

# On-Page and Technical SEO





# **How to optimize content for SEO**



"The most basic signal that information is relevant is when a webpage **contains the same keywords as your search query**. If those keywords appear on the page, or if they appear in the headings or body of the text, the information is more likely to be relevant."

-Google's "How Search Works" report



# **In this video, we're going to cover these on-page SEO elements:**

- Heading tags
- Title tags
- External links

# **What is a page heading tag?**

An HTML element that provides a hierarchical structure to a web page.

# **Best Practices for Page Headings**

- Your page title should have an H1 tag.
- Subsequent headings on the page should have an H2 or H3 tag, and so on.
- Use your primary keyword in your page title.

MARKETING | 6 MIN READ

## A Quick Primer on Google's Search Engine Results Page (SERP)

Written by Caroline Forsey @cforsey1



In simplified terms, a SERP (which stands for Search Engine Results Page) contains two types of content: organic and paid results.

In an effort to make the user search experience easier and more direct, Google created SERP features, on-page content that gives users answers to their queries without requiring them to click into an organic result. Although on-page SERP features are optimal for the user, they can make it harder for marketers to get noticed in organic search results, even when they're ranking #1.

### [Access Now: 21 SEO Myths to Leave Behind in 2021](#)

Search engines are smarter today than ever before. A few years ago, a search for "pizza" would result in a predictable mixture of restaurant websites, directories, review sites like YELP, and blog posts about the top pizza places in Boston.

Today, here's what you get when you search "pizza":



# Here's an example of how heading tags appear on a blog post.

- H1: A Quick Primer on Google's Search Engine Results Page (SERP)
- H2: What Does SERP Stand For?
- H2: SERP Features
- H3: Rich Snippets
- H3: Paid Results
- H3: Universal Results

# **What is a title tag?**

An HTML element that specifies the title of a web page (also known as the “SEO title”).

# This title in SERPs is the same as the page heading.

ahrefs.com › Home › Archive – The Ahrefs Blog

## How to Craft the Perfect SEO Title Tag (Our 4-Step Process)

What are SEO titles tags? (and why are they important?) A title tag is the HTML element used to specify the ...

May 28, 2020 · Uploaded by Ahrefs

**a hrefs blog**

Brought to you by Ahrefs, a data-driven marketing toolset  
powered by a huge index of backlinks, keywords and content



GENERAL SEO

## How to Craft the Perfect SEO Title Tag (Our 4-Step Process)

Joshua Hardwick • Updated: May 28, 2020 • English ▾

# This title tag is too long.

It gets cut off in search engine results, so searchers can't read the entire thing.

www.convinceandconvert.com › content-marketing › h... :

## How to Create a Winning Content Marketing Strategy in 7 ...

How to Create a **Content Marketing** Strategy in 7 Easy Steps · 1. Document Your Goals · 2.

Determine Your "One Thing" · 4. Identify Your Top 5 Audiences · 5.

## Title Tag

### What is a title tag?

A title tag is an HTML element that specifies the title of a web page. Title tags are displayed on search engine results pages (SERPs) as the clickable headline for a given result, and are important for usability, SEO, and social sharing. The title tag of a web page is meant to be an accurate and concise description of a page's content.

Enter your title below to see how it would appear in Google's search results:

Title Tag Preview Tool

Check

example.com > Books > A Tale of Two Springfields  
**It was the best of times, it was the blurst of times, it was the ...**

Display titles in Google results have a 600-pixel width limit, but most are truncated before that at the nearest word break. Moz recommends keeping your titles under 60 characters.

For the most accurate results, view on a desktop browser.

## Pro Tip: Preview Your Title Before Publishing

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Moz's Title Tag Preview tool lets you preview how your title will appear in SERPs and whether it might get cut off.

# **Best Practices for Title Tags**

- Include your primary keyword in your title tag.
- Keep your title under 60 characters, if possible.
- Make sure both your page heading and title answer the searcher's primary question.

**It also helps your on-page SEO to include external links on your pages.**

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These are links to other website's content.



