On-Page, Off-Page and Technical SEO PDF

On-page SEO improves what is on a page: content, titles, headings, links and images. Off-page SEO covers signals from outside, mainly links, mentions and reputation. Technical SEO makes sure the site can be crawled, indexed and loaded quickly. Audit all three, fix what blocks crawling first, then content, then outreach.

Key takeaways

- On-page work covers content quality, titles, headings, internal links and media.
- Off-page work focuses on earning links and mentions, not buying them.
- Technical work covers crawlability, indexing, speed, mobile and structured data.
- Fix technical blockers first because they limit everything else.
- Audit regularly and track changes with dates.

What is on-page, off-page and technical SEO?

On-page, off-page and technical SEO are the three areas of search optimisation: improving page content and markup, building external trust signals, and ensuring the site is accessible and efficient for search engines.

How are the three areas different?

Think of a shop. On-page SEO is the quality of the shelves and signs inside. Off-page SEO is the shop's reputation in the neighbourhood. Technical SEO is the building: doors that open, lights that work and a clear map. A weak area limits the others, so a balanced review is best.

What does on-page SEO include?

Item	What to check
Content	Matches intent, accurate, complete, easy to read
Title tag	Unique, descriptive, includes the main topic naturally
Meta description	Helpful summary written for people
Headings	One main heading and logical subheadings
Internal links	Related pages linked with meaningful anchor text
Images	Compressed, descriptive alternative text, sensible size

Item	What to check
Structured data	Valid markup that matches visible content
Readability	Short paragraphs, lists, clear language

What does technical SEO include?

Check that important pages are crawlable and not blocked by mistake, that a sitemap lists canonical URLs, that status codes are correct (200, 301, 404), that redirects are not chained, that pages load fast on mobile, that the site uses secure connections and that duplicate versions use canonical tags. Review core web vitals reports in Search Console and the official guidance for fixes.

How do I run a simple technical audit?

1. Crawl the site with a crawler tool and list errors.
2. Check Search Console coverage and indexing reports.
3. Test key templates for mobile and speed.
4. Review the robots rules and sitemap.
5. Find duplicate titles and thin pages.
6. Prioritise by impact and effort. Write recommendations in plain language with page examples.

What does off-page SEO include?

Links from reputable sites, brand mentions, reviews, local listings and social sharing that brings attention. Good methods are publishing original research, useful tools or guides, working with partners, speaking at events and contributing expert comments. Avoid link buying, link exchanges at scale and automated schemes, which can violate search policies.

How does local SEO fit in?

For local businesses, claim and complete a business profile, keep name, address and phone consistent, collect genuine reviews, add location pages with real information and use local keywords naturally. Reply to reviews politely.

How do I prioritise fixes?

Start with problems that block crawling or indexing, then fix pages that already have impressions but low clicks, then improve content depth for important topics, then build links. Estimate effort and impact, and record each change with a date so you can connect cause and effect.

How do I check results?

Use Search Console for impressions, clicks and positions by page and query, and analytics for conversions. Allow time for search engines to recrawl. Compare against a similar period to

account for seasonality.

What are common mistakes?

Blocking pages by accident, leaving test noindex tags in place, duplicate content from URL variations, slow image-heavy pages, ignoring mobile, writing titles for machines and chasing links before fixing content. Review after every site update.

How do I write a title and heading that work?

Put the main topic near the start, keep the title short enough to be read in full, and make it specific, for example "Beginner Guide to Email Subject Lines" instead of "Email". Use one main heading that matches the page purpose and subheadings that follow the questions users ask. Avoid repeating the same phrase in every heading. Read the result aloud: if it sounds natural to a person, it is probably good for search too.

How do I explain an audit result to a non-technical owner?

Group findings into three buckets: must fix now, should fix soon and nice to have. For each, say what is wrong in one sentence, why it matters and the effort needed. Use screenshots of real pages. Offer a short plan for the next month with owners and dates. Owners act more readily when the report is clear, short and tied to business outcomes such as enquiries or sales.

What is a short priority list for a small site?

First, confirm that every important page is indexed and loads securely. Second, fix duplicate or missing titles. Third, improve the three pages closest to conversions. Fourth, add internal links between related pages. Fifth, plan one piece of link-worthy content. Record each step with a date.

How often should I re-audit?

Run a light check monthly and a full audit every quarter or after a redesign, migration or major content change.

What records should I keep?

Keep a change log with date, page, change and reason so you can connect later results to specific actions.

Frequently asked questions

What is on-page SEO?

On-page SEO is improving elements on the page itself, such as content, titles, headings, internal links, images and markup.

What is off-page SEO?

Off-page SEO covers signals from outside your site, mainly links from trusted sites, mentions, reviews and overall reputation.

What is technical SEO?

Technical SEO ensures that search engines can crawl, index and render the site, including speed, mobile usability, redirects and canonical tags.

Which area should I fix first?

Fix technical blockers first, such as crawl or indexing problems, then improve page content, and then build off-page trust.

Is buying links a good strategy?

No. Buying links can break search engine policies and harm visibility, so earn links through useful content and real relationships.

Sources and further reading

- Google Search Central SEO starter guide
- Google Search Central documentation
- Google Search Console Help

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