

SEO GUIDE

# The SEO Audit Checklist

A systematic, page-by-page framework to find and fix every SEO issue on your site

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by Rook 🐼

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## The Complete SEO Audit Checklist

CHAPTER 01

# Score Your Site in 30 Minutes

*A structured, weighted framework for evaluating any website’s search performance — from technical foundations to AI-readiness.*

## ► How to Use This Checklist

This audit is divided into **six weighted categories** that together produce a score out of 100. For each item, mark it as ☐ **Pass**, ☐ **Partial**, or ☐ **Fail**. Tally your points at the end of each section, then calculate your final score using the weighting table.

**Scoring per item:**

RESULT	POINTS
<input type="checkbox"/> Pass	Full points for that item
<input type="checkbox"/> Partial	Half points (round down)
<input type="checkbox"/> Fail	0 points

**Time estimate:** 25–35 minutes with the right tools open.

CHAPTER 02

# Scoring Overview

#	CATEGORY	WEIGHT	MAX RAW SCORE	WEIGHTED MAX
1	Technical SEO	25%	30	25
2	On-Page SEO	25%	28	25
3	Off-Page SEO	15%	18	15
4	Content Quality & E-E-A-T	15%	18	15
5	Local SEO	10%	14	10
6	AI & GEO Readiness	10%	16	10
Total		100%		100

Your weighted score formula:

Category Score = (Your Raw Points ÷ Max Raw Score) × Weight  
Final Score = Sum of all Category Scores

CHAPTER 03

# Score Interpretation

SCORE	RATING	WHAT IT MEANS
90–100	🟢 Excellent	Best-in-class. Focus on marginal gains and emerging trends.
75–89	🟡 Strong	Solid foundations. Address the gaps to pull ahead of competitors.
55–74	🟠 Needs Work	Significant opportunities being missed. Prioritise red items.
35–54	🔴 Weak	Fundamental issues present. Likely losing traffic to fixable problems.
0–34	🔴 Critical	Major structural failures. Treat this as a rebuild, not a tune-up.

## CHAPTER 04

# Category 1: Technical SEO (25%)

The invisible architecture that determines whether search engines can find, crawl, and understand your site.

Max Raw Score: 30

### ► Core Web Vitals (12 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
1.1	<b>Largest Contentful Paint (LCP)</b> — Is LCP $\leq 2.5$ s on mobile? Test via PageSpeed Insights or CrUX.	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1.2	<b>Cumulative Layout Shift (CLS)</b> — Is CLS $\leq 0.1$ ? Check for images without dimensions, injected content, and web fonts causing layout jumps.	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1.3	<b>Interaction to Next Paint (INP)</b> — Is INP $\leq 200$ ms? Test interactive elements (menus, forms, accordions) on mobile.	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	

▮ **Tool tip:** Run your homepage and a key landing page through [PageSpeed Insights](#). Use field data (real users) over lab data where available.

### ► Crawlability (8 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
1.4	<b>Robots.txt</b> — Does it exist, allow critical paths, and block only what's intended? No accidental <code>Disallow: /</code> directives.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1.5	<b>XML Sitemap</b> — Is a valid sitemap submitted to Google Search Console and Bing Webmaster Tools? Does it include only indexable, canonical URLs?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
1.6	<b>Crawl Errors</b> — Are there fewer than 5 critical crawl errors in Search Console? No 5xx responses on important pages.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1.7	<b>Site Architecture</b> — Can every important page be reached within 3 clicks from the homepage? No orphan pages.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## ► Indexation (6 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
1.8	<b>Index Coverage</b> — Run <code>site:yourdomain.com</code> . Is the indexed page count within 10% of your expected total? No unexpected pages indexed.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1.9	<b>Canonical Tags</b> — Does every page have a self-referencing canonical tag? Are duplicate/variant pages canonicalised correctly?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1.10	<b>Noindex Audit</b> — Are any important pages accidentally noindexed? Check meta robots tags and HTTP headers.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## ► Schema Markup (4 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
1.11	<b>Structured Data Present</b> — Does the site implement relevant schema types (Organisation, Product, Article, FAQ, BreadcrumbList, LocalBusiness)?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
1.12	<b>Schema Validation</b> — Does all structured data pass Google's Rich Results Test with zero errors and zero warnings?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

▮ **Tool tip:** Use [Schema.org Validator](#) and [Google's Rich Results Test](#) side by side.

