



WEB DEVELOPER'S SEO CHEAT SHEET

You live and breathe SEO and can't understand why others don't share the same sense of passion for search optimisation as you.

Sound familiar?

If you are struggling to get your web developers to see why you need a constant stream of changes and adjustments made to keep one step ahead of the game when it comes to effective SEO, we have got exactly what you need.

Whether you need to optimise an on-page SEO element of a website, such as its title tags and meta descriptions, or you have more technical SEO issues that need fixing, our simple and straightforward Web Developer's SEO Cheat Sheet includes everything you need to know.



IMPORTANT HTML ELEMENTS

Affecting how you look in search results, SEO-friendly meta tags are a must if you want to increase your click-through rate. Consisting of HTML code, the on-page meta tags you need to know about are as follows:

TITLE TAG

```
<head>
  <title>Page Title</title>
</head>
```

BEST PRACTICES

- Aim for between 50-60 characters.
- Insert target keywords as early as possible.
- Avoid keyword stuffing.
- Focus on high-quality writing for maximum CTR.

META DESCRIPTION TAG

```
<head>
  <meta name="description"
  content="This is an
  example.">
</head>
```

BEST PRACTICES

- Aim for 160 characters, including spaces.
- Make sure each description is unique.
- Focus on high-quality writing for maximum CTR.

IMAGE

```

```

BEST PRACTICES

- Improve page loading speeds by providing image height and width.
- Always include an alt tag.
- Do not overstuff keywords.

HTTP STATUS CODES

HTTP status codes are short messages from the server that get tacked onto a website. An invaluable tool when it comes to diagnosing and fixing website configuration errors, you typically only see these codes when something has gone wrong with a web page.

- 200 - OK/Success
- 301 - Permanent redirect
- 302 - Temporary redirect
- 404 - Not found
- 410 - Gone (permanently removed)
- 500 - Server error
- 503 - Unavailable (retry later)

WEBMASTER TOOLS

Webmaster tools allow you to see how your site is being viewed by search engines such as Google and can help you to uncover any areas that need fixing.



Google Search Console
search.google.com/search-console/about



Bing Webmaster Tools
bing.com/toolbox/webmaster



Yandex
webmaster.yandex.com

HYPERLINKS

Hyperlinks are needed to help users navigate between web pages and websites. Links can point to other web pages, graphics, files, sounds, email addresses, and much more. Crucial for SEO, hyperlinks can increase a site's credibility, increase page views, and improve usability.

TEXT LINK

```
<ahref="https://www.example.com/webpage.html"Anchor Text</a>
```

BEST PRACTICES

- Use "sponsored" for compensated links.
- Use "ugc" for any links used within user-generated content.

NOFOLLOWED LINK

```
<a href="https://www.example.com/webpage.html"
rel="nofollow"> Anchor Text</a>
```

BEST PRACTICES

- Use "nofollow" for paid links or content with low levels of trust.

IMAGE LINK

```
<a href="https://www.example.com/webpage.html"></a>
```

BEST PRACTICES

- Use "alt" as the anchor text.

CANONICALIZATION

Canonical tags are used to tell search engines that a specific URL represents the master copy of a web page. Without canonicalization, identical or duplicate content can appear on multiple URLs, which in turn has a negative impact on search engine optimisation.

Common Duplicate Homepage URLs

- Chosen URL = `https://example.com/`
- Add `<link href=https://example.com/ rel="canonical" />` to the `<head>` section

IMPORTANT USER AGENTS

Each search engine identifies itself with a different user agent, and you can custom your instructions for each one using your robots.txt file. There are hundreds of user-agents with some of the most useful ones for SEO, including:

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| • Googlebot | • Baiduspider |
| • Googlebot-News | • FacebookExternalHit |
| • Googlebot-Image | • Applebot |
| • AdsBot-Google | • Slurp |
| • Mediapartners-Google | • Twitterbot |
| • Googlebot-Video | • Rogerbot |
| • Bingbot | • Dotbot |
| • Yandexbot | • DuckDuckBot |

You can choose to block whatever bots you don't want to be able to crawl your site using your robots.txt file.

URLS

URLs are a small ranking factor in SEO that helps search engines to determine a particular web page's relevancy to a search query. There are a number of factors that are related to URLs that can affect your ranking, with two of the most important being length and the addition of keywords.

BEST PRACTICES

Common URL Elements

1. Protocol
2. Subdomain
3. Root domain
4. Top-level domain
5. Subfolder/path
6. Page
7. Parameter
8. Named anchor

- Aim for between 50-60 characters
- Add keywords that are relevant to the page's topic
- Avoid the use of parameters
- Do not use spaces, underscores, or other characters
- Try to place content on the same subdomain for enhanced authority
- Use HTTPS protocol

ROBOTS EXCLUSION STANDARD

The robots exclusion standard, which is also known as the robots.txt, is a standard used by websites to communicate with web crawlers. More specifically, it tells web robots where not to scan on a website. This can help your SEO efforts as it cuts down the amount of time it takes a search engine bot to crawl a site, helping it to stay within its crawl budget and, in turn, improve a site's potential ranking.

