

Technical SEO Checklist (2025): A Field-Tested Playbook

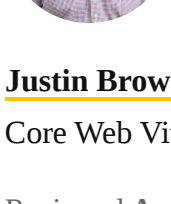
This **technical SEO checklist** helps you make your site crawlable, indexable, renderable, and fast—aligned to modern Google (Core Web Vitals with INP, helpfulness, anti-spam, entities). Start with the 15-minute TL;DR, then work through the full checklist for durable gains.

■ **Updated: Aug 9, 2025** INP replaces FID; use field data (CrUX, GSC) over lab-only scores.

Copy TL;DR

Downloadable SOPs

About the author



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Reviewed Aug 9, 2025 • Methodology: field data first (CrUX, GSC), SSR-first content, anti-abuse compliance.

TL;DR

Fast Triage

Full Checklist

Query Path SEO

Semantic SEO & Entities

Common Failures

Tools & SOPs

FAQ

Changelog

QUICK START

15-Minute TL;DR (hit these first)

Technical SEO checklist (2025): a step-by-step process to ensure your site is discoverable and competitive—covering robots.txt, sitemaps, canonicals, internal links, structured data, JavaScript SEO, Core Web Vitals (LCP/INP/CLS), internationalization (hreflang), security, and ongoing monitoring.

- Robots & crawl; Indexation & canonicals; Architecture & internal links
- Structured data & entities; JS rendering; Core Web Vitals
- Mobile & accessibility; Performance; Security; Hreflang; Logs & monitoring

- robots.txt** reachable; avoid accidental global blocks. See [robots docs](#).
- Indexation hygiene:** key templates are `index`, `follow`, self-canonical, return 200.
- XML Sitemaps:** only canonical 200 URLs; submit in GSC. [Learn more](#).
- HTTPS** everywhere; single canonical host; HTTP → HTTPS 301s; minimal redirect hops.
- Core Web Vitals** spot check: home + money templates pass LCP ≤2.5s, INP ≤200ms, CLS ≤0.10 (75th %ile) in field data (CrUX/GSC).
- Mobile rendering:** core content/links visible; no blocked resources; parity with desktop.
- Duplicate control:** parameters/prints not indexing; canonicalize or noindex.
- Analytics** + GSC verified on primary domain + variants.

Core Web Vitals Targets (Field Data)

Metric	Target	Status Hint
LCP	≤ 2.5s (75th %ile)	Good
INP	≤ 200ms (75th %ile)	Good
CLS	≤ 0.10 (75th %ile)	Good

Use GSC's CWV report + CrUX/PageSpeed Insights; Lighthouse is lab, not the source of truth.

AUDIT IN A HURRY

Fast Triage

- Crawl ~5k URLs** with JS rendering ON (Screaming Frog/Sitebulb). Export canonicals, status, indexability.
- Coverage diff:** compare GSC "Pages" (Indexed) vs XML sitemaps; investigate non-canonical/soft-404/redirected URLs.
- Top templates** (home, hub, article/product, facet): verify titles/H1s, canonicals, internal links, CWV field data.
- Logs:** confirm Googlebot spends crawl budget on canonicals (not params/404s); check 5xx spikes.
- Render parity:** raw vs rendered HTML—ensure core content/links exist without client-only JS.

Prioritize by Impact × Effort

Issue	Impact	Effort	Notes
Robots/global disallow	High	Low	Fix robots.txt; re-crawl key paths
Canonical/indexation mismatches	High	Med	Self-canonicals; remove stray 302s/soft-404s
INP long tasks	High	Med	Cut 3P scripts; split bundles; defer non-critical JS
Image LCP	Med	Low	Compress; preload; correct dimensions; CDN

In short: fix blocking robots/indexation issues first, then address INP and LCP for the biggest wins.

DEEP WORK

Full Technical SEO Checklist (2025)

1) Crawlability & Robots

Misconfigured robots can block discovery or vital resources.

How to check

- `/robots.txt` is accessible; no global `Disallow: /`. Test a few key paths.
- Robots doesn't block CSS/JS needed for rendering; verify via URL Inspection "View crawled page".
- Identify crawl-waste patterns (session IDs, tracking params, infinite calendars).

