SEO CHECKLIST

1/ KEYWORD RESEARCH

1.1 - Competitive research Steal keywords from competitors using the Keyword Density Checker or Ahrefs' Organic Keywords report. **Resource :** https://www.seoreviewtools.com/keyword-density-checker/ https://ahrefs.com/	
1.2 - Brainstorm a master list of keywords Brainstorm your own master list by sketching out a grid of words your target customer might use. Split the words into different prefixes and suffixes. Then combine them into one giant list using the free Mergewords tool. **Resource :** http://mergewords.com https://chat.openai.com/auth/login	
1.3 - Find traffic data and additional suggestions for your keyword list Sign up to a free Google Adwords account and access the Keyword Planner tool to get information on how much traffic your keywords receive in Google. **Resource :** https://adwords.google.com/home/ https://kwfinder.com/ https://answerthepublic.com/ https://buzzsumo.com/	
1.4 – Find keywords for easy rankings Using a paid tool such as KWFinder's SEO Difficulty report, simply enter your keyword into their tool, click "check difficulty," and it will show vital stats for pages appearing in the top 10. **Resource :** https://kwfinder.com/ https://ahrefs.com/	
1.5 – Check your site's overall SEO strength Using Ahref's Site Explorer tool, you can see the same stats for your site, and set targets for beating the competition. Armed with this knowledge, you can hunt around to find keywords with reasonable levels of traffic, weak competition, and set targets for how many links you need for a top listing. **Resource :** https://ahrefs.com/	

ON PAGE SEO

2.1 – Enable search engine friendly URLs Enable this option in your site settings. If your site doesn't have search engine friendly URLs, talk to your web developer to fix this up.	
2.2 - Ensure site navigation is made of real text links – not images If you do not have the main navigation featured in text, your internal pages will almost be invisible to Google and other search engines.	
2.3 - Add links to pages you want visible to search engines and visitors on the home page By placing links on the home page, Google's search engine spider can quickly understand which pages are important & worth including in the results.	
2.4 - Ensure that your chosen keywords are on your page and your page is relevant to the topic Simplest approach is to create relevant content around your chosen keywords. Then also make sure keywords appear naturally in places like the meta tags, h1 tags, image alt tags, etc. Don't overdo it!	
2.5 - Ensure that you have related phrases in your content along with your main keywords Use a tool like LSIGraph to find related keywords you can add in your content. **Resource :** https://lsigraph.com/	
2.6 - Fill out the meta tags on your site Fill out the meta title and meta description tags for all pages on your site, using the software your site is built on. If there's none, use a plugin or have your developer fix it. Character limit: 160 for meta description, 70 for meta title tags.	
2.7 Analyze your website for easy win load speed improvements **Resource :** https://tools.pingdom.com/ https://developers.google.com/web/tools/lighthouse/	
2.8 - Improve load speed - By compressing images over 200kb - Enable browser caching, and server compression (ask your developer if you don't know how to do this) - Work on improving recommendations from reports from previous load speed tools.	
2.9 - Add sitemaps.xml in the main directory of the site WordPress, Magento and Shopify has this automatically added. **Resource :** https://www.xml-sitemaps.com/	
2.10 Add robots.txt in the main directory of the site The robots.txt file is a simple file that exists so you can tell the areas of your site you don't want Google to list in the search engine results. You may skip this if there are no pages on your site you want excluded from search engines.	

2.11 Add canonical tag for duplicates If you have duplicate content, add a canonical tag to original version so Google determines which page you want listed in the search results. As a general rule, include this tag on every page on your site, shortly before the </head> tag in the code.	
2.12 Check if your site is mobile friendly **Resource :** https://search.google.com/test/mobile-friendly https://www.browserstack.com Make sure that the site is responsive which means that it automatically resizes across all devices and has mobile-friendly navigation for mobile users. As an alternative, you may need to setup a separate mobile subdomain or subfolder for mobile and tablet users, i.e. m.yoursite.com. Responsive websites are the simplest method. The above tools make suggestions on how to make your site more mobile friendly.	
2.13 User clean code in your site and fix any code errors By using the Web Standards Validator, you or your developer, can identify code errors, to clean and fix from your website **Resource :** https://validator.w3.org/	
2.14 Avoid using too much ads Sites with spammy and aggressive ads are often ranked poorly in search results.	
2.15 Fix any 404 errors in your site By finding them in Google Search Console, click on the error and then click 'Linked From' to find the pages with the broken links. **Resource :** https://www.google.com/webmasters/tools/home	
2.15 Improve the readability score on your website and make it readable for a wide audience https://readable.com/	
2.16 If you have lots of user created links or ads on your site, tell your developer to add the following tags on new outgoing links on your site. You can disregard this if you only have a small site for a small business. And you only need to do this for new outgoing links, altering these tags is not necessary for old outgoing links on your site. Official guide from Google published September, 2019, listed below. rel="sponsored": Use the sponsored attribute to identify links on your site that were created as part of advertisements rel="ugc": UGC stands for User Generated Content, and the ugc attribute value is recommended for links within user generated content rel="nofollow": Use this attribute for cases where you want to link to a page but don't want to imply any type of endorsement. https://developers.google.com/search/blog/2019/09/evolving-nofollow-new-ways-to-identify	