ROBOTS.TXT

Location:

`https://example.com/robots.txt`

User-agent: googlebot

Disallow: /example.html

Sitemap:

`https://example.com/sitemap.xml`

X-ROBOTS-TAG

Location: Sent in the HTTP headers

X-Robots-Tag: noindex

META ROBOTS

Location: In the HTML <head>

```
<meta name="robots" content="
[PARAMETER]" />
```

IMPORTANT PARAMETERS

- Noindex
- Nofollow
- Noarchive
- Or a combination of noindex and nofollow

BEST PRACTICES

- Ensure all important pages are crawlable.
- Don't block your site's JavaScript and CSS files.
- Use proper capitalisation of directory, sub-directory, and file names.
- Add your sitemap's location to your robots.text file.

BEST PRACTICES

- X-Robots-Tag can remove URLs from search results.

BEST PRACTICES

- Meta Robots can remove URLs from search results.

SITEMAP SYNTAX

A sitemap is an integral part of any website and is needed for both users and search engines. Essentially the structure of your website, it is similar to a book's contents page, but within the sections are links.

XML SITEMAP EXAMPLE:

RSS and text sitemaps are also options

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<urlset xmlns="http://www.sitemaps.org/schemas/sitemap/0.9">
  <url>
    <loc>http://www.example.com/foo.html</loc>
    <lastmod>2019-06-04</lastmod>
  </url>
</urlset>
```

SITEMAP INDEX FILE

RSS and text sitemaps are also options

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<sitemapindex
xmlns="http://www.sitemaps.org/schemas/sitemap/0.9">
  <sitemap>
    <loc>https://example.com/sitemap1.xml.gz</loc>
    <lastmod>2019-01-01T18:23:17+00:00</lastmod>
  </sitemap>
  <sitemap>
    <loc>https://example.com/sitemap2.xml.gz</loc>
    <lastmod>2019-01-01</lastmod>
  </sitemap>
</sitemapindex>set>
```

DEFAULT LOCATION:

<https://example.com/sitemap.xml>

sitemap: parent tag for each sitemap

loc: location of the sitemap

lastmod: the last modified date

* A sitemap cannot contain over 50,000 URLs.

Large websites should use multiple sitemaps listed under a single sitemap index file.

COMMON TYPES OF SITEMAP:

- Visual Sitemap
- HTML Sitemap
- XML Sitemap
- Search Engine Sitemap
- News Sitemap

BEST PRACTICES

- Prioritise your web pages.
- Categorise your content correctly.
- Place your sitemap on your homepage and root directory.
- Restrict the URLs for each sitemap (for medium to large businesses only).

IMPORTANT SOCIAL METADATA

Social metadata is needed to present your content in the best possible way on your social media platforms. Rather than allowing the likes of Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to guess how you want your content to be displayed in social feeds, you can actively tell them. Although you may not use social media tags as much as you do basic on-page tags, they can still make a significant difference to your overall social media engagement.

SAMPLE META TAG TEMPLATE: "ARTICLE"

Place this data between the <head> tags of your website.

```
<!-- Required Open Graph data -->
<meta property="og:title" content="Developer's Cheat
Sheet to SEO" />
<meta property="og:type" content="article" />
<meta property="og:image" content="https://example.
com/image.jpg" />
<meta property="og:url" content="https://example.
com" />
<!-- Optional Open Graph data -->
<meta property="og:audio" content="https://example.
com/guide.mp3." />
<meta property="og:description" content="Description
here." />
<meta property="og:site_name" content="Your Site
Name, i.e. Moz" />
<meta property="og:locale" content="en_us" />
<meta property="og:video" content="https://example.
com/guide.mp4" />
<meta property="fb:app_id" content="Your FB_APP_ID" />
<!-- Find additional markup on https://ogp.me -->
<!-- Twitter Card data -->
<meta name="twitter:card" content="summary">
<meta name="twitter:site" content="@Moz">
<meta name="twitter:title" content="Title of content
(max 70 characters)">
<meta name="twitter:description" content="Description of
content">
<meta name="twitter:image" content="https://example.
com/unique-image.jpg">
```

BEST PRACTICES

- Use Open Graph tags on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Pinterest.
- Use optimal image sizing.

Twitter = min 144x114 px, max 4096x4096 px

Facebook = min 600x600 px

- Preview your page before sharing using tools such as Facebook Debugger and Twitter's Card Validator.

MOBILE

Vital if you want to reach a wider audience, a mobile-friendly site is one that automatically scales to fit the screen size of your viewer's device. You can check how mobile-friendly your site is using Google Search Console's Mobile-Friendly Test.

There are three ways to create a mobile website:

- Use responsive web design.
- Use dynamic serving.
- Use different URLs – this is not advised.

BEST PRACTICES

- Display the same content on your desktop and mobile site.
- Keep page title tags and meta descriptions the same.
- Focus on improving your page loading speeds.
- Make your button sizes large enough to work on mobile.
- Ditch text-blocking ads and pop-ups.
- Keep your web design simple.