## **These tools offer suggestions to improve your content as you write it:**

- Yoast SEO plugin for WordPress
- Built-in SEO Wiz in Wix
- Optimizations in HubSpot page and blog editor



# Allowing Search Engines to Index Your Pages



# **Search engines have 3 primary functions:**

**Crawl:** Search webpages and look over the code and content for each URL.

**Index:** Store and organize the information it finds from crawling.

**Rank:** Provide the pieces of content that best match a person's search query.



# How is online information categorized?

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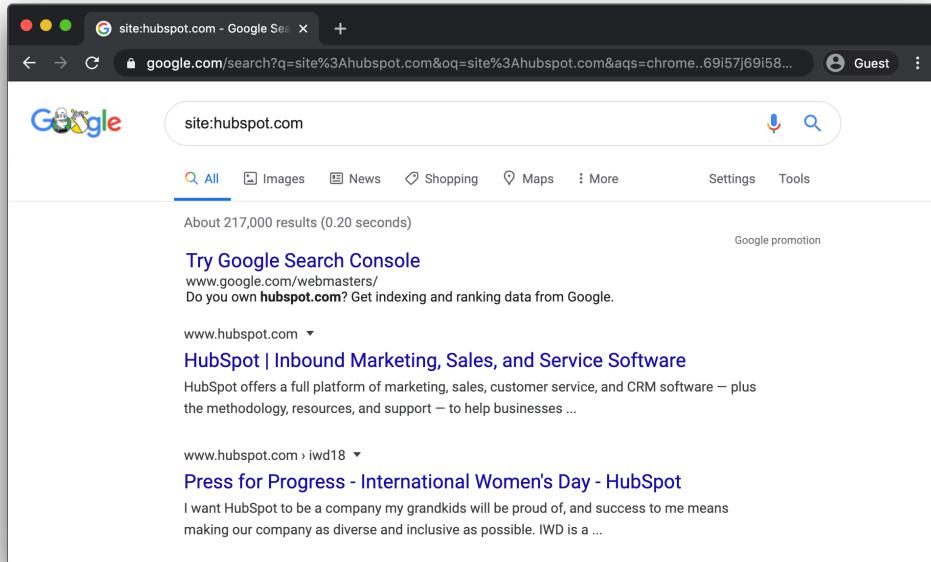
Think of this process like a library. Google is a massive library. Books need to be identified, categorized, and placed in the right order on shelves.

An advanced search operator sounds complicated, but it's actually pretty simple. In the search engine, type “**site:yourdomain.com**” replacing the domain with your own.

# Example of an advanced search operator

If we type "site:hubspot.com" into Google, The results for HubSpot show 217,000 pages currently being indexed by Google.

This isn't an exact number, but it provides an approximation of how many pages are currently being indexed.



# **What is a sitemap?**

A file of code that lives on your web server and lists all of the relevant URLs your website is carrying.

# Here's an example of an XML sitemap file.

An XML Sitemap includes  
4 Key Elements:

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8">
<urlset xmlns="http://www.sitemaps.org/schemas/sitemap/0.9" xmlns:xhtml
         xmlns="http://www.w3.org/1999/xhtml">
    <url>
        <loc>https://www.example.com</loc>
        <lastmod>2017-10-06</lastmod>
        <changefreq>weekly</changefreq>
        <priority>0.9</priority>
        <xhtml:link rel="alternate" hreflang="en" href="https://www.example.com"/>
        <xhtml:link rel="alternate" hreflang="fr" href="https://www.example.com/fr"/>
    </url>
```

# **The Roles Involved in Structuring a Website's Sitemap:**

- Marketing
- Development
- IT
- Legal

**Marketing is usually  
responsible for defining  
the structure of the site.**

**A developer will then  
build an XML sitemap file  
based on the website's  
structure.**

**The sitemap lives on a server – an IT expert will be able to get it there, so your IT team or agency will get involved.**

**Legal will make sure the  
site doesn't have  
outstanding copyright  
restrictions.**

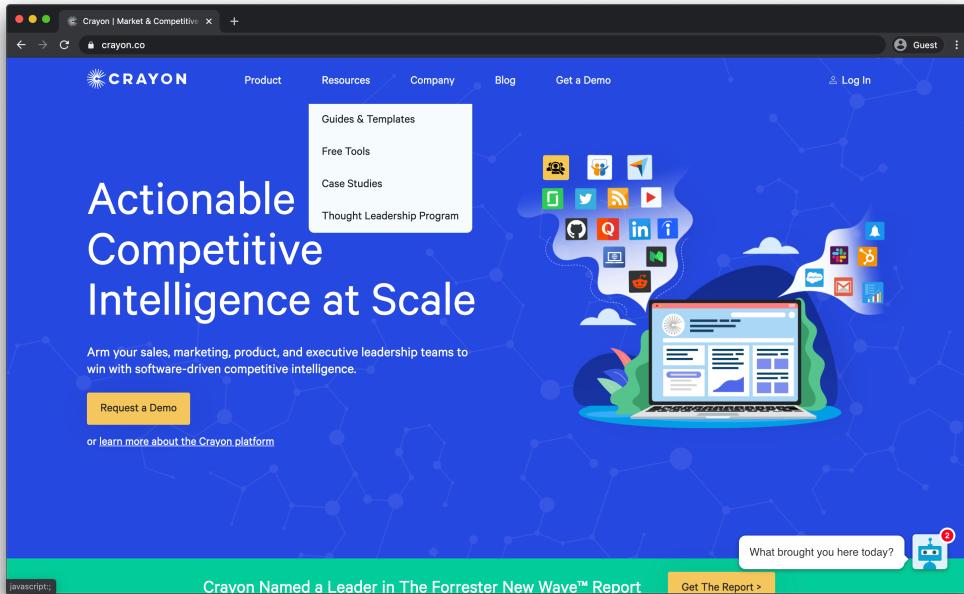
**The structure of your website plays a big role in your site's SEO, so it's important to plan your top-level navigation structure carefully.**



The further away a page is from the original homepage URL of your site, the worse it is for that page's SEO.

# Here is an example website navigation.

This is the high-level navigation structure from the website Crayon.



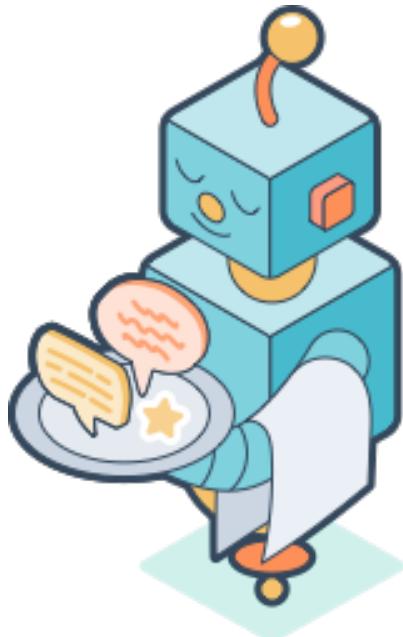
## **Once you've planned out how your website will be organized, you'll:**

- Create the XML sitemap
- Put it on your web server
- Submit it to each individual search engine

These steps depends on your technical ability and size of your organization. You many need to work with a developer or agency.

## Using the HubSpot CMS Hub makes this easier.

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HubSpot will automatically generate your XML sitemap file when you publish new pages and make changes to your site.



## How can you create your XML Sitemap with another CMS?

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Those of you using another CMS might be looking for an easy solution to create your XML sitemap.

There are a few free solutions, including Screaming Frog and XML-Sitemaps.com.

# How quickly will your new page be indexed?

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Google might not crawl and index your new page as quickly as you'd like. To index your content quickly, you should resubmit your sitemap after publishing a new page.