Fixes

- Remove blanket disallows; prefer canonicalization for duplicates over robots blocks.
- Allowlist critical assets (fonts/CSS/scripts). Consolidate hosts (`www/non-www`, `http/https`) with 301s.

In short: keep robots open for public pages and rendering assets; reserve disallows for true crawl waste.

2) Indexation & Canonicalization

Avoid split signals and thin/duplicate indexation.

How to check

- Indexable pages: **200**, `index`, `follow`, self-canonical; one URL = one intent.
- GSC Pages report: watch "Alternate page with proper canonical", "Soft 404", "Crawled – currently not indexed".
- Facets/parameters: confirm a strategy (whitelist, canonicalize up, or noindex).

Fixes

- Resolve parameter duplication with consistent linking + canonicals; retire stray 302s.
- Use noindex for thin/test pages; ensure sitemaps only list canonical 200s.

In short: one canonical, indexable URL per intent; clean sitemaps; no soft-404s or stray redirects.

3) URL Architecture & Internal Linking

How to check

- Money pages ≤ 3 clicks from home; check click depth distribution.
- Hubs link down to children; children link up and sideways; avoid orphans.
- Anchor text is descriptive; avoid generic "read more".

Fixes

- Build entity/topic hubs and link consistently from related articles.
- Add in-content contextual links (not only nav/footer); surface faceted "best" pages.

In short: compress click depth and use descriptive anchors to concentrate PageRank on money pages.

4) Structured Data & Entity Signals

How to check

- JSON-LD for **Organization**, **BreadCrumbList**, **Article/Product**, **FAQPage** where relevant.
- Org facts (name/logo/sameAs) consistent site-wide; on-page facts match schema.
- Validate with Rich Results Test; avoid spammy/irrelevant markup.

Fixes

- Add ItemList for this checklist; HowTo for triage; FAQPage for FAQs.
- Keep schema minimal and accurate; map IDs/anchors to headings.

In short: use JSON-LD to clarify page purpose and boost rich results without exaggeration.

5) JavaScript SEO & Rendering

How to check

- Compare raw vs rendered HTML—core content/links should exist pre-JS.
- Infinite scroll exposes crawlable pagination URLs; avoid JS-only navigation.
- Audit main-thread long tasks; bundle sizes; hydration delays.

Fixes

- Prefer SSR/SSG for critical content; lazy-hydrate non-critical widgets.
- Split bundles; defer/async non-critical scripts; inline critical CSS.

In short: ship indexable HTML for what matters; cut JS cost to improve INP and crawling.

6) Page Experience & Core Web Vitals

Targets

- LCP** ≤ 2.5s, **INP** ≤ 200ms, **CLS** ≤ 0.10 at the 75th percentile (field data).
- Use GSC CWV report, CrUX, RUM; Lighthouse only for lab diagnostics.

Fixes

- LCP:** optimize hero (preload, compress, correct dimensions); server-render above-the-fold.
- INP:** reduce JS, trim third-party scripts, break up long tasks >200ms.
- CLS:** set width/height; reserve space for ads/embeds; avoid layout thrash.

In short: prioritize field data; fix the biggest real-user bottlenecks first (hero image, third-party JS, layout shifts).

7) Mobile-First & Accessibility

How to check

- Same primary content/links on mobile and desktop (parity).
- Tap targets, font sizes, contrast; keyboard navigation; focus states.
- No intrusive interstitials or blocking overlays.

Fixes

- Responsive templates; remove m-dot variants.
- Audit accessibility basics (labels, alt text, headings order, ARIA where needed).

In short: keep content parity and basic a11y to avoid hidden content and engagement issues.

8) Performance & Infrastructure

How to check

- CDN + HTTP/2 or HTTP/3; Brotli compression; caching headers.
- Images: WebP/AVIF with `srcset` and correct sizes; avoid oversized images.
- DB/index performance on high-traffic templates; TTFB outliers.

Fixes

- Edge cache HTML where safe; tune server/DB; use image CDN (auto format/quality).
- Preconnect/preload critical origins; minimize DNS lookups.

In short: ship fewer bytes, cache more, and tackle backend hot spots that inflate TTFB.

