Ultimate Shopify SEO Checklist

SEO can be overwhelming for new Shopify store owners. Improving your Shopify store's search engine ranking is easy with these 8 simple tips.

Before you get started, set up Google Analytics and Search Console.

- [ ] Set up Google Analytics to get a wide range of key metrics that will help you make informed decision to improve your site's search ranking.
- [ ] Set up Google Search Console to check indexing status and optimize visibility of your store (once you set it up you can access a lot of info right in Google Analytics).

1. Submit a Sitemap to Google Search Console

- [ ] Sign in to Google Search Console
- [ ] In the sidebar, select your website
- [ ] Click on 'Index' to expand the section and then click on 'Sitemaps'
- [ ] Remove outdated or invalid sitemaps (if any) like sitemap.xml
- [ ] Enter sitemap_index.xml into the text box that appears
- [ ] Click Submit
- [ ] Fix any "crawling" errors you see after submitting your sitemap. Search engines systematically browse through your website and all of its web pages. If they're unable to reach a specific page, you'll see an error. Get more info on what's causing it based on the error code, and fix it.

2. Do Your Keyword Research

- [ ] Look into keywords related to your products and store, and look for high search volume terms you want to rank for.

For example, if you have a Shopify store selling leather phone cases, you might want to optimize for keywords like, "leather phone cases wallet," and "leather phone cases for iPhone XR" in addition to more general terms.

- [ ] We recommend using a keyword research tool such as Google's Keyword Planner or ahrefs. If you're a total newbie to keyword research, a simple way to start is by using Google Suggest. Just type a phrase into Google and see what related searches it auto-suggests.

3. Optimize Your Shop's Pages Based on Your Keyword Research

- [ ] Optimize your URL. A well-crafted URL provides both humans and search engines an easy-to-understand indication of what the destination page will be about and it should use the keyword/phrase you want to rank for. Using the example above we might want a page with the url: "mystore.com/leather-phone-case-iphonexr
- [ ] Keep page titles short and concise. Google displays the first 50 to 60 characters for most page titles, so be sure to keep your page title below 55 characters. Ensure that it accurately describes your content and is not misleading.
- [ ] Meta descriptions. Like page title, meta descriptions are also truncated to 160 characters. Be sure to keep your meta descriptions brief (under 155 characters) and include keywords toward the beginning of your descriptions.
- [ ] Use only one H1 tag on your pages. H1 tags are usually designated for page titles and should contain the page's main keyword.

4. Optimize Your Images for SEO

- [ ] Make sure that you have the right to use the image.
- [ ] Change your image filename to something that's relevant to the page and includes one of your target keywords for the page. Using the same example, a good image filename would be "leather-phone-case-iphone-xr.jpg"
- [ ] Always update the alt text for your images. Include your primary keyword for the page and something descriptive from the image itself. Using our example, an alt tag could be "Our supple leather phone case perfectly hugs the curves of the iPhone XR."

5. Get Backlinks to Your Store

- [ ] Guest blogging: Bloggers generally love having guest writers because it gives their site fresh content for very little effort, so it's worthwhile to look for opportunities to secure a backlink this way.
- [ ] Get links from your manufacturers: If you don't make your own products, it's a common practice for many e-commerce shop owners to ask the manufacturers of the products they sell to list their shop on their directories.
- [ ] Get your products reviewed by influencers: Another easy way to get backlinks is by sending your products to bloggers within your niche to do a product review.

6. Develop a Content Strategy

- [ ] Develop a mission for your blog and a content marketing strategy based on your keyword research.

7. Social Media

- [ ] Create social media profiles on platforms like Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and Pinterest (do some research to see which channels would be best for your store). You should also make it easy for your shopper's to share your images and pages on social media with "share" links on your site.

8. Additional Tips

- [ ] Fortunately, pretty much every theme on the Shopify Theme Store is mobile friendly, but make sure yours is so you don't miss out on sales.
- [ ] Ensure that your store is quick and responsive. Google's PageSpeed Insights in an excellent tool to analyze the performance of your store.
- [ ] To ensure you're following current best practices, visit Google's Search Console Help Section.
- [ ] Use the Shopify App Store to your advantage. Sign up for a free 30 day trial of Back in Stock and send customers notifications when popular products are back in stock to maximize your sales.

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