2.17 Improve your page experience (fast load speed, fast page responsiveness, and visual stability while loading)
In November, 2020, Google announced new guides for improving page experience. Improving page experience can be as simple as loading fast and not having popups bouncing around on mobile devices.

 But for large or complicated sites and performance junkies, send the following official guides to your web developer, and your technical staff can follow the guidelines and tools provided by Google.

https://developers.google.com/search/blog/2020/11/timing-for-page-experience
https://github.com/GoogleChrome/web-vitals-extension
https://support.google.com/webmasters/answer/9205520

LINKBUILDING

3.1 – Add your site to high-quality business directories Directories are websites that list information about local businesses. **Resources** https://www.linkedin.com/ https://www.bingplaces.com/ http://www.yelp.com/ https://www.mapquest.com/ https://www.yellowpages.com/ https://www.manta.com/ https://www.local.com/ https://www.citysearch.com/ https://www.merchantcircle.com/	
3.2 - Check your competitor's backlinks Find link opportunities to build links pointing to your site **Resource :** http://www.ahrefs.com https://majestic.com https://moz.com/link-explorer	
3.3 - Create videos and post on YouTube and other video sites Make sure to have your targeted keyword or relevant keywords occurring on the page somewhere **Resource :** https://www.youtube.com/ https://www.youtube.com/ https://www.dailymotion.com/ https://www.vimeo.com https://www.archive.org/	
3.4 - Reach out to quality sites with broken links on their pages - Convince the site admin to provide an updated link to your site - Use the formulas below to find potential pages with broken links, replacing 'keyword' with the keyword you are targeting: keyword useful links keyword useful resources keyword useful sites keyword recommended links keyword recommended resources keyword recommended sites keyword suggested links keyword suggested resources	

3.5 - Link outreach
Conduct an email outreach campaign for link opportunities and guest post opportunities. Make sure emails are personalized, unique, relevant and do not spam a large number of sites with the same email template. Use some of the following resources to find contact info, and reach out for unique opportunities.

- Decide on a strategy, whether it's broken links, guest post opportunity or perhaps you have a more helpful resource, such as a whitepaper or infographic, the site owner would be work mentioning.
- Find contact information with a tool like Hunter.
- Note personalization information for each opportunity individually in a spreadsheet.
- Use outreach platforms to schedule emails and manage relationships.

Search queries for guest post opportunities
keyword "guest post by"
keyword "guest post"
keyword "guest article"
keyword "guest author"
keyword "contributor"
keyword "guest contributor"

Resource :
https://tinyurl.com/link-clump-chrome
https://hunter.io/
https://mailshake.com/
https://www.buzzstream.com/
https://ninjaoutreach.com/
https://pitchbox.com/

Y/N

3.6 - Track mentions of your brand
If you see a mention of your brand without a link, send a quick email to the author, and this is often an easy opportunity to get a link back to your site.
Resource :
https://www.google.com/alerts
https://mention.com/en/

3.6 – Offer donation to charities and non-profits
Search for "site:.org + donors" or "site:.org + sponsors" in Google for a list of organizations that have these pages, offer a donation, and request a listing on the page.

3.7 – Sign up to Better Business Bureau
Check your BBB listing to see if you are already linking back to your site, and if you're not already a member, then consider signing up.
Resource :
https://www.bbb.org/

