WORLD'S MOST ULTIMATE st ASO CHECKLIST

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APP NAME

START HERE

Do you rank 1st for your exact app name?

NO → Is someone intentionally copying your app name to piggyback on your traffic?

YES → File a complaint with Apple. Even if you don't have a trademark for it, but you were the first to launch your app with this name Apple should force the copycats to stop stealing your users.

Unless it's *you* who are the copycat of course, then just stop it, seriously :)

NO → Your app name might be too generic, make it unique so that users can easily find you.

NO → Do you have keywords in your app name?

YES → Do you rank high enough for them (like top 20 at least)?

NO → Consider targeting less competitive keywords. Try a service like ASODesk.com to research new search terms and monitor your positions.

YES → If characther limits allow it, consider adding a descriptive part to your app name with your major keywords. As in «AppName: Best Keyword1 and Keyword2 Free»

Is your app name easy to spell and pronounce?

NO → Is it too late to change it?

YES → Add most common misspellings to your meta keywords so that users can find it even if they don't spell the name correctly.

NO → See if you can minimize the ambiguity and complexity of your app name to make sure you leverage word of mouth and virality to the fullest.

YES → Is someone else running search ads for your app name?

YES → Start running your own search ads, you should be able to outbid your competition due to higher relevance.

You can automate your Search Ads campaigns with a service like SearchAdsHQ.com

NO

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ICON

START HERE

Is your icon easily recognizable?

NO → Make a list of things you can add to make it more recognizable and experiment: shapes, colors, frames, symbols, etc. If you have a portfolio of apps you can add a branding element to all icons.

YES

Does your icon convey an idea of what the app is about?

NO → Figure out how you can make your icon more representative of your app's main features.

YES

Does your icon look good against light and dark background?

NO → See how you can make it more appealing regardless of environment.

YES

Does your icon stand out against competition?

NO → See how you can make a difference: contrasting colors, different shapes or adding a frame can help. Check out apps from other categories for inspiration.

Use a tool like SplitMetrics.com to run an A/B test and see how you stack up against competition.

YES

MOVE TO NEXT SECTION

Be sure to run an A/B test before you roll out any significant icon changes to the App Store

SplitMetrics is a great way to safely test your ideas

SCREENSHOTS

START HERE

Can users understand what your app does by only looking at your first two portrait or one landscape screenshot?

NO → The first two screenshots are critical because that's what users see above the fold on the app page and in search results. Make sure you make a good first impression.

YES

Are you using all 5 screenshots?

NO → Make use of all screenshot slots available. Each screenshot is an opportunity to convince users to download your app.

YES

Are all your screenshots of the same orientation?

NO → While they can stand out, mixed screenshots can also waste a lot of space on you app page and in search results, so consider opting for one orientation (run an A/B test to see which one). Never make second screenshot landscape if the first one is portrait!

YES

Do you have caption texts in your screenshots?

NO → Highlight your app's main benefits and selling points with legible high-contrast text. On top or at the bottom of the screenshot is the usual placement, but you can experiment.

YES

Are they short, easily readable and understandable?

NO → People don't read, they scan. You only have a few seconds to get your point across, so make your captions concise. And by all means have a call to action!

YES

Have you localized your screenshots?

NO → Take a look at your analytics and prioritize localizing for the languages/countries where you have most traction.

Use a service like Softlation.com if you also need to localize content within the app.

YES

Are you sure that you've really localized them, not just translated the captions?

NO → Always have a native speaker who understands the culture review your messaging and change the brand's tone if neeeded.

YES

Do you feature any login, registrations, purchase forms or ads in your screenshots?

YES → The goal of your screenshots is to score an install, so focus on the good stuff and showcase the value, not your sales funnel.

NO

Do you have any 'Welcome' type screenshots?

YES → Lose them. Get right down to business and describe your app, you can welcome your users once they download and launch.

NO

Do you have sophisticated background images with many details?

YES → Try switching to simpler backgrounds so that the main focus is on the app. Too much detail in the background distracts attention from where you really want it.

NO

Is your app a game?

NO → Do you feature devices in your screenshot?

NO → Try adding a device and showcase your app in action (e.g. someone taking a photo with your selfie app).

YES

Do you feature your characters in your screenshots (assuming you have charachters that is)?