# **Writing and Editing Meta Descriptions**



# Example Meta Description in the SERPs

www.hubspot.com › inbound-marketing ▾

## What Is Inbound Marketing? | HubSpot

Inbound marketing is a business methodology that attracts customers by creating valuable content and experiences tailored to them. While outbound marketing interrupts your audience with content they don't want, inbound marketing forms connections they're looking for and solves problems they already have.

# **What is a meta description?**

An HTML attribute that provides a brief summary of a webpage.

# Here is a meta description example:

This is the meta description for the appliance and electronics store, Best Buy:

www.bestbuy.com › home-appliances › washers-dryers › abcat0910000 ▾

## Washers and Dryers - Best Buy

Shop for **washers and dryers** at BestBuy.com and find deals on the top brands, from stacked units and front loaders to traditional washers & dryers.

[Washer and Dryer Bundles](#) · [Washer Dryer Combos](#) · [All Washers & Dryers](#) · [Dryers](#)

# **3 Reasons Why You Need a Meta Description**

1. A meta description increases clickthrough rates and visits from organic search.
2. A meta description gives the right people the right information at the right time.
3. A meta description increases visits from social.

# 10X

## Which link do most people click?

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More people click the #1 result in the SERPs.

The #1 organic result is 10x more likely to receive a click compared to a page in #10 spot.

To get your result to rank well, you need people to start clicking on it.

Meta descriptions entice people to click on your link instead of someone else's.

# **What's an Advanced Search?**

Allows people to specify or exclude terms in the search results.

# **How to Conduct an Advanced Search:**

- Explicit Phrase: Use quotes (" ") around the word that you want to appear.
- Exclude Words: Add a minus sign (-) before the word that you want to exclude.
- This OR That: Add OR in all caps to view results for multiple search terms.

# The open graph includes a meta description.

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The meta description for this page is "These 5 Trails In Massachusetts Will Lead You To Extraordinary Ancient Ruins" and it appears at the bottom of a post on "Only In Your State" Facebook website.

**It drives social media  
traffic, too.**