Category 1 Raw Score: \_\_\_\_ / 30

## CHAPTER 05

# Category 2: On-Page SEO (25%)

The elements on each page that tell search engines — and humans — what your content is about.

Max Raw Score: 28

### ► Meta Tags (8 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
2.1	<b>Title Tags</b> — Does every key page have a unique title tag, 50–60 characters, containing the primary keyword near the front?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.2	<b>Meta Descriptions</b> — Does every key page have a unique, compelling meta description, 140–160 characters, with a clear call to action?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.3	<b>Open Graph Tags</b> — Are <code>og:title</code> , <code>og:description</code> , <code>og:image</code> , and <code>og:url</code> set correctly for social sharing?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.4	<b>Twitter/X Cards</b> — Are Twitter Card tags present with a valid <code>twitter:card</code> type and preview image?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

### ► Heading Structure (6 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
2.5	<b>H1 Tag</b> — Does every page have exactly one H1 that includes the primary target keyword?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.6	<b>Heading Hierarchy</b> — Do headings follow a logical H1 → H2 → H3 structure with no skipped levels?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
2.7	<b>Keyword Placement</b> — Do H2/H3 headings naturally incorporate secondary and related keywords?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

### ► Internal Linking (8 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
2.8	<b>Contextual Internal Links</b> — Does each piece of content contain at least 2–3 contextual links to related pages on the site?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.9	<b>Anchor Text Variety</b> — Are internal link anchor texts descriptive and varied (not just “click here” or “read more”)?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.10	<b>Broken Internal Links</b> — Are there zero broken internal links? Run a crawl to check for 404s.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.11	<b>Link Equity Flow</b> — Do your most important pages receive the most internal links? Check with a crawl tool’s internal link distribution report.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

### ► URL Structure (6 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
2.12	<b>Clean URLs</b> — Are URLs short, lowercase, hyphen-separated, and human-readable? No query parameters, session IDs, or unnecessary folders.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.13	<b>HTTPS</b> — Is the entire site served over HTTPS with a valid SSL certificate? No mixed content warnings.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.14	<b>Redirect Chains</b> — Are there no redirect chains longer than one hop? Every redirect goes directly to the final destination.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	



▮ **Tool tip:** *Screaming Frog (free up to 500 URLs) will catch most on-page issues in a single crawl: broken links, duplicate titles, missing headings, redirect chains, and more.*

Category 2 Raw Score: \_\_\_\_ / 28

## CHAPTER 06

# Category 3: Off-Page SEO (15%)

*Your site's reputation and authority as perceived through external signals.*

Max Raw Score: 18

### ► Backlink Profile (10 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
3.1	<b>Domain Authority / Domain Rating</b> — Is your DA/DR competitive with the top 3 ranking competitors for your primary keywords?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3.2	<b>Referring Domains Growth</b> — Has the number of unique referring domains grown (or remained stable) over the past 6 months?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3.3	<b>Toxic Backlinks</b> — Have you audited for spammy or toxic backlinks and disavowed where necessary? Less than 5% of links flagged as toxic.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3.4	<b>Anchor Text Distribution</b> — Is your anchor text profile natural? A healthy mix of branded, naked URL, generic, and keyword-rich anchors.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3.5	<b>Link Relevance</b> — Do the majority of your backlinks come from topically relevant domains?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

### ► Brand Signals (4 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
3.6	<b>Brand Mentions</b> — Is your brand mentioned (linked or unlinked) on relevant industry sites, publications, or forums?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3.7	<b>Branded Search Volume</b> — Does your brand name generate measurable search volume? Check Google Trends or Search Console.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

### ► Directory & Citation Presence (4 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
3.8	<b>Key Directories</b> — Is your business listed on the top 5 relevant directories for your industry (e.g., Yelp, Trustpilot, G2, Capterra, industry-specific)?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3.9	<b>NAP Consistency</b> — Is your Name, Address, and Phone number identical across all directory listings?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

🔧 **Tool tip:** Use Ahrefs, Semrush, or Moz (free tiers available) for backlink analysis. For brand mentions, try Google Alerts or BrandMentions.