NO → Try prominently showcasing your cutest (or most dreadful) charachters in your screenshot images.

Experiment and see which ones perform best.

YES

Have you tested which characthers work best?

NO → Run A/B tests to see which ones yield highst conversion rates.

The best way to test this is via Splitmetrics.com

YES

MOVE TO NEXT SECTION

Be sure to run an A/B test before you roll out any significant screeenshot changes to the App Store

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VIDEO PREVIEW

START HERE

Do you have a video preview?

NO →

Run an A/B test to see how adding or removing a video preview affects conversions. Video previews are known to be both helping and hurting conversion rates, so the rule of thumb is to experiment.

YES ↓

How long is your video preview?

20+ sec ←

80% of users don't watch past first 12 seconds, so make sure you keep it short and to the point. Make your video dynamic and get right down to business.

15-20 sec →

Make sure you showcase your best features in the first seconds of your video.

Do you have a fade-in or 'welcome' type of message at the beginning of your video preview?

YES →

Lose it. App Store is not a movie theater, most users won't even watch past 5 seconds, so get to the point and 'sell' your app from the get go.

NO ↓

Does your poster frame give an idea of what your app has to offer?

NO ←

The video preview is taking a place of your first screenshots, so make sure it follows the same guidlines as your images.

Run A/B tests to see which frame converts best.

YES ↓

MOVE TO NEXT SECTION

RATING & REVIEWS

START HERE

Do you have an average rating for your app's current version in all key markets?

YES

Is it 4+ stars?

YES

Encourage your users to rate and review your app. Find the right segments and the right timings - when users have had a positive experience and when you're not disrupting.

NO

How bad is it? Can a few positive reviews outweight the negative ones?

YES

Do something good for your users, then encourage reviews. Be sure not to give stuff in exchange for reviews though, as this is punishable by Apple.

NO

Fix bugs and issues as soon as possible, add missing features, roll out an update and encourage good reviews. Provide users with a communication channel so they can funnel complaints to your support rather than vent in your App Store reviews.

NO

Do you read user reviews regularly?

YES

Start keeping an eye on your reviews. It will give you feedback for improvements and new features.

Apptrace.com offers a free service that lets you easily monitor reviews across key markets.

MOVE TO NEXT SECTION

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KEYWORDS

START HERE

Are there any spaces, articles, prepositions in your keywords string?

YES → Remove them. The correct format is ‘kwd1,kwd2,kwd3, etc.’

NO

Are there any repetitive keywords (including repetitions with keywords in titles and keywords), singular and plural forms, etc.?

YES → Remove all repetitions, one mention is enough.

Whenever you're not sure if a word form or symbol has an effect in search - compare search results with and without it. If there's little to no difference, you can lose the element in question and free up space.

NO

Do you have less than 97 characters used in the keyword section?

YES → Optimize your keywords section so that you can add more keywords in.

Ideally try to make use of all 100 characters.

Consider replacing one long keyword with 2 shorter ones, replace words with numbers ("two" = 2).

NO

Do you make use of related localizations?

YES

App Store search algorithm often takes into account meta data from relevant localizations when ranking apps.

E.g. your app name and keywords in Mexico Spanish localization will affect search results in the US.

UK and AU localizations have an impact on a wide range of store fronts. Make use of these cross-relations.

NO

Do you use your competitors' brand names as keywords?

YES

Do you rank for them?

NO → This means the algo just ignores them, so change these for something non-branded that you will rank for.

YES

Be careful and proceed at your own risk. According to the App Store rules this is not allowed.

Use a service like ASODesk.com to get keyword ideas.

NO

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DESCRIPTION

START HERE

Do your users need to hit the "... more" link to find the core value of your app?

YES

Less than 2% of users actually open the full description. Rewrite your description so that the text above the fold convey the value proposition.

NO

Is your short description scannable?

YES

Make it easy to read. Use bullet lists of your key features or any other way that can help you grab readers' attention and help get the point across fast.

NO

Does your above the fold description contain blank lines and interrupted sentences?

YES

Don't waste any space here. Revise it and make sure the most vital ideas you address your users are not cut off - on mobile you have 252 characters visible before the "... more" link.

NO

Do you have a call to action (CTA) above the fold?

YES

Add one!

