



Keyword Research Checklist

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Phase 1: Foundation & Preparation

- ☐ Define your target audience demographics and psychographics
- ☐ Identify your business goals and KPIs for SEO
- ☐ Set up essential keyword research tools (Google Keyword Planner, SEMrush, Ahrefs, etc.)
- ☐ Create a spreadsheet template for organizing keyword data
- ☐ Review your existing website content and current rankings
- ☐ Analyze your Google Search Console data for existing keyword performance

Phase 2: Seed Keyword Generation

- ☐ Brainstorm core topics related to your business/industry
- ☐ List your main products, services, and solutions
- ☐ Identify customer pain points and questions
- ☐ Review competitor websites for keyword ideas
- ☐ Mine customer support tickets and FAQs for language patterns
- ☐ Use Google Suggest and "People Also Ask" for variations
- ☐ Check related searches at bottom of Google SERPs

Phase 3: Keyword Expansion & Discovery

- ☐ Use keyword research tools to expand seed keywords
- ☐ Identify long-tail keyword opportunities
- ☐ Find question-based keywords (who, what, where, when, why, how)
- ☐ Discover commercial intent keywords (buy, price, review, best, top)
- ☐ Uncover local keywords if applicable (near me, city names)
- ☐ Research seasonal and trending keywords
- ☐ Explore semantic and LSI keywords

Phase 4: Competitive Analysis

- ☐ Identify top 5-10 competitors in your space
- ☐ Analyze competitor keyword rankings using tools
- ☐ Find keyword gaps (keywords competitors rank for but you don't)
- ☐ Identify easy-win opportunities (low competition keywords)
- ☐ Study competitor content strategies and topics
- ☐ Review competitor meta titles and descriptions
- ☐ Analyze competitor backlink anchor text

Phase 5: Keyword Metrics Evaluation

- ☐ Check search volume for each keyword
- ☐ Assess keyword difficulty/competition scores
- ☐ Calculate potential traffic estimates
- ☐ Review cost-per-click (CPC) data for commercial value
- ☐ Analyze search intent (informational, navigational, commercial, transactional)
- ☐ Check SERP features (featured snippets, PAA, knowledge panels)
- ☐ Evaluate click-through rate potential

Phase 6: Keyword Prioritization

- ☐ Score keywords based on relevance to business goals
- ☐ Prioritize by search volume vs. competition ratio
- ☐ Group keywords by topic clusters and themes
- ☐ Identify primary vs. secondary keywords for each page
- ☐ Map keywords to buyer journey stages
- ☐ Create content gap analysis
- ☐ Develop keyword implementation timeline

Phase 7: Implementation Planning

- ☐ Map keywords to specific pages/URLs
- ☐ Create content briefs for new pages needed
- ☐ Optimize existing content for target keywords
- ☐ Plan internal linking strategy
- ☐ Set up rank tracking for target keywords
- ☐ Create editorial calendar based on keyword priorities
- ☐ Assign team responsibilities and deadlines

Phase 8: Monitoring & Optimization

- ☐ Set up weekly/monthly ranking reports
- ☐ Monitor organic traffic changes
- ☐ Track conversion rates by keyword
- ☐ Review and update keyword list quarterly
- ☐ Adjust strategy based on performance data
- ☐ Test different keyword variations
- ☐ Document successful strategies and learnings

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