Category 3 Raw Score: \_\_\_\_ / 18

## CHAPTER 07

# Category 4: Content Quality & E-E-A-T (15%)

Google's quality rater guidelines emphasise Experience, Expertise, Authoritativeness, and Trustworthiness. This is how your content stacks up.

Max Raw Score: 18

### ► Content Depth (8 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
4.1	<b>Search Intent Match</b> — Does each key page clearly satisfy the dominant search intent (informational, navigational, commercial, transactional) for its target keyword?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4.2	<b>Content Comprehensiveness</b> — Does your content cover the topic as thoroughly as (or more than) the current top 3 ranking pages?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4.3	<b>Freshness</b> — Has key content been reviewed and updated within the past 12 months? Are “last updated” dates visible?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4.4	<b>Multimedia</b> — Does content include relevant images, videos, charts, or infographics (not just walls of text)?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

### ► E-E-A-T Signals (6 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
4.5	<b>Author Information</b> — Do articles/content pages display author names with linked bios showing credentials and experience?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4.6	<b>About &amp; Trust Pages</b> — Does the site have a comprehensive About page, Contact page, and Privacy Policy? Are they easily accessible?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4.7	<b>External Citations</b> — Does content reference and link to authoritative external sources where appropriate?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

### ► User Experience (4 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
4.8	<b>Readability</b> — Is content formatted for scannability? Short paragraphs, bullet points, clear subheadings, adequate white space.	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
4.9	<b>Mobile Experience</b> — Does content render well on mobile without horizontal scrolling, tiny text, or overlapping elements?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

▮ **Tool tip:** Use Google's "People Also Ask" and "Related Searches" to check if your content covers the subtopics users actually care about. Clearscope or SurferSEO can score content comprehensiveness.

Category 4 Raw Score: \_\_\_\_ / 18

## CHAPTER 08

# Category 5: Local SEO (10%)

If your business serves a specific geographic area, these signals are non-negotiable. If you're a purely online/global business, score each item you've optimised or mark N/A and redistribute the weight to Category 4.

Max Raw Score: 14

## ► Google Business Profile (8 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
5.1	<b>GBP Claimed &amp; Verified</b> — Is your Google Business Profile claimed, verified, and actively managed?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5.2	<b>Complete Profile</b> — Are all fields filled: business name, category, address, phone, hours, website, description, attributes?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5.3	<b>Photos &amp; Posts</b> — Have you uploaded recent photos (last 90 days) and published Google Posts (last 30 days)?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
5.4	<b>Reviews &amp; Responses</b> — Do you have ≥10 reviews with a ≥4.0 average rating? Are all reviews responded to within 48 hours?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

### ► Local On-Page (6 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
5.5	<b>Location Pages</b> — If you serve multiple areas, does each have a unique, content-rich location page (not just swapped city names)?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5.6	<b>Local Schema</b> — Is <code>LocalBusiness</code> schema implemented with correct NAP data, geo-coordinates, and opening hours?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5.7	<b>Localised Content</b> — Does your content reference local landmarks, events, or context where relevant?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

🔧 **Tool tip:** Use the [GMB Everywhere](#) Chrome extension to audit competitors' Google Business Profiles alongside your own.

Category 5 Raw Score: \_\_\_\_ / 14

## CHAPTER 09

# Category 6: AI & GEO Readiness (10%)

Generative Engine Optimisation (GEO) is the emerging discipline of optimising for AI-powered search (ChatGPT, Perplexity, Google AI Overviews, Copilot). These checks position your site for the next era of search.

