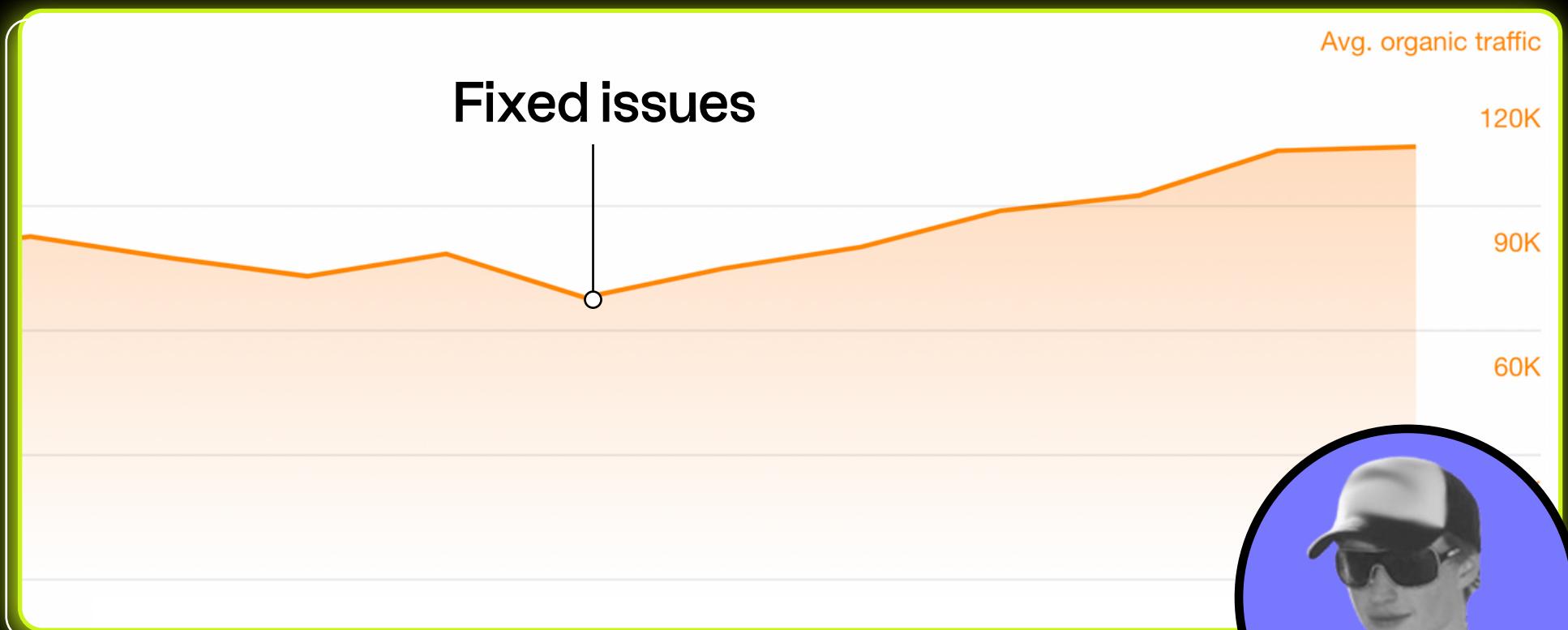
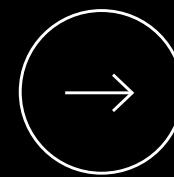


