

Kona Company has created this guide based on the recommendations from the Google SEO team. The goal of the guide is to make it easier for search engines to crawl, index, and understand your content. In general, the best practice is to optimize content primarily for your audience. Don't try too hard to optimize for the search engine itself.

SEO basics

Create unique, accurate page titles

- Page titles tell users and search engines what the topic of a page is.
- If your page appears in search results, the title tag will appear in the first line of the results. This helps users recognize if the page is relevant to their search.
- Can list the name of your website / business and include other things like location or main focuses / offerings.

Make use of the "description" meta tag

- A page's description meta tag gives Google and other search engines a summary of what the page is about.
- These are important because Google will likely use them as snippets for your pages (shown underneath page title in search results page).
- Words from the snippet are bolded when they appear in the user's query.
- Creating unique meta descriptions for each page is helpful when more than one of your site's pages show up in search results.

Improving Site Structure

Improve the structure of your URLs using simple words

- This not only helps keep your site organized, but can also lead to better crawling of your documents by search engines. It also creates "friendlier" URLs for those that want to link to your content.
- If your URL contains relevant words, this provides users and search engines more info about the page.
- The URL is also displayed below the meta description in a Google search result, and like the meta description, user-queried words appear bolded in the URL.

Make your site easier to navigate

- Navigation helps visitors quickly find the content they want and helps search engines understand what content the webmaster thinks is important.
- You should think about how visitors will go from the general page to a page containing more specific content.

Optimizing Content

Offer quality content and services

- Creating compelling and useful content will likely influence your website more than any of the other factors discussed here. This could be distributed through blog posts, social media, email, or forums.
- Anticipate differences in your users' level of knowledge and provide an appropriate mix of keywords in your content to reflect that.
- Create fresh, unique, easy-to-read content aimed at your users, not search engines.

Write better anchor text

- Anchor text is the clickable text that users see as a link.
- Improve this by making it descriptive, concise, and easy to spot.
- Doing this better means it's easier to convey the contents that are being linked to (to your users and Google).

Optimize your use of images

- The "alt" attribute allows you to specify alternative text for the image if it cannot be displayed for some reason. If the browser doesn't support an image, or the user is using a screen reader, the alt text provides information about the visuals.
- If you're using an image as a link, the alt text will be treated similarly to the anchor text of a text link.
- Alt text also makes it easier for Google Image search to understand your images.

Use heading tags appropriately

- Heading tags are visual cues to users that this text is important, and helps them understand the type of content beneath. Imagine you're writing an outline.

Dealing with Crawlers

Make effective use of robots.txt

- This file, named "robots.txt", is placed in the root directory of your site. The purpose is to restrict crawling where it's not needed.
- It's useful if certain pages of your site aren't useful for users when showing up in search results pages

Be aware of rel="nofollow" for links

- By setting links as "nofollow", this means those links on your site shouldn't be followed or pass your page's reputation to the pages linked to.
- This is useful if your site has a blog with public commenting turned on, and links within those comments could pass your reputation to pages that you aren't comfortable vouching for. This prevents comment spam. You can automatically add this tag to comment columns and message boards.

SEO for Mobile Phones

Notify Google of mobile sites

- Mobile sites not only use a different format from normal desktop sites, but the management methods and expertise required are also quite different. They need to be configured so they can be indexed correctly.
- While many mobile sites are designed with mobile viewing in mind, many weren't designed to be search friendly.

Guide mobile users accurately

- One of the most common problems is that the mobile site appears on a desktop or desktop version appears on a mobile device.
- One option is to redirect users to the appropriate version of the page.
- Google notices the URL version and displays the appropriate version in search results.
- The other way around this is instead of using redirects, the content / format changes slightly according to the user-agent. This means the URL can stay the same.