Web Developer

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Canonical & hreflang

Technical seo

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Canonical

Canonical

the canonical attribute in the HTML link element is primarily used for SEO purposes to specify the preferred version of a web page when multiple versions of the same content exist, preventing duplicate content issues and negative impacts on a site's search engine rankings

```
<link rel="canonical" href="https://example.com/preferred-url">
```

Canonical urls: a beginner's guide to canonical tags

Canonical tag - definition + best practices - seobility wiki

URL parameters

multiple URLs with different parameters might display the same product page, but search engines may view them as separate pages, potentially diluting the SEO value as they may not know which version to prioritize in search results

```
https://example.com/products/blue-shirt
https://example.com/products/blue-shirt?size=medium
https://example.com/products/blue-shirt?color=blue
```

canonical
the canonical tag informs search engines which URL is the preferred version to show in search results
```
<link rel="canonical" href="https://example.com/products/blue-shirt">
```

hreflang

hreflang

specifies language and regional targeting for a page and is typically placed in the <head> section of an HTML document, providing information to search engines about alternate versions of a webpage in different languages or regions

this helps search engines understand the language and geographical targeting of each version so they can serve the most relevant version to users based on their language and location

hreflang: definition and seo best practices - seobility wiki
What are hreflang attributes & how do you implement them?

hreflang

```html
<!--example with language codes -->
<link rel="alternate" hreflang="en" href="https://example.com/en/">
<link rel="alternate" hreflang="fr" href="https://example.com/fr/">
<link rel="alternate" hreflang="es" href="https://example.com/es/">


<!--example with regional codes -->
<link rel="alternate" hreflang="en-us" href="https://example.com/en-us/">
<link rel="alternate" hreflang="en-gb" href="https://example.com/en-gb/">
```

language codes ISO 639-1, and optional region codes ISO 3166-1 Alpha 2

hreflang in sitemaps

including hreflang in sitemaps is beneficial for large websites with multiple language versions, as managing hreflang in each page's <head> can be complex

placing hreflang annotations in the XML sitemap simplifies the process and helps search engines understand language and regional targeting without depending on individual page headers

- reduces the need to manage hreflang in individual pages
- ensures accurate language targeting for large websites with many pages
- improves search crawling by centralizing language and regional information

Hreflang Tag
A Guide to Understanding Self-Referencing Hreflang Tags

hreflang in sitemaps

```xml
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<urlset xmlns="http://www.sitemaps.org/schemas/sitemap/0.9"
          xmlns:xhtml="http://www.w3.org/1999/xhtml">
  <url>
    <loc>http://example.com/en/page</loc>
    <xhtml:link rel="alternate" hreflang="en" href="http://example.com/en/page" />
    <xhtml:link rel="alternate" hreflang="fr" href="http://example.com/fr/page" />
  </url>
  <url>
    <loc>http://example.com/fr/page</loc>
    <xhtml:link rel="alternate" hreflang="fr" href="http://example.com/fr/page" />
    <xhtml:link rel="alternate" hreflang="en" href="http://example.com/en/page" />
  </url>
  <!-- Add more URLs with hreflang annotations as needed -->
</urlset>
```

Canonical & hreflang

Canonical & hreflang

for multilingual websites, combining canonical and hreflang is crucial for managing preferred URLs and regional content

each page should have
- a canonical attribute pointing to itself
- an hreflang attribute pointing to alternate language versions

this combination indicates the preferred URL for each language version, ensures users get the right content based on language preferences, informs search engines of the preferred URL for SEO, and avoids duplicate content issues

Canonical & hreflang

```html
<!-- English page -->
<!-- canonical tag pointing to the english version of the book page -->
<link rel="canonical" href="https://example.com/books">

<!-- hreflang tags indicating alternate versions in different languages -->
<link rel="alternate" hreflang="en" href="https://example.com/books">
<link rel="alternate" hreflang="it" href="https://example.com/it/libri">
<link rel="alternate" hreflang="fr" href="https://example.com/fr/livres">
```

Canonical & hreflang

```html
<!-- Italian page -->
<!-- canonical tag pointing to the italian version of the book page -->
<link rel="canonical" href="https://example.com/it/libri">

<!-- hreflang tags indicating alternate versions in different languages -->
<link rel="alternate" hreflang="en" href="https://example.com/books">
<link rel="alternate" hreflang="it" href="https://example.com/it/libri">
<link rel="alternate" hreflang="fr" href="https://example.com/fr/livres">
```

Canonical & hreflang

```
<!-- French page -->
<!-- canonical tag pointing to the french version of the book page -->
<link rel="canonical" href="https://example.com/fr/livres">

<!-- hreflang tags indicating alternate versions in different languages -->
<link rel="alternate" hreflang="en" href="https://example.com/books">
<link rel="alternate" hreflang="it" href="https://example.com/it/libri">
<link rel="alternate" hreflang="fr" href="https://example.com/fr/livres">
```

Pagination

Pagination and SEO

pagination is used for content that spans multiple pages, such as blogs or product listings, and search engines might misinterpret these pages as separate entities, which can negatively affect rankings

pagination attributes help search engines understand the relationship between pages in a series, such as blog posts or e-commerce product listings

Pagination and SEO

```html
<!-- page 1 -->
<head>
  <meta charset="UTF-8">
  <title>Page 1</title>
  <link rel="canonical" href="https://example.com/page1" />
  <link rel="next" href="https://example.com/page2" />
</head>


<!-- page 2 -->
<head>
  <meta charset="UTF-8">
  <title>Page 2</title>
  <link rel="canonical" href="https://example.com/page2" />
  <link rel="prev" href="https://example.com/page1" />
</head>
```