12 Most common SEO issues



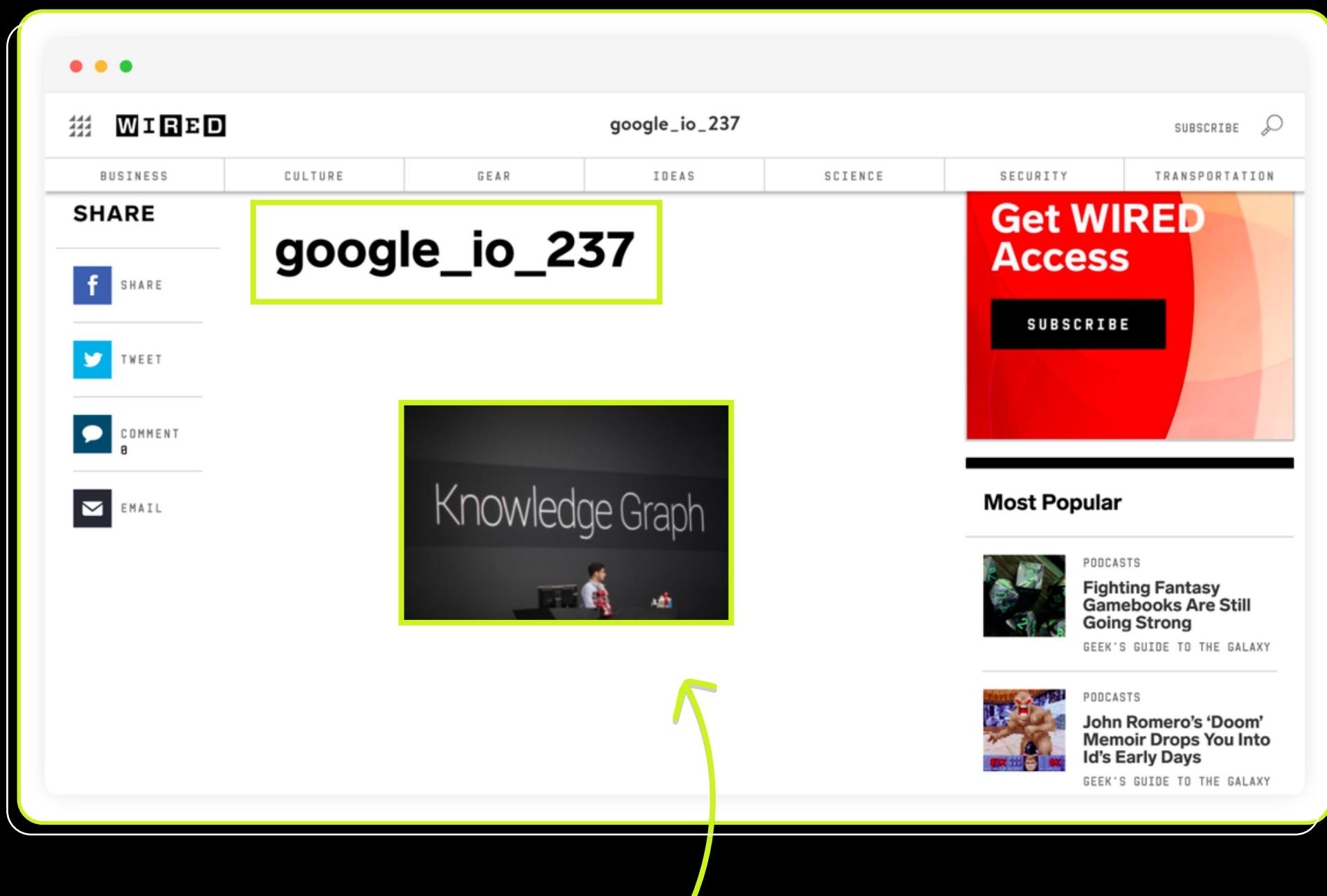
Featuring
Glen Allsopp
detailed.com



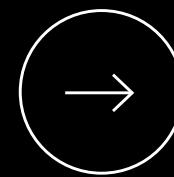


1. Image pages

Use WordPress? Every image you've ever uploaded may have its own page, which Google indexes.



I used to find this on ~30% of WordPress sites and although its presence seems to be declining, it's still good to check for...



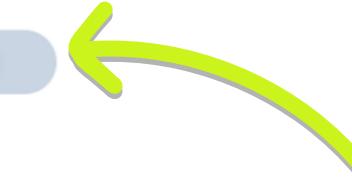
Luckily, this is an **easy fix**.

WordPress plugins like Yoast have a built-in option to redirect attachment URLs to the image.

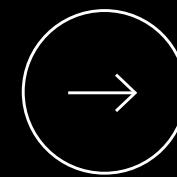
Media pages

When you upload media (e.g. an image or video), WordPress automatically creates a media page (attachment URL) for it. These pages are quite empty and could cause [thin content problems and lead to excess pages on your site](#). Therefore, Yoast SEO disables them by default (and redirects the attachment URL to the media itself).

Enable media pages



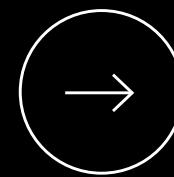
We recommend keeping media pages disabled. This will cause all attachment URLs to be redirected to the media itself.