# **How do you write an effective meta description?**

- Write compelling content.
- Include one or two keywords.
- Aim for 155-160 characters.
- Avoid non-alphanumeric characters.

**The meta description is  
your chance to convey the  
value of your page to the  
viewers.**

# The Ultimate Guide to Responsive Web Design

[www.designagency.com/responsive-web-design-guide](http://www.designagency.com/responsive-web-design-guide)

Master responsive web design with this practical guide. Learn how to create websites that perform their best across all devices and see successful examples.

# **The meta description is your chance to convey the value of your page to the viewers.**

- Be informative and add value.
- Write a short sentence previewing the content
- Provide a clear benefit to the visitor to click through your post.

**Focus on one or two  
unique keywords in the  
meta description of each  
page.**

**Aim for 155-160 characters  
in your meta description as a  
benchmark. Your meta  
description will be cut off if  
its too long.**

**Special characters might appear just fine on your computer screen, but search engines can't read these symbols as easily. Avoid using special characters like plus signs (+) and em-dashes (–) in your meta descriptions. They may not appear correctly or be removed.**

 Snippet preview

## Yoast SEO for Wordpress: The Definitive How To Guide

[www.lokitimestwo.com/yoast-seo-wordpress-definitive-guide/ ▾](http://www.lokitimestwo.com/yoast-seo-wordpress-definitive-guide/)

The definitive **Yoast SEO** how to guide. Improve SEO, rank high, increase traffic to your Wordpress website, and make BANK by Cody McBurnett & Julia Lovallo.



### SEO title

Yoast SEO for Wordpress: The Definitive How To Guide

### Slug

yoast-seo-wordpress-definitive-guide

### Meta description

The definitive Yoast SEO how to guide. Improve SEO, rank high, increase traffic to your Wordpress website, and make BANK by Cody McBurnett & Julia Lovallo.

[Close snippet editor](#)

# For WordPress, use Yoast SEO for meta descriptions.

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Log into your WordPress dashboard, click on your posts, and edit your description.



# Writing Descriptive Link Text



# Example Link Description From the HubSpot Blog

## Types of Content Marketing

There are many types of content marketing your business may decide to leverage. Below are some of the most popular options.

