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SEO Content Brief Guide: Everything You Need to Know

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What Is an SEO Content Brief?

An SEO content brief is a detailed document created by a content manager or strategist to help content writers understand the goals and objectives for a piece of content.

These documents contain critical details and instructions like search intent, keywords, competitive analysis, and desired word count to help writers create successful blog posts, articles, white papers, and more.

An SEO-focused content brief helps in-house and freelance writers understand your expectations and stay on task. It also increases the likelihood of receiving a quality first draft.

A comprehensive brief ensures everyone on your team can do their best work—and helps turn a draft into a successful asset for your business.

Think of an SEO content brief as the gateway to consistent, high-quality content that ranks well in search engines.

Key Elements of SEO Content Briefs



SEO Content Brief Elements

1 Primary keyword

The main keyword you're targeting

2 Secondary keywords

Variations of the primary keyword and related phrases

you want the writer to include

3 Search intent

The user's expectation of the content they hope

to find based on the target keywords

4 Editorial direction

The core subject and angle of the article

5 Expected word count

The approximate length of the finished content determined

by the topic's complexity and competitor content

6 Target audience

Who the content is intended to reach

7 Brand voice

Details about the preferred style and tone

8 Internal links

Related and relevant pages on your site

the writer should include

9 External links

External URLs the writer should reference and include

10 Competitor links

High-ranking competitor articles as a reference point

11 Headings

Main sections, subtopics, and key points the writer

should use in the content

12 Technical details

Instructions on how long headlines and meta descriptions

should be

13 Call to action

The next step or action you want the reader

to take after reading

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The most effective briefs contain consistent information to aid writers in content creation.

The majority of SEO content briefs should include the following elements:

- **Primary keyword:** The main keyword you're targeting
- **Secondary keywords:** Variations of the primary keyword and related phrases you want the writer to include
- **Search intent:** The user's expectation of the content they hope to find based on the target keywords
- **Editorial direction:** The core subject and angle of the article
- **Expected word count:** The approximate length of the finished content determined by the topic's complexity and competitor content
- **Target audience:** Who the content is intended to reach
- **Brand voice:** Details about the preferred style and tone
- **Internal links:** Related and relevant pages on your site the writer should include



- **External links:** External URLs the writer should reference and include
- **Competitor links:** High-ranking competitor articles as a reference point
- **Headings:** Main sections, subtopics, and key points the writer should use in the content
- **Technical details:** Instructions on how long headlines and meta descriptions should be
- **Call to action:** The next step or action you want the reader to take after reading

While the above list covers common content brief elements, you might include more or less, depending on your needs and guidelines.

Remember that a strong content brief should provide topic direction, explain your target audience, and have crucial SEO directives.

Including this information helps the writer understand what a successful first draft should look like and ensures they don't leave any crucial elements out, leading to unnecessary revisions and publishing delays.

The Importance of an SEO Content Brief

A good brief helps writers create content that satisfies search intent, gets better rankings, and outlines the thinking and strategy behind the content.

This makes it easier for content writers, editors, and others involved in the creative process to deliver work that aligns with the overall SEO and [content marketing strategy](#).

On top of enhancing workflow, SEO briefs can help with the following:

- **Search engine rankings:** Aligning content with SEO requirements and best practices can lead to higher rankings and more traffic
- **Content performance:** High-quality, helpful content that caters to humans and satisfies Google can increase click-throughs and drive more organic traffic to your content
- **Consistent style and tone:** Help writers adhere to brand guidelines on voice, tone, and style
- **Target audience:** Connect the topic with the target audience to better speak to their needs and questions
- **Edits and revisions:** Briefs lead to better content that's more aligned with internal goals and an efficient workflow that requires less editing, revising, and rewriting

What to Include in an SEO Content Brief

Now that you know the what and why of mastering SEO-focused content briefs, let's jump into the how.

Below, you'll find a step-by-step walkthrough on how to put your brief together and details of what to include.

Tip

Sign up for a [free Semrush account](#) (no credit card needed) to follow along with the steps in this guide.

Primary Keywords

Primary keywords or phrases, also known as target keywords, reflect the main topic of your content.



Include your target keyword in each SEO content brief so your writer knows the most important terms to include in headlines, subheadings, body copy, and metadata.

Why are primary keywords important?