Why does it matter?

Your site needs to maintain a clean footprint to help with its overall '**quality score**'.

I avoid indexing low-quality pages in Google that I wouldn't want searchers to find.

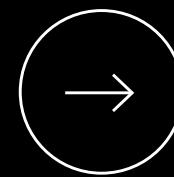


2. HTTP pages

As you'll know, all pages on your site need to be secure ([https](https://)).

But you'd be surprised how many sites still have pages ranking which aren't secure.

The screenshot shows a Google search results page with a yellow border. The search query in the bar is `site:pcmag.com -inurl:https`. Below the bar are navigation buttons for News, Books, Images, Videos, Shopping, Maps, Flights, and Finance. A message indicates "About 2,950 results (0.45 seconds)". The first result is for "Eero" and includes a snippet: "Eero. Latest Eero. Eero. Eero is a good-looking mesh-based Wi-Fi system that installs in minutes, is easy to manage, and delivers good overall throughput ...". The second result is for "iometer" and includes a snippet: "PC Magazine is your complete guide to computers, phones, tablets, peripherals and more. We test and review the latest gadgets, products and services, ...". Both results show the PCMag logo and a link to <http://uk.pcmag.com>.



Use the '**'site:domain inurl:-https'** search command to find these non-secure pages.

This search command can also help you find other unusual pages that probably shouldn't be indexing.

The image shows a comparison between a Google search results page and the official Forbes.com website.

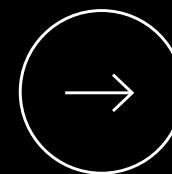
Google Search Results: A screenshot of a Google search results page for the query "site:forbes.com -inurl:https". The results show two links from the Forbes website:

- Forbes.com : College Planning**: A link to <http://images.forbes.com › collegeplanning>. A green arrow points from this result to the corresponding article on the Forbes site.
- America's New Tech Hot Spots - 2013-03-**: A link to <http://www.forbes.com › pictures › methodology>.

Forbes.com Homepage: A screenshot of the official Forbes.com homepage. The header features the Mercado Pago logo and the slogan "COBRA EN LÍNEA FÁCIL Y SEGURO". The main navigation bar includes links for U.S., EUROPE, ASIA, Home, Business, Investing, Technology, Entrepreneurs, and Op/Ed. The "Investing" category is highlighted in red. Below the navigation, there are several news articles:

- Personal Finance**: [Start Saving For College Now](#). Description: Seven basic points to remember when starting a savings plan.
- Home Improvement**: [A+ College Real Estate](#).
- Back-To-School**: [Six Must-Have Gadgets For College Students](#).
- Personal Finance**: [13 Financial Tips For College Kids](#).
- Business In The Beltway**: [An Expensive Education](#).

At the bottom of the search results page, there is a note: "Mar 8, 2013 — Mark Schill of Praxis Strategy Group crunched the numbers for us to determine the changes in STEM employment from 2001 to 2012 in the 51 ..."



3. Pages you don't even know about

Find pages you might not want to index (or even know existed).

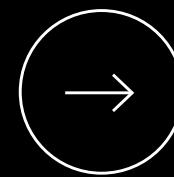
Perform a **site:domain** search and use terms to discover these pages.

Google site:ey.com "lorem ipsum"

About 541 results (0.27 seconds)

ey.com https://www.ey.com › doorway · Translate this page

Lorem Ipsum profile page browser title Building a better ... - EY
Lorem Ipsum Profile Lorem P Lorem Ipsum . Lorem job title. Proin quis ligula id nunc accumsan venenatis ut eu mauris. Morbi non finibus orci.



Example of terms to try:

"Lorem ipsum" →

Portfolio →

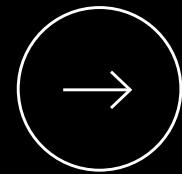
Demo →

Index →

Error →

Test →

Or perform a blank **site:domain** search and look for any odd titles that might be low-quality pages.



4. Matching intent

"I'm not ranking for [keyword]" can be answered by understanding the search intent.

- **Content type:**

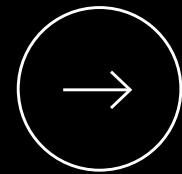
Should it be a blog post, landing page, or other?

