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SEO checklist

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All Squarespace templates are [built for clean indexing by search engines](#), but the content you add to your site and how you present it plays a big role in how easily people are able to find you. As you prepare to [launch your site](#), go through the list below to ensure your site is optimized for search engines and visitors alike.

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Tip: For more in-depth explanations of [SEO best practices](#), visit [Increasing your site's visibility to search engines](#).

Before launch

Before launching your site, optimize it for search engines:

- **Add a site title** - Even if you're using a [logo](#) you should add a [site title](#), as the text may be Indexed by search engines. We recommend you keep the title under 60 characters and include one or more keywords.
- **Add a site description** - Add a short (50-300 characters), relevant, readable description of your site to your [SEO site description](#). This text may appear below your [site title](#) in search results, depending on what your visitors search for.

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- **Add your location** - Your site has a better chance of appearing in searches for your area if Google and your customers can see your location. If you have a business with a physical location, we recommend you [create a Contact us page](#) with your address and a map. Alternately, in some [templates](#) your [business information](#) can display on your site.
- **Connect a custom domain** - Using a [custom domain](#) (rather than the built-in .squarespace.com URL) strengthens your brand and makes it easier for potential customers to find you in search results.
- **Connect to social media** - [Set up social sharing](#) to link to your social media profiles, push content as you publish it, and encourage people to share your [pages](#).
- **Add social sharing images** - [Social sharing images](#) display on social media when you or someone else shares your site. Add one to represent your whole site, one for each [page](#) individually, and one for each [blog post](#), product, and event.
- **Add SEO descriptions** - Ensure each [page](#) on your site has a [unique SEO description](#). The text should be short and readable (50-300 characters), and describe the content of the [page](#). You can also add [SEO descriptions](#) to individual [blog posts](#), products, and events.
- **Check your [page](#) and [title](#) formats** - [Control how your page titles appear](#) in browser tabs, social shares, and search engine results. You can set this for [page titles](#), the [homepage](#), and collection items (such as [blog posts](#) or products).
- **Create a custom 404 [page](#)** - Customize the [404 Page](#) with links to some of the popular or important areas of your site. This encourages visitors who encounter a broken link to stay on your site, rather than immediately going back to search results.
- **Choose your [blog post URL](#) format** - If you're [blogging](#), choose how your [blog post URLs](#) are automatically created. While you can choose any options that fit your needs, we recommend you always include the post's title.
- **Check [URL slugs](#)** - It's best to have [URLs](#) that reflect the content of the [page](#). If you save a [blog post](#), product, or event before adding a title, the [URL slug](#) will be a random string of characters. Check the slugs for each [page](#) and item on your site, and [change any](#) that don't use real words.
- **Ensure SSL is enabled** - Confirm your [SSL panel](#) is set to the **Secure** setting. Sites without SSL may be penalized.
- **Review your content** - Ensure you've followed our [content best practices](#) for all [pages](#) on your site.

At launch

As soon as your site is launched, we recommend you:

- **Verify your site with Google Search Console** - After you've [verified your site with Google](#), you can manage your site's presence in Google search results and see how visitors find you.
- **Request that Google index your site** - This [asks Google's bots to review your site](#) and update search results with your new content.
- **Verify your site with Bing Webmaster Tools** - [Verify your site with Bing](#) to manage your site's presence in Bing and Yahoo search results.
- **Connect to Google Analytics** - Track visits and other reporting on your site through our [built-in integration with Google](#).
- **Enable AMP** - If you have a [blog](#), [enabling AMP](#) creates a stripped-down version of your site that loads faster on mobile devices.

After launch

As you add or edit content, ensure that your site stays as friendly as possible for search engines.

- **Use your site's analytics tools** - Visit your site's [Google Search Keywords panel](#) and other analytics panels, such as [Other Search Keywords](#), [Activity Log](#), and [Traffic](#), to track changes to your site traffic and search engine ranking.
- **Follow Google Analytics** - Use our [integration with Google Analytics](#) for more visitor tracking and reporting.
- **Make updates strategically** - Continue optimizing your site by following our [content best practices](#).
- **Redirect changed or broken links** - If you change the [URL slug](#) on a [page](#) on your site, [create URL redirects](#) to forward visitors who go to the old [URL](#) to the correct [page](#).
- **Continue updating and adding content** - Updating your site frequently helps search engines see your site as active site. One way to regularly add content to your site is to [start blogging](#).

Content best practices

As you build your site, keep in mind:

- **Use keywords strategically** - Include text on your site (including [page titles](#) and [descriptions](#)) that matches the search terms people will use to find sites like yours. For more help, visit [Adding keywords for SEO](#).
- **Structure your content** - Structure your [pages](#) with [headings](#) to keep your text skim-friendly and help search engines navigate your content. Visit [our tips](#) for more help.
- **Add alt text to images** - In addition to increasing accessibility for visitors who use assistive screen readers, [alt text](#) also helps search engines identify the content of a [page](#).
- **Add social sharing images and SEO descriptions** - As you add new [pages](#) to your site, give them [social sharing logos](#) and [SEO descriptions](#).
- **Give your images readable file names** - Image file names may also be used as [alt text](#). Follow our [best practices](#) when creating your image file names.
- **Add tags and categories** - Organize your [blog posts](#), [products](#), [gallery images](#), and other content with [tags and categories](#) to help visitors navigate your site.
- **Link to your site's content** - Where it's relevant, use [content links](#) to connect the [pages](#) on your site to each other.
- **Customize URL slugs** - As you add [pages](#) and collection items, [ensure their URLs](#) reflect the content of the [page](#).
- **Keep your pages nimble** - To ensure your site loads well, [we recommend](#) keeping images under 500 KB and overall [page size](#) under 5 MB.

Site ranking changes

If you see a dip in ranking right after optimizing your site, it's okay. It's normal to see some fluctuations in your ranking while search engines index your changes.

If your ranking hasn't gone up after a week or two, check [Analytics](#) to see if there are site traffic trends that might explain the dip. For example, a change in how other websites link to your site can impact your visibility. You may also want to consider updating your [keywords](#) to target different search terms.

Note: [SEO](#) strategy falls outside of the scope of Squarespace support. Because search engines have complex, frequently changing technology, and everyone's marketing needs are unique, we're unable to provide specific [SEO](#) advice to our customers.

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