- **Relevance and alignment:** Incorporating keywords ensures the content remains relevant to the topic or subject, aligning with the users' search intent and expectations
- **Search engine optimization:** When used in headings, meta description, and body copy, keywords help search engines determine relevance and can increase rankings
- **Enhanced visibility:** Keywords help optimize content for search engines, improving its visibility and making it easier for users to find relevant information
- **Targeted audience reach:** Using specific keywords allows content creators to target their intended audience more effectively, attracting individuals interested in the particular subject matter

Remember, your primary keyword should indicate exactly what people will find when they click on your content.

To research keywords for your content strategy, use a tool like the [Keyword Magic Tool](#).

This will help you discover and select relevant keywords for your website, and then you can map out the type of content you'll create for each term.

To start, open the tool and enter your content topic.

For example, let's use "weight loss tips."

The screenshot shows the Keyword Magic Tool interface. At the top, the title "Keyword Magic Tool" is displayed in a large, bold font. Below it, a subtitle reads "Find millions of keyword suggestions for your SEO." A search bar contains the text "weight loss tips". To the right of the search bar is a location dropdown set to "US". A green "Search" button is located at the bottom right of the search bar area. A purple arrow points from the text "The results under 'Keyword'" in the accompanying text below to the "Search" button. Below the search bar, there is a section labeled "Examples:" followed by a list of suggestions: "loans movies how to buy audible books".

The results under "Keyword" will bring up a list of potential primary keywords to structure your piece of content around.



weight loss tips x Search

Projects > Keyword Overview > Keyword Magic Tool

[Keyword Research course](#) [User manual](#) [Send feedback](#)

Keyword Magic Tool: weight loss tips

Database: United States Currency: USD

All Questions All Keywords Broad Match Phrase Match Exact Match Related Languages beta

Volume ▼ KD % ▼ Intent ▼ CPC (USD) ▼ Include keywords ▼ Exclude keywords ▼ Advanced filters ▼

All keywords: 4.7K Total volume: 33,560 Average KD: 75%										+ Add to list				
	Keyword	Intent	Volume	Trend	KD %	CPC (U...)	Com.	SF	Results	Updated				
	+ weight loss tips		8.1K		100	1.08	0.28		5	3.6B	Last week			
	+ tips for weight loss		2.4K		100	0.95	0.28		4	2.2B	2 weeks			
	+ weight loss tips for women		1.6K		98	1.40	0.31		7	1.3B	2 weeks			
	+ fast weight loss tips		720		100	0.92	0.28		8	953M	Last week			
	+ best weight loss tips		480		99	1.18	0.31		5	1.5B	Last week			
	+ weight loss tip		390		100	0.95	0.28		5	235M	2 weeks			
	+ weight loss tips for men		290		67	0.52	0.37		1	501M	2 weeks			

Click on a keyword to learn more about it, like search volume and ranking difficulty.

Doing so will redirect you to [Keyword Overview](#), where you can dive deeper into the query's performance.

For example, let's click on "weight loss tips."

Like so:



Keyword Overview: weight loss tips

United States  Desktop  Nov 8, 2023  USD

Overview Bulk Analysis

Select location 

 Update metrics 0/1,000

 Export to PDF



Keyword ideas

Keyword Variations

4.7K Total volume: 33.6K

Keywords	Volume	KD %
weight loss tips	8.1K	100 
tips for weight loss	2.4K	100 
weight loss tips for women	1.6K	98 
fast weight loss tips	720	100 

Questions

49 Total volume: 210

Keywords	Volume	KD %
how to weight loss tips	50	100 
what is the best tips for weight loss	40	100 
how to fast weight loss tips in hindi	20	n/a 

Keyword Clusters

Get keyword clusters **automatically**

• weight loss tips

    	an healthy eating
    	lose weight
    	best weight loss
    	weight loss tips
    	lose weight quickly

You may discover your chosen primary keywords have high search volume and difficulty, which are more challenging to rank for.

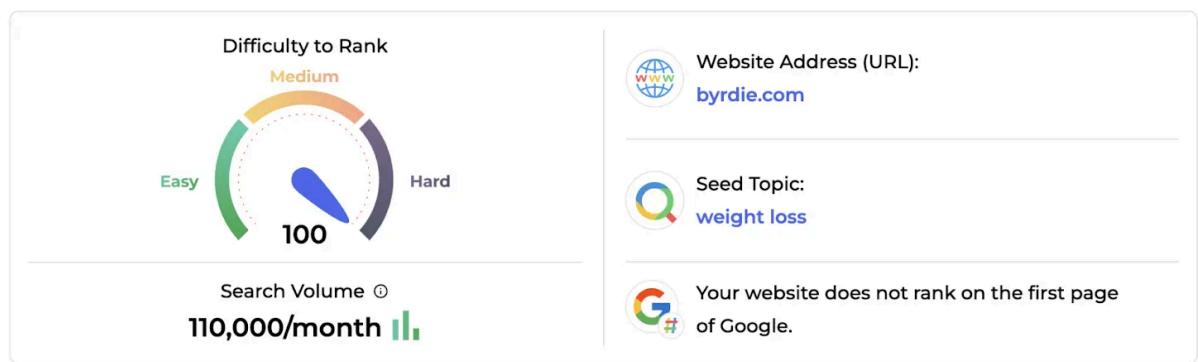
Continue your search until you find a relevant lower-difficulty phrase.