- **Content format:**

Should it be a how-to guide, list, or other?

- **Content angle:**

What type of audience should it be targeting?



To understand intent, Google your topic and **read the results page**.

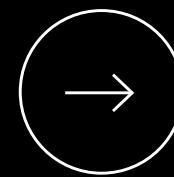
Type: Blog post

SERP overview for "real estate agent website" ② 15 Aug 2023 ▾ Compare with ▾

- Search result
- 1 50 Best Real Estate Websites
<https://www.agentimage.com/50-best-real-estate-websites/> ▾
- 2 Placester®
<https://www.nar.realtor/realtor-benefits-program/business-marketing/placester> ▾
- 3 Top 25 Real Estate Agent Websites RANKED (+ Tips & ...)
<https://theclose.com/real-estate-agent-websites/> ▾
- 4 The 11 Best Real Estate Agent Websites of 2020 (Plus Tips ...)
<https://blog.hubspot.com/sales/real-estate-agent-websites> ▾
- 5 15 Best Real Estate Agent Websites: **Tips and Examples**
<https://www.wix.com/blog/real-estate-agent-websites> ▾
- 6 ► People also ask
- 7 Real Estate Agent Websites: 30+ **Inspiring Examples** (2023)
<https://www.sitebuilderreport.com/inspiration/real-estate-websites> ▾

Format:
List of examples

Angle: Inspiration
for real estate agents



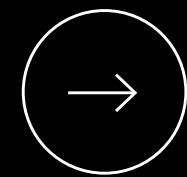
5. Tags and categories

Another common source of thin content on a site is going overboard on tags and categories.

They're great in moderation.

But not when these pages:

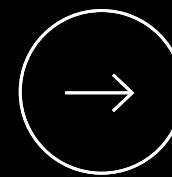
- Are empty
- Only have one post/item
- Haven't been updated in years



This applies to ecommerce, forums, and any other sites with a blog.

I avoid having a significant number of categories, tags or collections with 0-2 items.

The screenshot shows the Star Trek Shop homepage. A yellow box highlights a product card for the "Star Trek Party Supplies Pack". The card displays a stack of cups and a plate, both featuring Star Trek logos. An "Exclusive" badge is visible. The product title is "Star Trek Party Supplies Pack" and the price is \$34.95. To the right of the card, a yellow bracket points from the text "I avoid having a significant number of categories, tags or collections with 0-2 items." towards the product card. The website's header includes links for "SHOP BY SERIES", "COLLECTIONS", "SHOP BY PRODUCT", "BEST SELLERS", and "SALE". The footer contains a "Sort" dropdown and a small "No rating available" message.



6. Title and H1

Updating dates in your blog title?

Make sure you don't just change your H1 but also the title that shows in Google (or vice-versa).

The image displays two side-by-side screenshots. On the left is a screenshot of a website titled 'Best Off-Road SUVs For 2023'. The title bar is highlighted with a yellow border. On the right is a screenshot of a SEO analysis tool showing the 'Title' field set to 'Best Off-Road SUVs for 2022 - Forbes Wheels'. A yellow arrow points from the website's title bar to the SEO tool's 'Title' field.

Wheels > Best > Best Off-Road SUVs

Cars SUVs Trucks Minivans Ele

Compact Midsize Large Hybrid Large Luxury 3 row 7-Seater Off road

Best Off-Road SUVs For 2023

Andrew Wendler, Alex Kwanten
Deputy Editor, Managing Editor

Forbes Wheels independently tests and reviews cars and automotive products. Our analysis and opinions are our own.

Way back in the 1960s, when SUVs were brand new, the term really meant something. These vehicles were built or specialized four-wheel drive machines meant for agricultural use. The "Sports" part came after people discovered how much fun such vehicles could be.

Read More

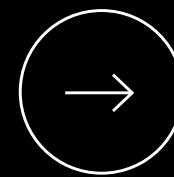
+ Show Summary

https://www.forbes.com/wheels/best/off-road-suvs/

Canonical https://www.forbes.com/wheels/best/off-road-suvs/

Robots Tag max-image-preview:large

X-Robots-Tag Missing

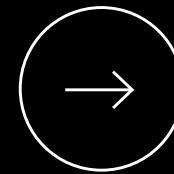


Easily find and fix these pages with '**site:domain intitle: [previous year]**'.