3.8 Create your own authority links By buying a previously owned website or domain, you can turn it into a blog and unlimited source for powerful, highly relevant links back to your site. Make sure you link to other authoritative and relevant resources and don't do anything spammy with links pointing back to your site, such as site-wide footer links. **Resource :** https://flippa.com - Market place for buying and selling websites https://sedo.com - Buy and sell domains	
3.9 Build relationships with other bloggers in your industry Try creating or curating popular blog posts into a top-level summary, then send a quick email to the bloggers mentioned, let them know, and very politely ask for a mention or linkback.	
3.10 Give out testimonials to earn high quality, relevant links Look for businesses or services with a testimonials page already, or a testimonials carousel or widget on their homepage. Speed up your search with a couple of Google search queries: "keyword" + testimonials "keyword" + recommendations "keyword" + "client testimonials" "keyword" + "what customers say" "keyword" + "what our customers say"	
3.11 Use HARO to get free links from major news outlets, publications and blogs Sign up for HARO, reply to relevant expert requests from reporters daily and use email templates to speed up your results. While you might not get featured in the New York Times or Time Magazine on your first day or first week even, it's a numbers game, so keep at it. https://www.helpareporter.com/ - Help A Reporter Out https://support.google.com/mail/answer/6579?hl=en - Create Rules to Filter Your Emails - Gmail https://support.google.com/a/users/answer/9308990?hl=en - Create Email Templates – Google Workspace Learning Center	

SOCIAL MEDIA

4.1 - Create a Facebook business profile **Resource :** https://www.facebook.com/	
4.2 - Create a Twitter business profile **Resource :** https://www.twitter.com/	
4.3 - Create a LinkedIn business profile **Resource :** https://www.linkedin.com/	
4.4 - Create a Pinterest business profile **Resource :** https://www.pinterest.com/	
4.5 - Create a Instagram business profile **Resource :** https://www.instagram.com/	

LOCAL SEO

5.1 – Verify your business profile on Google My Business Fill out as much information as possible on your Google My Business profile, including description, category associations, images and videos **Resource :** https://www.google.com/business/	
5.2 – Put NAP info on your site Include your business name and location somewhere on your website in a H1 or H2 tag, this could be your contact page or home page. Also include your full business name, address and phone number somewhere on your site.	
5.3 – Add schema.org tags in your website markup Follow the schema.org tag specification for local businesses **Resource :** https://schema.org/LocalBusiness	
5.4 - Build reviews for your business By including links to your business Google My Business page on your site, email signatures, flyers, and business cards, prompting customers to leave a review. Encourage customers at the end of each sale or transaction to leave a review. https://marketingkit.withgoogle.com/	
5.5 - Submit your website to the major business directories Examples: Yelp, Yellow Pages, CitySearch and so on. You can use tools like Moz Local to submit your business to all of the major directories in one go.	
5.6 - Cross-check your business listings for correct NAP data NAP stands for name, address and location. These details need to be consistent across your Google My Business listing, website contact page, and external business listings.	
5.7 Add photos and videos to your business profile You should have a handful of professional-looking photos uploaded to your profile at a bare minimum.	

SEO TROUBLESHOOTING

6.1 – When your site is not listed in Google at all Generate a handful of links to your site and start some social activity (i.e. tweeting a link to your site)	
6.2 – When business is not ranking for your own business name - Build links to your site with some of the links with your brand name as the anchor text - Create citations in common business directories used in your country - Setup Facebook and Twitter accounts for your business - Use Open Site Explorer to spy on competing sites ranking higher for the brand name	
6.3 – When your rankings have dropped of - Use Open Site Explorer or Ahrefs to spy on competitors, find out how many backlinks they have, how much social media activity they have. Set these as your targets to build rankings back up—if your website links and social media activity are lower than competitors. - If your links and social activity are the same, review the Google Algorithm updates chapter to see if you have been penalized by a Google Update.	
6.4 - How to seek professional help for free Post your questions in a variety of SEO websites for highly technical responses. **Resource :** https://moz.com/community/q https://webmasters.stackexchange.com/ https://www.quora.com/ https://stackoverflow.com/ https://wordpress.stackexchange.com/	

WEB ANALYTICs

7.1 – Track your keyword's rankings with Ahrefs Rank Tracker Track your keyword's rankings with Ahrefs Ranks Tracker if you have an account. If you don't have an account, there are several "rankings tracking" software you can find with a couple of Google searches. https://www.ahrefs.com/	
7.2 – Sign up to Google Analytics Install the tracking code in your site, with the assistance of a web developer or by following Google Analytics setup process. **Resource :** https://www.google.com/analytics	
7.3 Google Search Console Add and verify your site to Google Search Console. **Resource :** https://search.google.com/search-console/about http://support.google.com/webmasters/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=34592	
7.4 – Other web analytics software It's often useful to use other web analytics software, in tandem with Google Analytics, to track results. This can include tracking rankings, tracking your website's overall link strength and authority, tracking phone calls, doing split tests on your website, and even tracking where people click on your page with heat map software like Crazy Egg. **Resource :** https://www.callrail.com/ https://www.calltrackingmetrics.com/ https://www.crazyegg.com/ https://vwo.com/ https://get.google.com/tagassistant/ https://datastudio.google.com/overview	