Once you've selected your primary keyword or phrase, add it to your SEO content brief for your writer to target with high-quality content.

Pro tip

Use a tool like **SERP Gap Analyzer** to quickly analyze the top-ranking articles and see if you've missed any important keywords.





Create New Content

Keyword	Global Search Volume	① Difficulty to Rank	② SERP Weaknesses	Generate Content	View details >
how to lose weight	74,000/month 100	Very Hard	① ② 123		View details >
lose weight	27,100/month 100	Very Hard	① ② 123		View details >

Secondary Keywords

Secondary keywords help broaden your reach and clarify your primary keyword.

Consider adding them to your brief to help ensure your content is comprehensive and covers all related topics.

Secondary keywords are helpful to include in your SEO content brief for several reasons.

- **User intent:** While primary keywords target the core topic, secondary keywords can address subtopics, questions, or variations of user queries
- **Reduce keyword stuffing:** Naturally integrate secondary terms into your content without overloading it with the same keyword
- **Content depth:** Incorporating secondary keywords can result in more comprehensive content that appeals to a wider audience
- **More targeted traffic:** Secondary keywords often include **long-tail keywords** that can attract highly targeted traffic

Let's continue the "weight loss tips" example.

Secondary keywords for this topic could include "fast weight loss tips" and "best weight loss tips."

Including secondary keywords in content briefs improves the chances your content will rank for more keyword variations in addition to the primary target keyword.

To find secondary keywords, pull up the **Keyword Magic Tool** again.



Type your target keyword into the search box. Click "**Search**."

Keyword Magic Tool

Find millions of keyword suggestions for your SEO.



US

Search

Examples: loans movies how to buy audible books

You'll see a list of terms you can target as secondary keywords:

<input type="checkbox"/> Keyword	Intent	Volume	KD %	CPC (USD)	SF	Updated
+ weight loss tips »	I	8,100	100 ●	1.08	6	This week C
+ tips for weight loss »	I	2,400	100 ●	0.88	3	Last week C
✓ weight loss tips for women »	I	1,600	95 ●	1.52	6	Last week C
✓ fast weight loss tips »	I	720	100 ●	0.92	5	This week C
✓ best weight loss tips »	I C	480	100 ●	1.18	4	This week C
+ weight loss tip »	I	390	94 ●	1.08	4	Last week C
+ weight loss tips for men »	I	390	61 ○	0.54	4	2 weeks C
+ for weight loss tips »	I	320	100 ●	0.81	3	4 weeks C
+ tips weight loss »	I	320	100 ●	0.95	6	3 weeks C
+ weight loss tips at home »	I	320	99 ●	0.92	5	3 weeks C
✓ quick weight loss tips »	I	260	100 ●	0.77	6	3 weeks C

Filter by the following options to dive deeper into your secondary keyword selections:

- **Broad Match:** Variations of your seed keyword in any order
- **Phrase Match:** Keywords with the exact seed keyword in any order
- **Exact Match:** Keywords with the exact seed keyword in the exact order
- **Related:** Keywords similar to your seed keyword, based on having similar search engine results



Keyword Magic Tool: weight loss tips

Database: United States v Currency: USD

All Questions All Keywords Broad Match Phrase Match Exact Match Related Languages beta v

Volume v KD % v Intent v CPC (USD) v Include keywords v Exclude keywords v Advanced filters v

To add secondary keywords to a keyword list, select the ones you want by clicking the box to the left of each term:

Selected: 4 Total volume: 1,980		Deselect all	Copy	+ Add to keyword list	Update 0/1	
-	Keyword	Intent	Volume	KD %	CPC (USD)	SF
<input type="checkbox"/>	weight loss tips »		8,100	100	1.08	6
<input type="checkbox"/>	tips for weight loss »		2,400	100	0.88	3
<input type="checkbox"/>	weight loss tips for women »		1,600	95	1.52	6
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	fast weight loss tips »		720	100	0.92	5
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	best weight loss tips »		480	100	1.18	4
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	weight loss tip »		390	94	1.08	4
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	weight loss tips for men »		390	61	0.54	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	for weight loss tips »		320	100	0.81	3

Next, click “+ Add to keyword list” and give your list a name for easy reference.