This is both an example of a CTA and our advice ;)

Do you stuff your description with keywords?

YES

There's no valid evidence that description is indexable by App Store search algo, so focus on users, not search bots (note: this doesn't apply to Google Play - your description affects search there)

NO

Have you localized your description?

NO

Take a look at your analytics and prioritize localizing for the languages/countries where you have most traction.

Use a service like Softlation.com if you also need to localize content within the app.

Are you sure that you've really localized them, not just translated?

NO

Always have a native speaker who understands the culture review your messaging to fit in and change the brand's tone if neeeded.

YES

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WEBSITE

START HERE

Do you have a link to your website from your App Store page?

NO

Put a link to your website. Pro tip: use both developer site and support links and point them at different pages of your website (or different websites) to help with SEO.

YES

Do you have a link to your app from your website?

NO

Link to your app from your website.

Use smart banners to drive installs and text links with relevant keywords in anchor texts to help your app rank higher in Google web search.

Pro tip: build links to your app page from other websites and always link to the canonical page (look it up in html source code).

YES

Do you use rich mark up on your website?

NO

Associate your app with your website by adding rich markup meta tags for Facebook open graph, Twitter cards and Google+ structured data.

This will help drive additional traffic to your app whenever your site is mentioned on social media.

YES

Do you have content-based app?

NO

Consider adding app indexing markup to help surface your app in search results both on device and in Google search. (See App Search Programming Guide and Google Firebase Indexing)

YES

Do you use app-indexing?

NO

YES

What was your last time when you updated your app?

more than 6 months ago

Try to regularly update your app as it adds features and gives you additional chances of getting featured.

Moreover every new update gives you an opportunity to update your ASO strategy.

not long ago

MOVE TO NEXT SECTION

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MISC

START HERE

Is your app published worldwide?

NO → Consider making your app available worldwide unless there is a good reason not to, like licensing or operational limits.

YES

Are your store listings localized?

NO → If you are just getting started, focus on your core market language. Consider localizing your meta data with your next app verison release.

YES → Make sure you don't forget to localize the copy on your screenshots and shcreenshots itself.

Is your app size over 100Mb?

YES

Is the size significantly bigger than 100Mb?

YES → Consider compressing some of the graphical assets or make some of the content downloadable after install to make your app below 100Mb so it can be installed via cellular connection.

NO → Well some things are meant to be big, so no worries. However, always remember to check the 'Wifi only' option when buying ads.

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ANALYTICS

START HERE

Do you have an analytics SDK in place?

NO → Understanding your users is critical, so make sure to have at least basic analytics.

YES

Are you tracking all major events?

NO → Most analytics solutions cover the essentials out of the box, but do spend time to also tag the events specific to your app.

YES → Make sure that you know exactly what you're tracking and why, focus on actionable data and don't get trapped in vanity metrics.

Are you planning to run paid user acquisition?

NO → Getting users is hard, so even if you're not planning to run ads you might have to eventually. Always have a plan B.

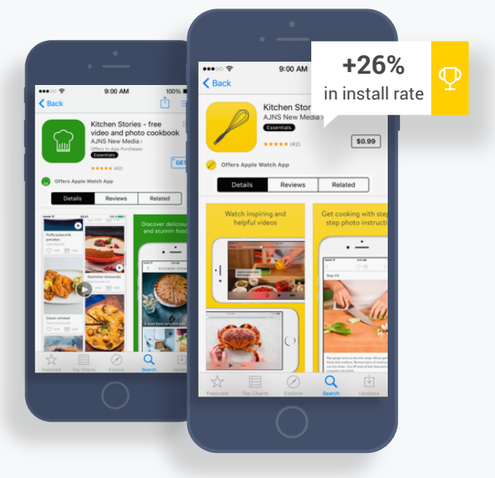
YES

Do you have a mobile attribution SDK?

NO → Having a mobile attribution partner will let you advertise across multiple ad networks with a single SDK while giving you extra insights and analytics.

Adjust.com is a great option to get started.

YES → Make sure that you pass key events over to ad networks that have built-in optimization algos (like Facebook) - this way you can optimize towards actions that matter to you.



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SplitMetrics is an A/B testing and conversion rate optimization platform for App Store and Google Play trusted by the world's leading app developers.

Contact us for a **free ASO consultation**

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