### 1. Social Media Content Marketing

With over 3.7 billion global users, it's easy to understand why so many businesses invest in **social media content marketing**. There are a number of platforms (such as Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, LinkedIn, and Snapchat) to work with and several ways you can create and share social media content on each of them (such as photos, live and pre-recorded videos, and stories).

All of these platforms and ways to share your content provide you with a plethora of opportunities to connect with your audience.

# Example Link Destination From the HubSpot Blog

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying a blog post on the HubSpot website. The URL in the address bar is [blog.hubspot.com/marketing/social-media-marketing](http://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/social-media-marketing). The page title is "Social Media Marketing: The Ultimate Guide" by Kristen Baker. Below the title, there's a brief description: "Discover how social media marketing can help you generate leads, boost conversions, and increase brand awareness." A call-to-action button labeled "Download Now" is visible next to an image of a document titled "THE SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT CALENDAR TEMPLATE". The right side of the image features a close-up of a person's hands typing on a laptop keyboard, overlaid with various social media engagement icons like likes, comments, and shares.

# **What is descriptive link text?**

The clickable word(s) in a hyperlink. On a webpage, descriptive link text is important for your SEO performance.

**Generic words like “click here” or “learn more” is not an effective link description.**

# **Here are some link description best practices.**

Stay on topic. Don't use text that has no relation to the page's content.

Don't use the page's URL as the link description, unless you have a good reason to do so, such as referencing a site's new address.

Keep descriptions concise. Aim for a few words or a short phrase.

Format links so that they're easy to spot.

# Example of link descriptions and the page's HTML

20 March 2020 • 

## Website Optimization

To learn more about website optimization, [click here](#).

Share 

"To learn more about website optimization, "  
[click here](https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/optimize-website-for-lead-generation)  
". "

20 March 2020 • 

## Website Optimization

Learn more about [website optimization](#).