Then use the free **Detailed SEO Extension (Glen's tool)** to quickly check the page's title.

The screenshot shows a detailed SEO audit report for a specific page. The top navigation bar includes links for Overview, Headings, Links, Images, Schema, Social, Advanced, and Help. The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Title**: Best Off-Road SUVs for 2022 - Forbes Wheels (43 characters)
- Description**: Some SUVs look tough, but the vehicles on this list are tough. Here are the best off-road SUVs options for those looking to get off the beaten path. (151 characters)
- URL**: <https://www.forbes.com/wheels/best/off-road-suvs/> (Indexable)
- Canonical**: <https://www.forbes.com/wheels/best/off-road-suvs/> (Self-referencing)
- Robots Tag**: max-image-preview:large
- X-Robots-Tag**: Missing



7. Old publish dates

Avoid older dates showing up against recently published or updated content.

This hurts your CTR and, from my experiments, your rankings.



pcmag.com

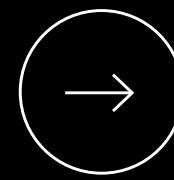
<https://www.pcmag.com> › ... › Android Apps

⋮

The Best Android Apps for 2023

Oct 5, 2022 — Which Amazon Kindle Is Right for You? ... All of Amazon's Echo Devices

Compared: Which One Is **Best** for Your Smart Home? ... Windows, macOS, Chrome OS, or...

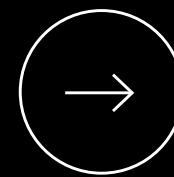


Here's one way to find this problem using Google:

- Perform a **site:domain** search
- Select tools (on the right)
- Enter last year's date (or even further back)

The screenshot shows a Google search results page with a yellow border. The search query in the bar is "site:pcmag.com \"best\"". On the right side of the search bar, there is a "Tools" button which is highlighted with a yellow box and a green arrow points to it from the list above. Below the search bar, there are several filter buttons: Videos, Images, Songs, Laptop, Haircuts, Air fryer, Smartwatch, Movie, and Anime. To the right of these are "All filters", "Tools" (which is selected), and "SafeSearch". A date range "Jan 1, 2022 – Dec 31, 2022" is also visible. The search results list three items, all from pcmag.com, all titled "The Best [Category] for 2023". Each result includes a snippet of text and a link to the full article.

- PC pc当地.com
[The Best Android Apps for 2023](https://www.pc当地.com/.../Android Apps)
Oct 5, 2022 — Which Amazon Kindle Is Right for You? ... All of Amazon's Echo Devices
Compared: Which One Is Best for Your Smart Home? ... Windows, macOS, Chrome OS, or...
- PC pc当地.com
[The Best Video Editing Software for 2023](https://www.pc当地.com/.../Video/Video Editing)
Jun 9, 2022 — Which Amazon Kindle Is Right for You? ... All of Amazon's Echo Devices
Compared: Which One Is Best for Your Smart Home? ... Windows, macOS, Chrome OS, or...
- PC pc当地.com
[The Best Apps in the Windows 11 Store for 2023](https://www.pc当地.com/.../Windows)
Feb 24, 2022 — Which Amazon Kindle Is Right for You? ... All of Amazon's Echo Devices
Compared: Which One Is Best for Your Smart Home? ... Windows, macOS, Chrome OS, or...
\$9.99

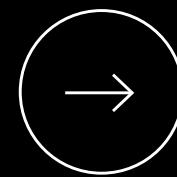


8. Heading tags

It may seem basic to some, but I still regularly see sites not using heading tags correctly.