Add the keywords you've selected to your content brief. Secondary keywords can help your content rank for more terms and improve the depth of the piece for the reader.

Another way to discover secondary or related keywords is by using [SEO Content Template](#).

It lets you automate content brief creation and provides helpful SEO recommendations.

Here's how it works:

Type your primary keyword into the text box and click “Create content template.”

SEO Content Template

Generate actionable briefs for SEO friendly content with just a few clicks.

US (Desktop)

A purple arrow points from the text input field to the “Create content template” button.

The tool will analyze competing content that already ranks for your target keyword. It will identify related topics and keywords you can then add to your content brief.

As you can see in the example below, the tool returned a large list of related keywords based on the top 10 Google rivals for the keyword.

This can help you outrank your competitors and create high-quality content your target audience loves.

SEO Recommendations Real-time Content Check

SEO recommendations for your content [Order content writing](#) [Export to DOC](#) United States (Deskt... ▾)

Our analysis is based on your Google top 10 rivals

how to bake a cake

1 <https://www.bhg.com/recipes/how-to/bake/how-to-make-a-cake/> ↗
2 <https://www.southernliving.com/how-to-bake-a-cake-7096752> ↗
3 <https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/food-network-kitchen/basic-vanilla-cake-recipe-2043654> ↗
4 <https://www.wikihow.com/Bake-a-Cake> ↗
5 https://www.reddit.com/r/AskBaking/comments/z9miyg/how_to_bake_cake_in_batches_when_i_only_have_a/ ↗

Show all rivals (1 keyword)

Key recommendations (based on your Google top 10 rivals)

Semantically related words

- Enrich your text with the following semantically related words: room temperature, chocolate cake, eggs one at a time, wet ingredients, cool completely, baking time, 30 minutes, cake pans, cake recipes, cake flour, vanilla extract, oven to 350, stand mixer, creaming butter and sugar, purpose flour, top of the cake, parchment paper, dry ingredients, light and fluffy, preheated oven



Automate Content Brief Creation

with the SEO Content Template Tool

[Try for Free →](#)

Search Intent

Every content marketer aims to reach the top of search engine results pages (SERPs).

But it's essential to understand the **search intent** behind each keyword if you want to achieve this.