RICH SNIPPETS AND STRUCTURED DATA

Rich Snippets, which are sometimes called Rich Results, are Google search results that display additional data which is pulled from the Structured Data found in a web page's HTML. Rich Snippets are more eye-catching than normal search results, which can increase your organic click-through rate.

The use of structured data can help a website to stand out in SERPs. Stick to schema.org for best results.

BREADCRUMBS

```
<script type="application/ld+json">
{
  "@context": "http://schema.org",
  "@type": "BreadcrumbList",
  "itemListElement": [
    {
      <---Repeat markup for additional list items--->
      "@type": "ListItem",
      "position": 1,
      "item": {
        "@id": "http://example.com/dinner",
        "name": "Dinner" }
    },
    <---Additional list items here--->
  ]
}</script>
```

Common Structured Data Types:

- Local business
- FAQ page
- Person
- How to
- Product
- Article
- Recipes
- QApge

REVIEWS

```
<script type="application/ld+json">
{
  "@context": "http://schema.org",
  "@type": "Review",
  "reviewBody": "The restaurant has great ambiance.",
  "itemReviewed": {
    "@type": "Restaurant",
    "name": "Fine Dining Establishment"
  },
  "reviewRating": {
    "@type": "Rating",
    "ratingValue": 5,
    "worstRating": 1,
    "bestRating": 5,
    "reviewAspect": "Ambiance"
  }
}</script>
```

SECURITY

Making sure your website is secure is crucial for SEO as one of Google's top priority ranking factors is website security.

BEST PRACTICES

- Install an SSL certificate.
- Use strong passwords.
- Get security plug-ins installed.

TARGETING MULTIPLE LANGUAGES

Multilingual SEO focuses on optimising content for different languages and allows users in different countries to find your website in their native language. Allowing your site to become searchable in new markets, multilingual SEO is a great way to expand your business.

URL STRUCTURES FOR COUNTRY & LANGUAGE TARGETING

ccTLDs (Country-Level Only): example.de

Subdirectories with gTLDs: example.com/de/

Subdomains with gTLDs: de.example.com/

rel="alternate" hreflang="x"

Annotate alternate language & region versions of content

HTML version in <head>

Each version must identify all versions, including itself

```
<link rel="alternate" hreflang="x-default"
href="http://example.com/" /> (Specifies
Default)
```

```
<link rel="alternate" hreflang="en" href="http://example.com/en/"
/> (Specifies Language; English)
```

```
<link rel="alternate" hreflang="en-GB"
href="http://example.com/en-gb/" /> (Specifies Language + Region)
```

SITEMAP VERSION

```
<?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/english/</loc>
    <xhtml:link rel="alternate" hreflang="de"
href="http://example.com/deutsch/" />
    <xhtml:link rel="alternate" hreflang="en"
href="http://example.com/english/" />
  </url>
  <url>
    <loc>http://example.com/deutsch/</loc>
    <xhtml:link rel="alternate" hreflang="en"
href="http://example.com/english/" />
    <xhtml:link rel="alternate" hreflang="de"
href="http://www.example.com/deutsch/"
/>
  </url>
</urlset>
```

POPULAR LANGUAGES

en - English

es - Spanish

zh - Chinese

hi - Hindi

ja - Japanese

US - United States

GB - Great Britain

CN - China

IN - India

JP - Japan

PERFORMANCE

The performance of your site is intrinsically linked to your customer experience and is, therefore, crucial if you want to stand out from your competitors. There are several different aspects of site performance, including:

PAGE SPEED

Research shows that internet users expect a website to load in under three seconds. Any longer, and they will bounce. Check your page speed using Google PageSpeed Insights; any score above 80 is regarded as strong, but the higher, the better.

BEST PRACTICES

- Reduce page redirects.
- Minify CSS, JavaScript and HTML.
- Remove render-blocking JavaScript.
- Leverage browser caching.
- Improve server response time.
- Use a content distribution network.
- Optimise images.

TEST YOUR PAGE SPEED WITH:

Lighthouse: developers.google.com/web/tools/lighthouse

PageSpeed Insights: developers.google.com/speed/pagespeed/insights

GTmetrix: gtmetrix.com

WebPageTest: webpagetest.org

MODERN JAVASCRIPT SITES

Java-Script is a text-based programming language that allows you to make web pages interactive for enhanced user engagement.

BEST PRACTICES

- Keep JavaScript bundles small.
- Use server-side or pre-rendering.
- Use Chrome Dev Tools "Performance" tab to test your runtime performance.

IMAGE OPTIMISATION

Images are one of the most common problems when it comes to site speed.

BEST PRACTICES

- Reduce the file size.
- Pick the right file format for each image.
- Use alt tags.
- Optimise the image title.
- Include captions.
- Explore lazy loading.

The logo for ClickIntelligence, featuring the word "Click" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font, followed by "Intelligence" in a thinner, blue, sans-serif font. The "C" in "Click" is stylized with a white dot.