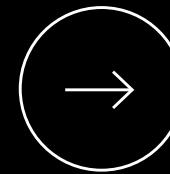
The screenshot shows a user interface for a website audit or SEO tool. At the top, there are navigation tabs: Overview, Headings, Links, Images, Schema, Social, Advanced, and a settings gear icon. The main content area displays a list of items, each preceded by a blue box containing '<H1>'. The items are:

- <H1> Home Maintenance & Improvement, Reimagined
- <H1> On-demand Home Care
- <H1> Finding Service Pros for Urgent Repairs
- <H1> Annual Home Diagnostic
- <H1> Maintenance & Improvement
- <H1> 24/7 Home Care
- <H1> Preferred Pricing & Vendors
- <H1> Our Services
- <H1> 24/7 Home Care



Here are some basic rules I follow:

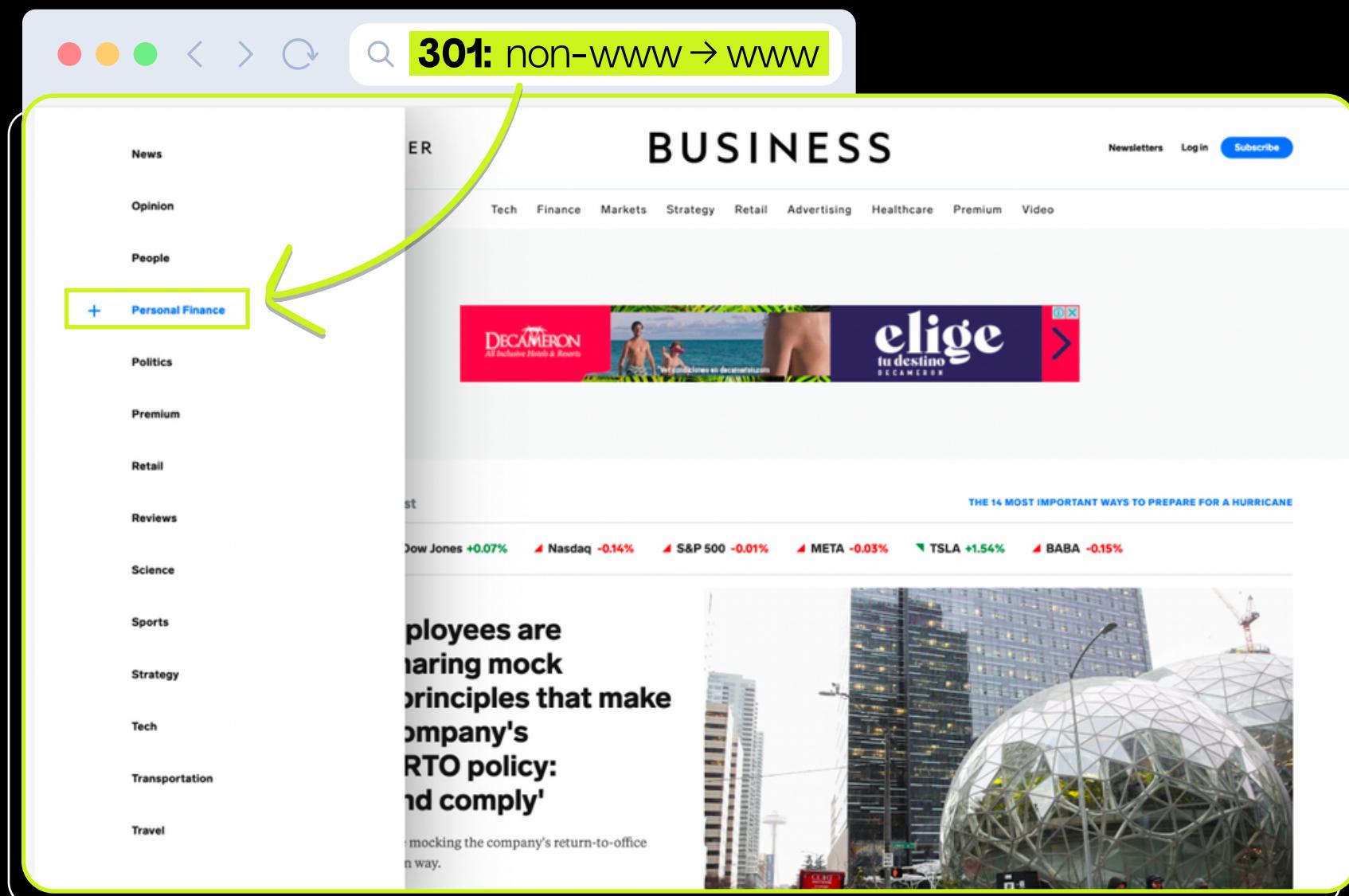
- **Include only one H1 per page**
- **Use the same title for the H1 and the title that shows in Google**
- **Don't over-optimise titles with keyword stuffing**
- **Order H2-H6s appropriately, e.g. don't go from H2 to H4 without H3 in between**
- **Make them incredibly skimmable**

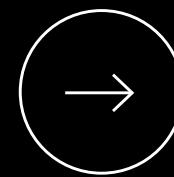


9. Redirected links

Ideally, key navigational links should not go through a redirect.