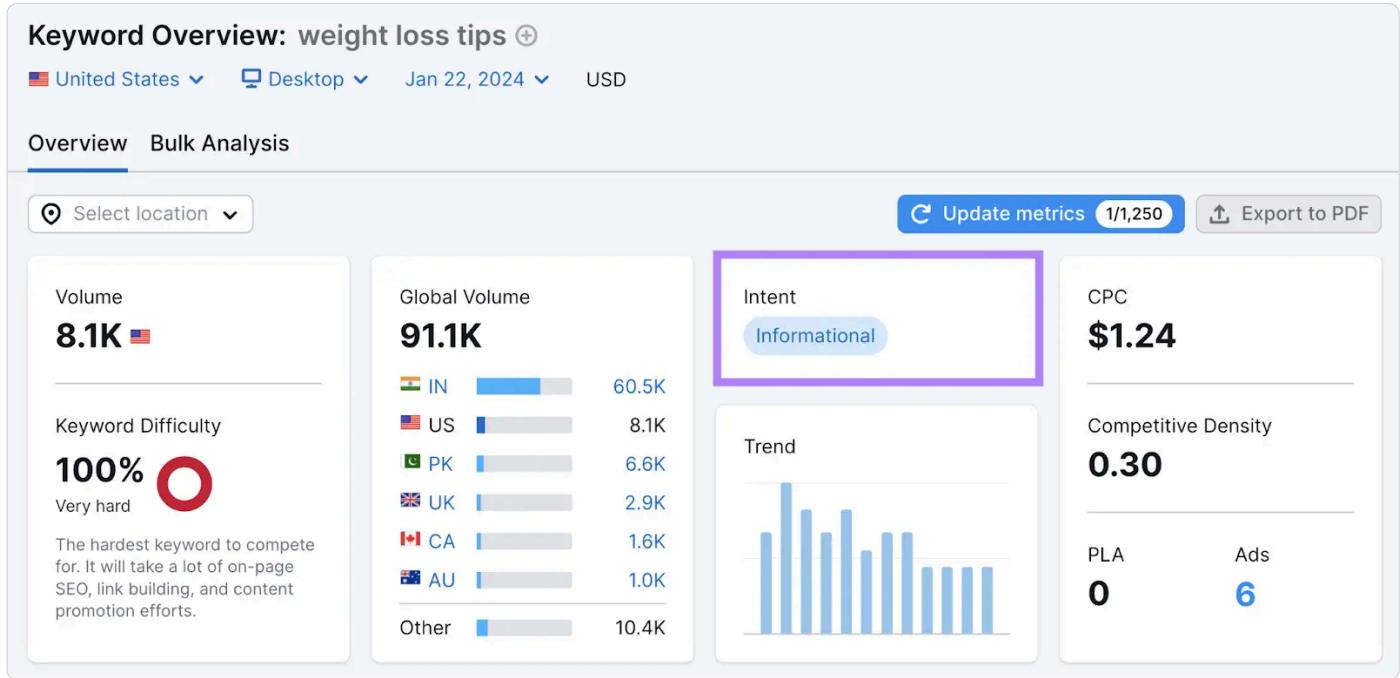


Are users looking for comparison content, solutions, or purchasing information? Tailoring your content to match intent is crucial for SEO success.

Search intent is categorized in four ways:

- **Informational:** Articles and guides to help users learn about a specific topic
- **Navigational:** Specific websites, brands, or login pages
- **Commercial:** Information about products or services so users can conduct research before buying
- **Transactional:** Pages where the user can make a purchase or complete a conversion

You can quickly find any keyword's intent using [Keyword Overview](#), in the "Intent" widget.



For instance, if someone searches for "weight loss tips," they likely expect information (actionable tips, listicles, and guides) on how to lose weight.

This is **informational** search intent.

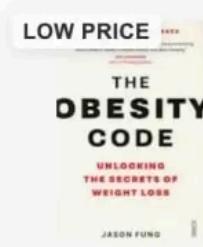
On the other hand, if someone is searching for "best weight loss books," they expect specific product recommendations and reviews.

This is **commercial** (or "commercial investigation") search intent.

The search intent also describes which types of content generally rank near the top of the SERP for that keyword.

For example, if a keyword has commercial intent, the competitor content that currently ranks is likely focused on recommending specific products or services and helping users make a purchase decision.



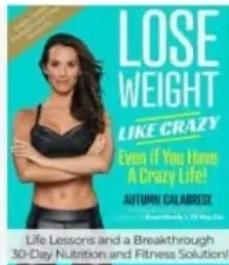


The Obesity Code:
Unlocking the...

\$23.99 Usually \$27

Amazon..., 10+ stores

4.8 ★★★★★ (241)



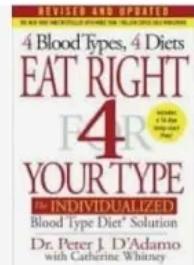
Lose Weight Like
Crazy Even If Yo...

\$28.00

Barnes ... , 10+ stores

📍 4.9 mi · In stock

5.0 ★★★★★ (5)



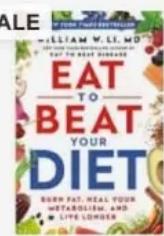
Eat Right 4 Your
Type (Revised a...

\$13.08 Pre-owned

eBay - h..., 10+ stores

📍 Also nearby

4.6 ★★★★★ (34)



Eat to Beat Your
Diet: Burn Fat,...

\$15.75 Was \$20

Target, 10+ stores

📍 2.4 mi · In stock

5.0 ★★★★★ (52)

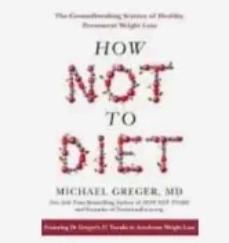


Women, Food, and
Hormones: A 4...

\$8.49 Usually \$15

Walmart..., 10+ stores

4.5 ★★★★★ (11)

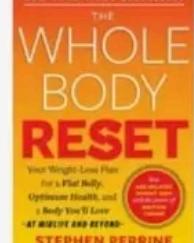


How Not to Diet:
the...

\$17.15

Amazon..., 10+ stores

4.8 ★★★★★ (35)



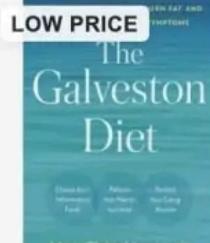
The Whole Body
Reset: Your...