Share 

"Learn more about "  
[website optimization](https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/optimize-website-for-lead-generation)  
". "

# Internal linking



# **What is an internal link?**

Any link from one page on your website to another page on your website.



# How does Google use internal links?

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Google uses internal links to discover your new site content.

**Internal links pass authority  
from one page to another.**

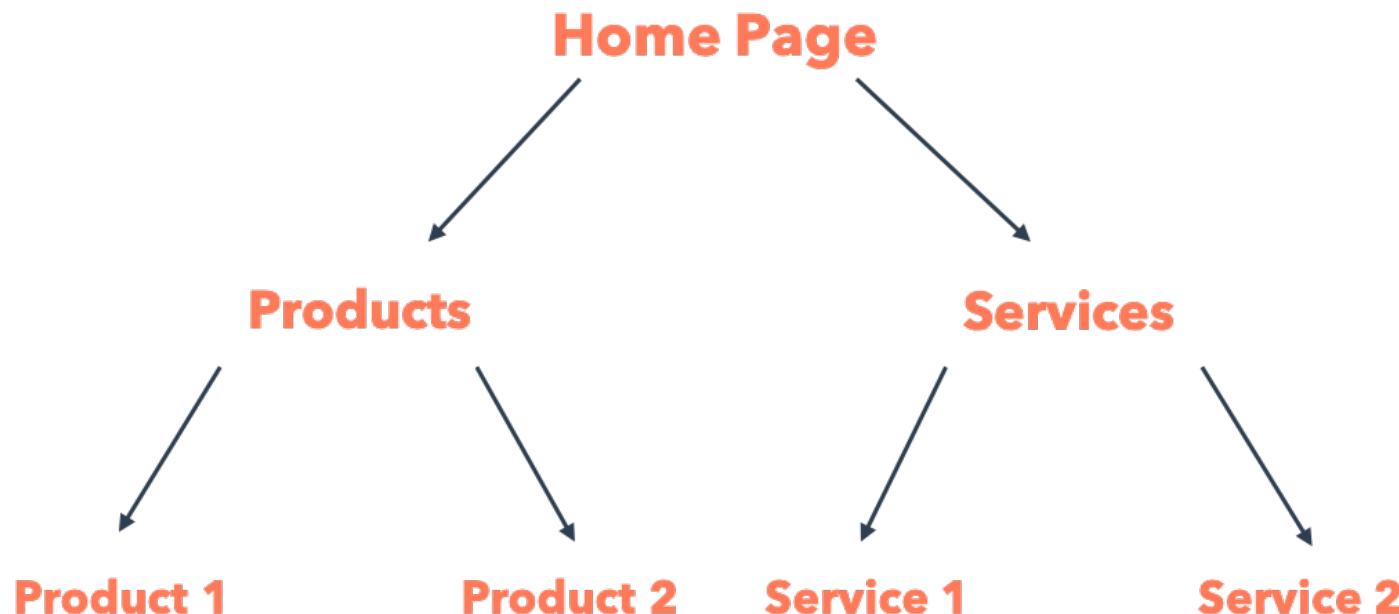
## **The right internal links help Google learn the following about your pages:**

- Relevance
- Relationship to your other pages
- Value

# **Think about your website architecture like a pyramid**



# How is your website architecture like a pyramid?



**Ensure that search engines  
can follow the links  
between your pages.**

**Make sure they're not  
“nofollow.”**

# Pro Tip: Audit Your Site's Internal Links

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You can use a tool like Ahrefs Site Audit to scan your website for broken links that need fixing and find any orphan pages that no other pages link to.



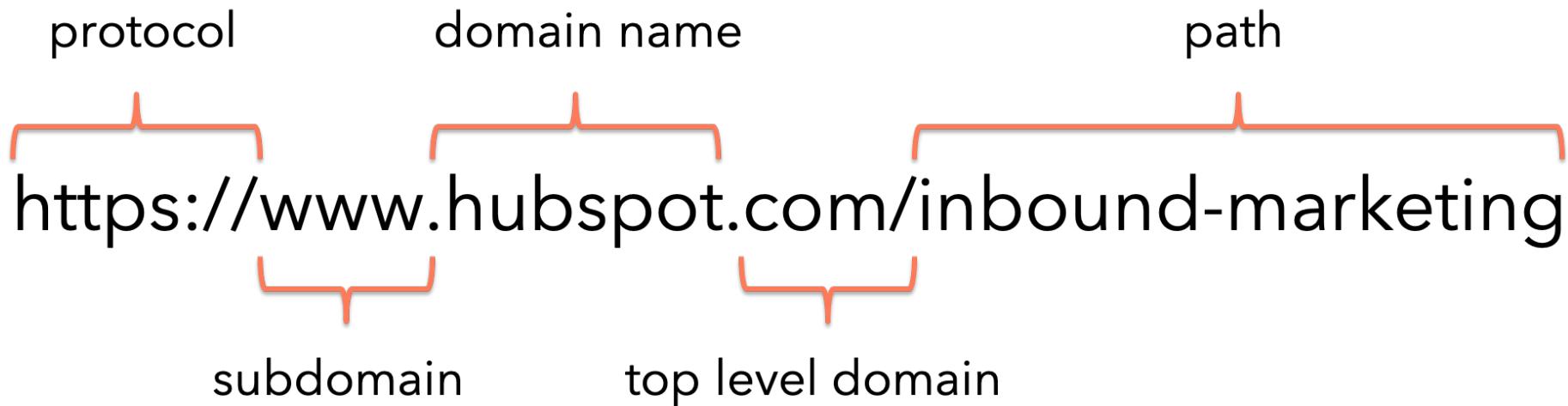
# URL structure



# **What is a URL?**

A URL (Uniform Resource Locator) specifies the location of a resource on the web.

# The Anatomy of a URL



# **URLs affect your SEO in a few ways:**

- They improve the user experience.
- They're a ranking factor in search engines.
- They help users and search engines understand what your content is about.

# **Best Practices for Writing URLs:**

- Include your primary keyword.
- Use hyphens between words.
- Keep them short and simple.
- Describe the page contents.



# Technical SEO basics



# **What is technical SEO?**

The practice of improving technical aspects of a website to help search engines crawl and index it more effectively.

# Basic Technical SEO Elements

- Robots.txt
- Canonicalization
- Protocols
- Redirect codes
- Site speed

# **What is robots.txt?**

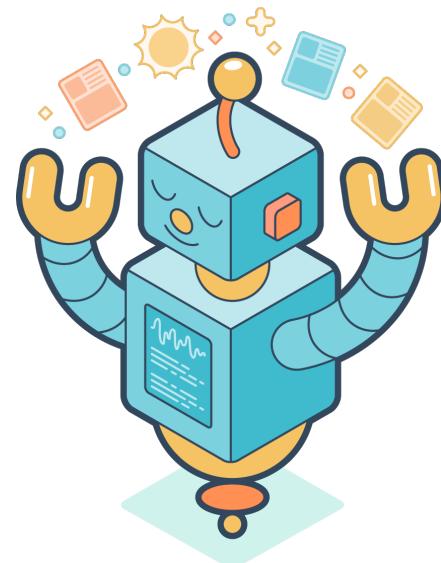
A text file that instructs search engine bots on how to crawl a website's pages.

# Basic Format of Robots.txt

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User-agent: [user-agent name]

Disallow: [URL string not to be crawled]



# **What is a canonical tag?**

An HTML element search engines use to handle duplicate content.

# Here's an example of a canonical tag.

---