- http to https
- www to non-www
- trailing-slash to no trailing-slash





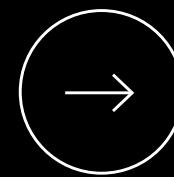
I hear you:

"A 301/308 redirect should pass all the 'weight', so it's fine..."

Why do it if you don't need to?

Here's why:

It's an (albeit, slightly) **slower** experience for users and increases the chance of creating **redirect chains** down the road.

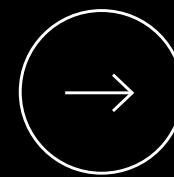


10. Redirect chains

Redirect chains occur when there's more than one redirect between the initial URL and the final URL.

For example:



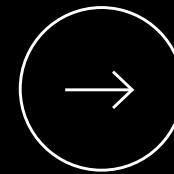


Similar to Glen's previous point, ideally these 301s should be fixed and not go through a redirect chain.

They can impact:

- Crawl budget
- Page loading times
- General user experience
- 'Power' of your internal/backlinks

Redirect chains can be found in a Screaming Frog crawl and/or using a (free) tool like httpstatus.io.



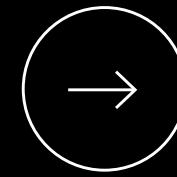
11. Canonical interlinks

Avoid sending key internal links to pages you're not trying to rank (e.g. they canonicalise elsewhere).

The image shows a screenshot of the SpaceX website's "FEATURED PRODUCTS" section. On the left, there are two products: a "STARSHIP TORCH PRE-SALE" (SOLD OUT) and a "UNISEX STARSHIP HEATSHIELD PULLOVER HOODIE" (\$65.00). A yellow box highlights the hoodie. A yellow arrow points from this box to the "Canonical" field in the SEO meta-data on the right.

SEO Meta-Data (Right Side):

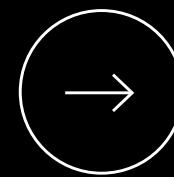
- Title:** Unisex Starship Heatshield Pullover Hoodie – SpaceX Store (69 characters)
- Description:** Fabric Content: Black• Small-5X: 70% Cotton / 30% Polyester Gray Heather• Small-5X: 52% Cotton / 48% Polyester (110 characters)
- URL:** https://shop.spacex.com/collections/featured-products/products/unisex-starship-heatshield-pullover-hoodie (Indexable)
- Canonical:** https://shop.spacex.com/products/unisex-starship-heatshield-pullover-hoodie (Canonicalised)
- Robots Tag:** Missing
- X-Robots-Tag:** Missing



This is **extremely common** for ecommerce sites on Shopify.

Not the end of the world, but sometimes entire sites are built this way which isn't ideal.

It's nothing a **developer** can't fix.

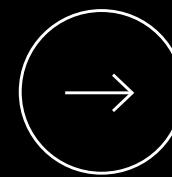


12. 404 pages with good backlinks

Many site owners delete pages without redirecting them to another page on the site.

This can be ok, but I suggest checking to see if the page has existing backlinks.

If it does, you can pass the 'power' of the backlinks to another page.

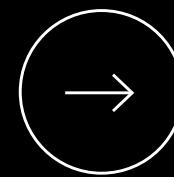


I use **Screaming Frog** to find these issues:

- Connect to Ahrefs' API
- You'll see backlinks per URL
- Find 404 pages with backlinks
- 301 to a page you want to rank

The screenshot shows the Screaming Frog SEO Spider interface. At the top, it displays the URL <https://hubspot.com/>. Below the address bar is a toolbar with various filters and export options. The main area is a table of crawled URLs, with the 'Ahrefs Backlinks - Exact' column highlighted by a yellow box. To the right of the table is a sidebar with sections for 'Summary' and 'Crawl Data'. The 'Crawl Data' section is expanded, showing categories like 'Internal' and 'External' with further sub-options. At the bottom of the interface, there's a navigation bar with links like 'Overview', 'Issues', 'Site Structure', etc., and a progress bar indicating 'API 79%'.