\$25.99

Barnes ... , 10+ stores

📍 4.9 mi · In stock

4.8 ★★★★★ (22)



The Galveston
Diet: The Doctor...

\$13.99 Usually \$19

VitalSou..., 10+ stores

📍 Also nearby

5.0 ★★★★★ (3)

Using this information, you can understand what type of content you should create to best match the search intent.

Editorial Direction

Before writers can start on any piece of content, they need to know the core subject and angle to hook readers.

Use this section of the brief to include any specific directions or guidelines regarding the topic or necessary details. For example, if you want the writer to include specific points, highlight key features, or focus on a relevant case study, include these details in this section.

An example might look something like this:

"After reading the article, the audience should have a clear understanding of the inherent value of SEO analytics, be able to distinguish it from broader analytic tools like Google Analytics, and be equipped with knowledge on accessing and deriving actionable strategies from their SEO metrics. They should also be introduced to keyword research tools as a valuable asset to their analytics toolkit."



Expected Word Count

Providing a basic guideline for the desired word count will help ensure the writer thoroughly covers the topic.

You can determine the ideal length for an article by looking at competitor content that already ranks for the keywords you're targeting.

But instead of manually sorting through top-ranking articles to find word counts, use [SEO Content Template](#).

(If you already closed it out, click "**SEO Content Template**" under "On Page & Tech SEO" and create a content template based on your primary keywords.)

Below the related keywords we referenced above, you'll see a section called "Text length." This recommends the length of content you should create to compete with the content that already ranks.

Key recommendations (based on your Google top 10 rivals)

Semantically related words	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Enrich your text with the following semantically related words: <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">room temperaturechocolate cakeeggs one at a timewet ingredientscool completelybaking time</div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">30 minutescake panscake recipescake flourvanilla extractoven to 350</div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">stand mixercreaming butter and sugarpurpose flourtop of the cakeparchment paper</div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">dry ingredientslight and fluffypreheated oven</div>
Backlinks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Try to acquire backlinks from the following domains: <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">lopeic.picsriparazione-folletto.it</div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">littleupsidedowncake.comjobisite.combestappsfinder.comginafordinfo.com</div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">cupcakejones.netwikinewforum.comsecret-agent-josephine.com</div>
Readability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Average readability score of top 10 URLs: 67
Text length	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Recommended text length: 1435 words

Use this figure as a benchmark for your brief.

To have a chance at outranking high-performing competitor content, your content must be just as detailed—and have unique insights.

For example, say your competitors all have comprehensive, in-depth guides on a specific topic that are 2,000 to 2,500 words.

You will have difficulty outranking the other pages if you try to target the same keyword with an 800-word article. This is because your content will likely lack the same level of detail and specificity Google expects for this topic.

Target Audience

For best results, writers need to understand your target audience before they start to write.

- Who are they?
- Are they experts? Beginners?
- What challenges or pain points are they facing?



This is why it is helpful to reference [buyer personas](#) in your SEO content briefs.

Creating content based on personas can have an impressive impact on marketing success.

In fact, according to a NetProspex [case study](#), persona-based content creation led to a 100% increase in page views per visit, a 900% increase in site visit duration, and a 171% spike in marketing ROI.



Persona-Based Marketing Results



semrush.com



Don't have pre-defined audience personas?

Consider sharing the following details about your audience in briefs:

- Description of the target reader (e.g., "Michael Scott, regional manager of a small paper supply business")
- Why they buy and how they benefit from your product or service
- What factors influence their shopping and purchasing decisions
- Their niche or industry
- Their main pain points as they relate to the topic

You can also discover details about your target audience using [Google Analytics](#) and the [One2Target](#) analysis tool.

Both tools provide valuable demographic and psychographic information about your customers and potential customers for inclusion in content briefs.

Brand Voice

Include [brand voice](#), tone, and style details in each content brief. This can be a summary of the writing style or a link to your overall brand style guide.

Providing [brand voice and tone](#) direction is important because it allows writers to understand how you communicate with readers and customers.

Have you ever noticed how some brands have a consistent voice and personality, whether you're on their social media channel, viewing a television ad, or listening to a podcast commercial?

This is because they have set guidelines for writers on using their brand voice.

Nike is a master of the inspirational voice, which they use in almost every medium, from blog posts and email marketing to print ads.



Describe your brand voice using adjectives (casual, informative, humorous, formal) and list any industry terms the writer should use or avoid in your brief.

Doing this will help you build a consistent brand voice that inspires trust and credibility in your target audience.