9) Security & Integrity

How to check

- HTTPS/HTTPS; no mixed content.
- GSC "Security Issues" clean; no malware/injection.
- No deceptive ads, cloaking, or sneaky redirects.

Fixes

- Enforce HTTPS; audit third-party scripts; apply CSP and SRI where feasible.
- Automate dependency updates; monitor for integrity regressions.

In short: protect users and signals—security regressions often cause hard-to-diagnose traffic drops.

10) Internationalization (hreflang)

How to check

- Valid, reciprocal hreflang pairs; include self-references.
- Correct language-region codes; canonicals align with alternates.
- Decide ccTLD vs subfolder; avoid mixing regional content on one URL.

Fixes

- Generate via sitemaps or tags; validate with dedicated tools.
- Keep content language-consistent per URL; map alternates 1:1.

In short: hreflang should be reciprocal, consistent, and aligned to your canonical strategy.

11) Monitoring, Logs & Troubleshooting

How to check

- Weekly crawls; track 5xx/404 spikes; alert on robots.txt and SSL expiry.
- Logs: top crawled paths, waste URLs, status mix, Googlebot patterns.
- GSC: Indexing → Pages; Sitemaps; Enhancements; Manual actions.

Fixes

- Pre-prod crawl → release → post-release diff + rollback plan.
- Add uptime/latency monitors; alert on sitemap errors and sudden canonical shifts.

In short: monitor proactively so regressions don't sit unnoticed for weeks.

QUERY PATH SEO

Map intent → templates → links

TOFU (Learn)

- what is *technical seo checklist*, *seo audit checklist*
- Pillar + glossary; interlink to explainers and CWV/JS SEO hubs.

MOFU (Do)

- technical seo audit steps*, *fix core web vitals*, *solve indexing issues*
- Action guides; link back to this checklist and relevant fixes.

BOFU (Hire)

- [technical seo services](#), *log analysis*
- Service page with proof/process/pricing; linked from fixes.

SEMANTIC SEO

Entity Coverage Checklist

Google Search Console Core Web Vitals LCP INP CLS CrUX robots.txt XML Sitemap Canonical URL Noindex Hreflang PageRank

Internal Links Crawl Budget Server Logs SSR/SSG JavaScript SEO Critical CSS HTTP/3 CDN Brotli Spam Policies Site Reputation Abuse

AI Overviews

TROUBLESHOOTING

Common Failure Patterns

Why does Search Console show "Discovered – currently not indexed"?

Strengthen internal links and hubs; fix thin content; submit updated sitemaps after improvements; watch GSC coverage status change.

Why does Google miss content that looks fine in my browser?

Client-only content/links. Add SSR/SSG or server-render critical parts; expose paginated URLs.

Why are field data poor when lab scores are great?

Real users on slow devices. Compress images, reduce third-party scripts, cut main-thread JS for INP.

Why did our third-party review subdirectory cause a drop?

Potential site reputation abuse. Prune/noindex and refocus on first-party, relevant content.

OPERATIONS

Tools & SOPs

Tools

- Crawlers:** Screaming Frog / Sitebulb (JS rendering ON)
- Web Vitals:** GSC CWV, PageSpeed Insights, your RUM/CrUX
- Logs:** GoAccess/ELK for Googlebot analysis
- Release Mgmt:** Pre-prod crawl → post-release diff

Living SOP

- Pre-launch checks (robots, canonicals, sitemaps, CWV)
- Post-launch checks (coverage diffs, error budgets)
- Monthly hygiene (404/5xx, logs, schema validation)
- Rollback plan for template regressions

Prefer a one-pager? Export this page to PDF or copy the TL;DR. It pairs perfectly with our [technical SEO services](#).

FAQ

Technical SEO Checklist — FAQ

► Are Core Web Vitals a ranking factor?

► Is "Helpful Content" still a thing?

► Do I need schema to rank?

► What is INP and why did it replace FID?

► How often should I run a technical SEO audit?

CHANGELOG

What's New

- Aug 9, 2025 — 2025 edition: INP replaces FID; anti-abuse guidance; expanded schema (FAQ/ItemList/HowTo); improved AI Overviews readiness; E-E-A-T card.