Pixel Width	Meta Description 1	Meta Description 1 Len...	Meta Description 1 Pixel ...	Ahrefs Backlinks - Exact	Meta Keywords
0		0	0	107,019	
0		0	0	547,488	
494	HubSpot's CRM platform contains the marketing, sales, service, operati...	136	85	0	
499	Check out the leaderboard for May 2018 for the Impact Award Partner o...	80	50	0	
361	All of HubSpot's mobile marketing ebooks, in one place	54	33	46	
401	Create an invoice template for your business using HubSpot's free invo...	149	91	12,478	
322	Learn about all of HubSpot's different products and features and how th...	125	77	5,804	
347	See how, since jumping to HubSpot's CRM platform, Giant Swarm empo...	148	95	17	
537	Congratulations to the August 2022 Partner Tier Promotions	58	37	0	
445	HubSpot is a marketing, sales, and customer service platform that help...	94	59	7,959	
556	HubSpot's customer service software makes supporting customers eas...	157	98	8,603	
572	This page serves as a go-to modern hub for all things business stats. It...	139	84	12,402	
270	Take the guesswork out of software buying decisions. These compariso...	121	76	5,106	
152	Ready to do your best work? Explore career opportunities globally and le...	103	64	46,553	
599	Meet the HubSpot management team.	33	23	18,755	
490	HubSpot's free CMS tools offer the features you need to launch a custo...	151	92	17,146	
523	HubSpot's software has everything your marketing team needs, from st...	148	92	20,259	
343	The HubSpot for Startups Partner Program is a global network of accele...	153	96	5,482	
201	HubSpot is a CRM platform that brings everything scaling companies n...	242	149	2,842	
335	See pricing for HubSpot's all-in-one marketing software to help you gro...	154	94	6,402	
243	Meet the Board of Directors of HubSpot.	39	24	6,106	
395	Join a local HubSpot User Group (HUG) to meet other HubSpot users an...	127	82	43,390	
339	Inbound marketing helps you attract customers with content designed t...	162	102	36,802	
209	Case Study Library	18	11	10,108	
373	Learn about the Solutions Provider and Solutions Partner packages, and...	107	65	5,846	
282	Learn how to grow your business via HubSpot's App Partner Program.	66	43	29,376	
576	We offer a full suite of onboarding, training, and consulting options to h...	117	71	3,622	
580	Powerful sales software to help your team close more deals, deepen rel...	157	97	12,237	
403	Ebooks, guides, templates, and more to help you grow.	53	33	8,001	
571	Use AI to create landing page, email, and ad copy. Provide what your ma...	129	80	1,323	



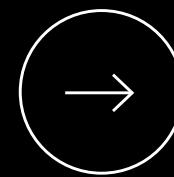
Bonus: Superpixels

Once you've taken care of the fundamentals, add '**Superpixels**' everywhere you can.

In my 1,000+ audits, the most common issue was this:

Sites were so... **similar**.

No personality. Just pushing out content for Big G.



Superpixels = In the standard things you put on your site, try to make them memorable. Personal.

Make visitors do a double take. To me, this makes earning links, subscribers and sales much easier.

A screenshot of the Ottica Seattle website. At the top left is a profile picture of Rand Fishkin with the name "Rand Fishkin" and handle "@randfish". At the top right are navigation links: "BOOK AN APPOINTMENT", "WHAT'S NEW", "STORE INFO", "ABOUT", and "INSTAGRAM". Below the header is a grid of images showing various eyeglasses and a woman wearing glasses. A prominent yellow-bordered overlay on the right side contains the text: "Six emails. Per year. (Okay, there might be seven but we may end up sending as few as four?) Sign up to get a peek at new arrivals and more! Email Address SUBSCRIBE We respect your privacy." A large yellow curved arrow points from the text above to this overlay.

Rand Fishkin
@randfish

One of the best email overlays I've seen.

OTTICA SEATTLE

BOOK AN APPOINTMENT WHAT'S NEW STORE INFO ABOUT INSTAGRAM

Six emails. Per year.
(Okay, there might be seven but we may end up sending as few as four?)
Sign up to get a peek at new arrivals and more!

Email Address

SUBSCRIBE

We respect your privacy.