Further reading:

- [How to Build a Brand Identity in 5 Steps](#)

Internal Links

Consider adding internal links to each brief you make.

Why?

Internal linking helps search engines find, index, and understand the content on your site. Links also help readers stay on your site longer, improving your bounce rate.

Which internal links should you include?

- Contextually relevant links
- Links on related topics or within the same topic
- Links to products, services, or other conversion-based pages

Quickly find relevant pages on your site to include in briefs by typing a shortcut into Google.

Here's how:

Type "[TOPIC] site:[YOURURL]" into Google to return relevant pages to include in your content brief.





how to bake a cake site:pauladeen.com



pauladeen.com

<https://www.pauladeen.com> › recipe › basic-1-2-3-4-c... ::



Basic 1-2-3-4 cake recipe

Grease and flour 3 (9-inch) **cake** pans. Using an electric mixer, cream butter until fluffy.

Add sugar and continue to cream well for 6 to 8 minutes. Add eggs, 1 ...

★★★★★ Rating: 4.9 · 36 reviews · 55 mins

Provide the URL and anchor text suggestions within the brief to make it easier for the writer to link to other relevant content.

External Links

Providing relevant **external links** in your content brief helps ensure writers use respected and accurate sources.

It's also valuable information for writers to have during the research stage.

When compiling the content brief, research your topic to identify relevant sources for your industry. Paste these URLs into the content brief for the writer to reference.

Include any specific brand guidelines in the content brief regarding sources like "Use only .gov, .edu, or .org sites."

If there are any lower-quality sites you want the writer to avoid when looking for sources, call those out as well.

Competitor Links

Find top-ranking articles on your subject matter to include in your content brief.

Your writers can reference these competitor links to determine why they rank so well and figure out how to outrank them.

Be clear that these articles are in the brief as a guide only. They aren't there for your writers to copy or paraphrase. The goal is to create better content and outrank it, not duplicate it.

Brief tools like the **SEO Content Template** will help you save time when searching for competitor articles.

It provides a list of the top 10 articles ranking for your topic.

Here:



SEO recommendations for your content

[Order content writing](#)[Export to DOC](#)

United States (Deskt... ▾)

Our analysis is based on your Google top 10 rivals

weight loss tips

- 1 <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/weight-loss/in-depth/weight-loss/art-20047752> ↗
- 2 <https://www.everydayhealth.com/diet-and-nutrition/diet/tips-weight-loss-actually-work/> ↗
- 3 <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/303409> ↗
- 4 <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/how-to-lose-weight-as-fast-as-possible> ↗
- 5 <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/managing-your-weight/tips-to-help-you-lose-weight/> ↗
- 6 https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/losing_weight/index.html ↗
- 7 <https://www.health.harvard.edu/topics/diet-and-weight-loss> ↗
- 8 <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/30-ways-to-lose-weight-naturally> ↗
- 9 <https://www.webmd.com/diet/lose-weight-fast> ↗
- 10 <https://www.helpguide.org/articles/diets/how-to-lose-weight-and-keep-it-off.htm> ↗

[Hide all rivals \(1 keyword\)](#)**Find Competitor Articles for Your Brief**

with the SEO Content Template Tool

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Headings

Headings (or headers) provide structure to your article, keep readers engaged, boost SEO results, and improve readability.

Including headings in your content brief will ensure the writer covers the topic thoroughly.

Generally, this will include the H1 (main [article headline](#)), H2s (main topics to be covered), and H3s (subtopics).

When putting together the headings for your article, include primary and secondary keywords the writer should use.

How do you know what headlines to include?

Look at the H2s and H3s of top-performing competitor content for inspiration.

A great way to start is to use a tool like [SERP Gap Analyzer](#).

It uses AI to analyze the SERPs and create full content briefs—including titles, meta descriptions, headlines, and content outlines—from a single keyword.



AI Writing Tools

Generate title ideas, SEO friendly meta descriptions, entire content briefs to share with your writers as well as full first drafts of your articles.



Post Title Ideas

Generate a blog post title from a topic or keyword.



Content Brief

Generate a complete content brief with an outline, content focus, resources and all the details your writer needs to create an amazing piece of content.



Article Genie

Generate an AI-modeled first draft of your article, powered by GPT-4.



Meta Description

Suggest an SEO friendly meta description based on a phrase or keyword.

Technical Details

Use this section of your SEO content brief to provide your writers with technical details.

For example, meta tags and descriptions encourage your target audience to click on your content and are important for on-page optimization.