```
<link rel="canonical"  
      href="http://www.example.com">
```



## **Follow these canonicalization best practices:**

- Use self-referential canonical tags.
- Canonicalize your website's homepage.
- Audit your canonical tags.

# **What is protocol?**

A URL's protocol indicates how a browser should retrieve information about the web page.

**To ensure your site is served  
securely over HTTPS, make  
sure your website has a valid  
SSL certificate.**

# **What is a redirect?**

A way to send users and search engines to a different URL from the one originally requested.

## **The most common redirect codes are:**

- 301, or "Moved Permanently"
- 302, or "Moved Temporarily"

# Google's PageSpeed Insights is a free tool you can use to test how fast your website loads.

PageSpeed Insights    HOME    DOCS

MOBILE    DESKTOP



https://www.hubspot.com/

▲ 0–49    ■ 50–89    ● 90–100    ⓘ

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**Field Data** — Over the previous 28-day collection period, [field data](#) shows that this page **does not pass** the [Core Web Vitals](#) assessment.

▲ First Contentful Paint (FCP)	3.1 s	● First Input Delay (FID)	21 ms
33%	45%	92%	7% 1%
■ Largest Contentful Paint (LCP)	3.2 s	● Cumulative Layout Shift (CLS)	0
66%	22%	90%	3% 7%

Show Origin Summary

# 50%

## Mobile Optimization is Important

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Over 50% of internet activity across the world occurs on mobile devices.

Source: Statista

# Use Google's Mobile-Friendly Test to determine if a page is optimized for mobile.

The screenshot shows the Google Mobile-Friendly Test interface. At the top, it says "Mobile-Friendly Test" and displays the URL "https://www.hubspot.com/". Below this, the "Test results" section indicates that the page is "mobile friendly". It was tested on March 18, 2021, at 9:31 AM. The main message is "Page is mobile friendly" with the subtext "This page is easy to use on a mobile device". A "Page loading issues" section shows no problems. To the right, a "Rendered page" view shows a smartphone displaying the HubSpot homepage with a cookie consent banner and the headline "There's a better way to grow.". Below the test results, there are "Additional resources" like "Open site-wide mobile usability report" and "Learn more about mobile-friendly pages".

Mobile-Friendly Test

https://www.hubspot.com/

Test results

Page loading issues [VIEW DETAILS](#)

Rendered page

HTML [SCREENSHOT](#)

Tested on: Mar 18, 2021 at 9:31 AM

**Page is mobile friendly**

This page is easy to use on a mobile device

Additional resources

- Open site-wide mobile usability report
- Learn more about mobile-friendly pages
- Post comments or questions to our discussion group

We use cookies to make HubSpot's website a better place. Cookies help to provide a more personalized experience and relevant advertising for you, and web analytics for us. To learn more, and to see a full list of cookies we use, check out our [Cookie Policy](#) (baked goods not included).

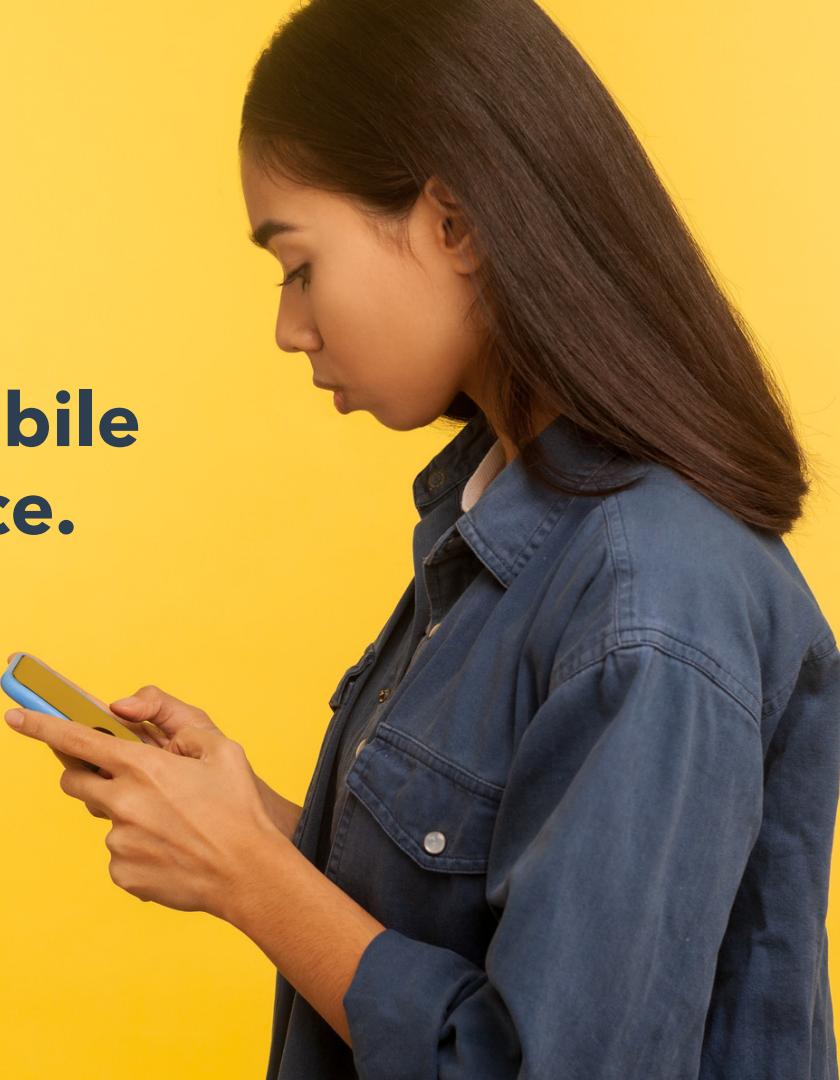
Allow cookies Decline

**There's a better way to grow.**

Marketing, sales, and service software that helps your business grow without compromise. Because "good for the business" should also mean "good for the customer."

[Share](#)

**Focus on the mobile user experience.**



# **What is responsive design?**

The method of designing web pages that appear optimally on all devices.

## **Be aware of pop-ups on mobile.**

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If your mobile site has a pop-up that interferes with a user's ability to navigate the page, this will negatively impact the user experience and your SEO.



# Optional: Resizing and compressing images

