited", old phone numbers, missing suite numbers) split your authority across multiple "businesses" in Google's eyes. Audit your top 30 citations and unify them.

**LOCAL SEO SCORE** \_\_\_\_\_ / **10**

*Aim for 8+. Below 6 = local visibility gap.*

# 06

## Analytics & Tracking

Without proper tracking, you cannot measure what is working. Ensure analytics are correctly configured and reporting is in place — if it is not in a report, it will not be acted on.

- Google Analytics 4 (GA4)** is installed and tracking all pages correctly.
- Google Search Console** is verified and the sitemap is submitted.
- Conversion tracking** is set up for key actions (form submissions, phone calls, purchases).
- Goals / Key Events** are configured in GA4 to track business-critical conversions.
- UTM parameters** are used for campaign tracking and attribution.
- Regular reporting** is in place (weekly or monthly) with actionable insights.

### GA4 ESSENTIALS

The minimum useful GA4 setup is enhanced measurement on, four to six key events configured as conversions, Search Console linked, and a monthly export to a dashboard that a non-analyst can read. Anything less and SEO becomes opinion, not evidence.

### SEARCH CONSOLE IS YOUR FREE SEO TOOL

Performance  Queries shows what people search for to find you. Pages  Coverage shows what Google has indexed (and why not). Core Web Vitals shows your real-world performance. Check it weekly — the data is free and the issues are usually fixable in hours, not weeks.

**ANALYTICS & TRACKING SCORE** \_\_\_\_\_ / **10**

*Aim for 9+. Below 6 = flying blind.*

# Σ

## Action plan & scoring summary

Transfer the score for each section into the table. Set a priority (H/M/L) based on the gap to target. Anything below 6 is a candidate for the top-3 actions on the next page.

#	AUDIT AREA	SCORE / 10	PRIORITY
01	Technical SEO	_____ / 10	<input type="checkbox"/> H <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> L
02	On-Page SEO	_____ / 10	<input type="checkbox"/> H <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> L
03	Off-Page SEO	_____ / 10	<input type="checkbox"/> H <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> L
04	Content & Keywords	_____ / 10	<input type="checkbox"/> H <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> L
05	Local SEO	_____ / 10	<input type="checkbox"/> H <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> L
06	Analytics & Tracking	_____ / 10	<input type="checkbox"/> H <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> L
Σ	<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	_____ / 60	—

### Score interpretation

50-60

**Excellent SEO foundation.** Focus on refinement, ongoing content production and emerging algorithm signals.

35-49

**Good base but significant gaps.** Prioritise sections scoring below 6 with named owners and quarterly targets.

Below 35

**Major SEO issues.** Seek professional support to build a structured remediation plan before scaling spend.



## Priority action matrix

Translate the gaps from your scoring table into a one-page plan. Capture three actions per timeframe — quick wins this week, medium-effort items this month and major projects this quarter.

QUICK WINS (THIS WEEK)	MEDIUM EFFORT (THIS MONTH)	MAJOR PROJECTS (QUARTER)
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

### Notes

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COMPLETED BY

DATE

NEXT REVIEW DUE

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### Need expert SEO support?

Our SEO team delivers audits, strategy and ongoing optimisation to grow your organic traffic and rankings — with measurable targets and monthly reporting.

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