Include metadata details, including desired character count and keywords to include in your brief.

If you have specific SEO directives, like the target keyword must be used in the introduction and conclusion, you could also put that information in this section.

Call to Action

What action do you want readers to take after reading your content?

Defining the **call to action** (CTA) helps the writer craft a compelling narrative that will lead the reader to the desired action.

And knowing the CTA ahead of time helps your writer concisely wrap up the article.

Examples of some common CTAs include:

- Start your free trial
- Download your free guide now
- Book a free demo
- Sign up for our newsletter
- Buy now
- Learn more



- Read more

TABLE OF CONTENTS

What Is Tone of Voice?

Why Tone of Voice Is Important

Brand Voice vs. Tone of Voice: What's the Difference?

How to Find Your Brand's Tone of Voice

Step 1: Define Your Core Values

Step 2: Define Your Brand's Tone of Voice

Step 3: Observe Your Audience

Step 4: Create & Implement Tone of Voice Guidelines

Create Your Own Tone of Voice Guidelines

Once you have an idea of what it should look like, match your tone of voice to the content format you're using to communicate.

If you haven't already, [create your own tone of voice guidelines with our free template](#).

Don't be afraid to get creative—the goal is to stand out from your competition. And by sticking to a consistent, unique tone of voice, your brand can gain authority (and popularity) within your niche.

Maintain a Consistent Tone of Voice in Your Copy

Easily improve every piece of content with ContentShake - optimize your text for readers and search engines.



[Try it Now for Free →](#)

Creating a Content Brief Template

The structure and format of your content brief should remain consistent.

This is especially true if you work with a team of writers and hope to establish a well-oiled, long-term content workflow. A recognizable content brief template that's easy to skim, understand, and implement will help you achieve this goal.

The exact format is really a matter of preference. But most teams tend to gravitate toward one of two template structures:

- Sections and details
- Table format

The sections and details format follows a simple structure:



Sections and Details SEO Content Brief Template

File Edit View Insert Format Tools Extensions Help

Normal text Arial 11 B I U A

Primary keywords:

<Details>

Secondary keywords:

<Details>

Search intent:

<Details>

Expected word count:

<Details>

Target audience:

<Details>

Brand voice:

<Details>

Internal links:

<Details>

External links:

<Details>

The table format looks like this:



Table Format SEO Content Brief Template  

File Edit View Insert Format Tools Extensions Help

Normal text Arial 11 B I U A

Primary keywords	<Details>
Secondary keywords	<Details>
Search intent	<Details>
Expected word count	<Details>
Target audience	<Details>
Brand voice	<Details>
Internal links	<Details>
External links	<Details>
Headings and subheadings (Outline)	<Details>
Call to action	<Details>

The benefit of a table structure for your SEO content brief template is that it's generally more compact on the page.

But it can also become visually confusing once you add all of the details.

At the end of the day, there's no best structure for your briefs. It's about what works best for your team.

Test out these two formats and see what works best for your needs.

Common SEO Content Brief Challenges

Brief creation can greatly help content optimization, SEO, and your workflow.

But it can also create problems.

Let's look at some common mistakes and ways to avoid them.

Focusing on Keywords Without Search Intent

Avoid the trap of focusing too much on data and over-optimizing your content.

Yes, keywords are essential for organic traffic. But the goal isn't to check keywords off a list.

Your top priority should be to answer a search query with well-written, high-quality content.



Creating content that doesn't match the "why" behind your primary keywords will make it harder to rank, and you may struggle to see organic traffic.

Ensure you include details on search intent along with provided keywords so the writer nails both.

Unoriginal or Plagiarized Content

Including competitor links in content briefs is a best practice, but it also opens you up to plagiarism, paraphrasing, and duplicate content issues.

Include a note in your content brief that writers should find a unique angle for each topic to ensure the work is original and use competitor links for research, analysis, and inspiration only.

Always run final drafts through a plagiarism checker as a final step to ensure you publish original content every time.

Time-Consuming at Scale

Creating comprehensive content briefs can become time-consuming if you plan on producing a large quantity of articles.

However, a tool like the [Semrush SEO content template](#), which automates brief creation, will help you scale content production without overloading your team.

Content briefs are a valuable tool that can streamline content production, help writers produce top-notch work, and improve your SEO results.

Take advantage of analytics and automation tools to include helpful demographic and competitor data and speed up the brief creation process for the best results.



Quickly Create Effective SEO Content Briefs

with the SEO Content Template Tool

[Try for Free →](#)

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