Max Raw Score: 16

## ► Structured & Machine-Readable Content (6 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
6.1	<b>Clear, Quotable Answers</b> — Do key pages contain concise, direct answers to common questions in the first 100 words or in a clearly marked summary?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6.2	<b>FAQ Sections</b> — Do relevant pages include FAQ sections with <code>FAQPage</code> schema markup?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6.3	<b>Data Tables &amp; Lists</b> — Are comparisons, specifications, and structured information presented in HTML tables or ordered lists (not just prose)?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## ► Authority & Citability (6 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
6.4	<b>Original Research &amp; Data</b> — Does your site publish original statistics, surveys, case studies, or data that AI models might cite?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6.5	<b>Topical Authority</b> — Do you have a content cluster with 5+ interlinked pieces covering a single topic in depth?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6.6	<b>Brand Entity Presence</b> — Does your brand appear in knowledge panels, Wikipedia, Wikidata, or Crunchbase?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

## ► Technical AI Accessibility (4 points)

#	CHECK	POINTS	RESULT	NOTES
6.7	<b>AI Crawler Access</b> — Does your <code>robots.txt</code> allow (or intentionally block) AI crawlers (GPTBot, ClaudeBot, PerplexityBot, Bytespider)? Is this a deliberate decision?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6.8	<b>Semantic HTML</b> — Is content structured with semantic HTML5 elements ( <code>&lt;article&gt;</code> , <code>&lt;section&gt;</code> , <code>&lt;aside&gt;</code> , <code>&lt;figure&gt;</code> ) rather than generic <code>&lt;div&gt;</code> soup?	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	

🔧 **Tool tip:** Search for your brand on [Perplexity.ai](#) and [ChatGPT](#). If neither mentions you, your GEO signals need serious work. Check your `robots.txt` for lines mentioning GPTBot, ClaudeBot, or similar.

Category 6 Raw Score: \_\_\_\_ / 16

CHAPTER 10

# Final Score Calculation

Use this table to calculate your weighted score:

CATEGORY	YOUR RAW SCORE	÷ MAX RAW	= RATIO	× WEIGHT	= WEIGHTED SCORE
1. Technical SEO	____	÷ 30	= ____	× 25	= ____
2. On-Page SEO	____	÷ 28	= ____	× 25	= ____
3. Off-Page SEO	____	÷ 18	= ____	× 15	= ____
4. Content & E-E-A-T	____	÷ 18	= ____	× 15	= ____
5. Local SEO	____	÷ 14	= ____	× 10	= ____
6. AI & GEO Readiness	____	÷ 16	= ____	× 10	= ____
Final Score					____ / 100

CHAPTER 11

# Quick-Reference Tool Stack

These free and freemium tools cover every check in this audit:

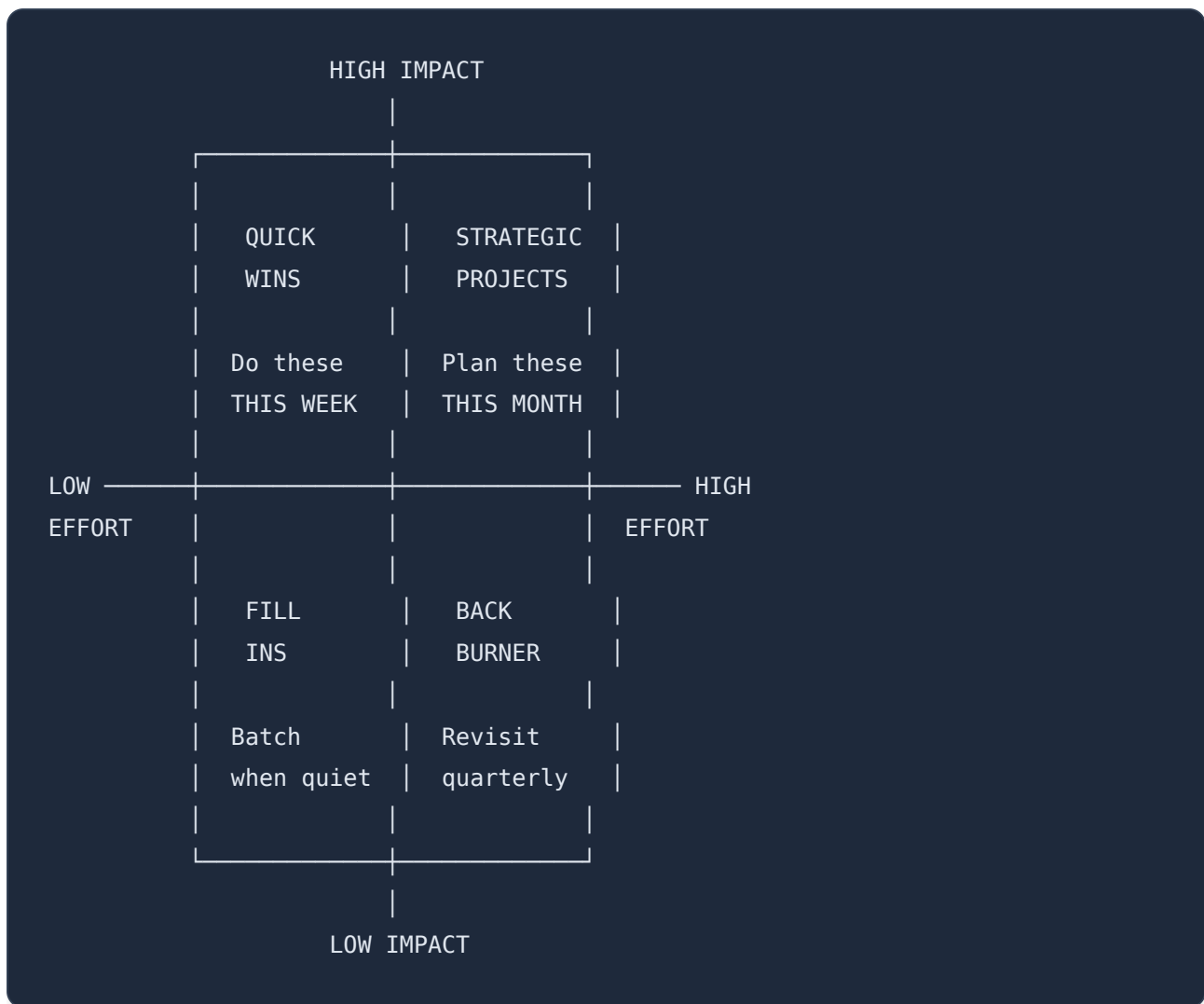
TOOL	WHAT IT COVERS	FREE TIER
Google Search Console	Indexation, crawl errors, Core Web Vitals, search performance	☐ Fully free
Google PageSpeed Insights	Core Web Vitals, performance diagnostics	☐ Fully free
Screaming Frog SEO Spider	On-page audit, broken links, redirects, meta tags, headings	☐ Up to 500 URLs
Ahrefs Webmaster Tools	Backlink profile, referring domains, technical SEO issues	☐ Limited free
Google's Rich Results Test	Schema validation, rich snippet eligibility	☐ Fully free
Moz Link Explorer	Domain authority, link analysis	☐ 10 queries/month
Google Business Profile	Local SEO management	☐ Fully free
Perplexity.ai / ChatGPT	GEO visibility check (search your brand)	☐ Free tiers
GTmetrix	Page speed, waterfall analysis, Core Web Vitals	☐ Limited free
WAVE Accessibility Tool	Accessibility checks (correlates with UX quality)	☐ Fully free

CHAPTER 12

# Priority Action Matrix

After scoring, use this matrix to decide what to fix first:





#### Common quick wins (high impact, low effort):

- Fix broken internal links
- Add missing meta descriptions
- Compress oversized images (LCP improvement)
- Add `alt` attributes to images
- Submit an updated XML sitemap
- Fix redirect chains
- Claim and complete your Google Business Profile

#### Common strategic projects (high impact, high effort):

- Build topical authority content clusters
- Earn backlinks through original research
- Implement comprehensive schema markup
- Improve Core Web Vitals across the site
- Create location-specific landing pages

- Publish FAQ content with structured data for GEO

CHAPTER 13

# Re-Audit Schedule

Audit Type	Frequency	Focus
Full audit (this checklist)	Every 6 months	Complete reassessment
Technical spot-check	Monthly	Core Web Vitals, crawl errors, indexation
Content review	Quarterly	Freshness, new keyword opportunities, E-E-A-T
Competitor benchmark	Quarterly	Compare scores against top 3 competitors
GEO check	Monthly	Search your brand in AI tools, monitor visibility

CHAPTER 14

# Changelog

Version	Date	Changes
1.0	February 2026	Initial release

Built for marketers, founders, and agencies who believe SEO is a system — not a guessing game.

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# The SEO Audit Checklist

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