

# Technical WordPress SEO

## Technical SEO Foundation:

SEO is an acronym that stands for Search Engine Optimization. It's a strategy used by website owners to get more traffic by ranking higher in search engines.

Search engine optimization isn't about tricking Google or gaming the system. It's simply about creating a website that has optimized code and formatting which makes it easy for search engines to find your website.

When people search the web for the topics you write about, your search-engine-optimized content will appear higher in the search results, and you'll get more people clicking through to your website.

**Website Architecture** is how a website's pages are structured and linked together. An ideal Website Architecture helps users and search engine crawlers easily find what they're looking for on a website.

## Why Is Website Architecture Important for SEO?

### Three reasons:

**Reason #1:** An optimized site architecture helps search engine spiders find and index all of the pages on your website.

If you have pages on your site that are several clicks from your homepage (or not linked from any other page at all), Googlebot will have a hard time finding and indexing those pages.

**Reason #2:** Site architecture sends link authority around your website.

**Reason #3:** The right website architecture makes it easy for visitors to find what they need on your site.

## Technical Tools:

**Screaming Frog SEO Spider** is a tool that you can install and it will exactly behave the way, search engines does on your website.

Google Chrome Lighthouse is an open-source, automated tool for improving the quality of web pages. You can run it against any web page, public or requiring authentication. It has audits for performance, accessibility, progressive web apps, SEO and more.

**Merkle** has all the tools to handle your technical SEO.

**Google Search Console** is a free service offered by Google that helps you monitor, maintain, and troubleshoot your site's presence in Google Search results.

## **Do-It-All SEO Plugins:**

**Yoast SEO** is a great search engine optimization plugin for WordPress but it has lot of extra unnecessary functionality.

**RankMath** is another great plugin and it is less bloated so more recommended.

## **Starting with Crawl:**

**Page titles** means meta information is very important for SEO and with wordpress plugins you can easily make a captative title for your website.

In the same way, You can set your **meta descriptions** for every page.

Heading tags are also very important for SEO. So take time to make a logical appropriate structure of headings.

## **Managing Architecture:**

### **Best Practice for Permalinks:**

- Never use WordPress default slug. Always customize it in your url. Always use hyphens between words.
- Remove all the erroneous special character in that slug like \$,&.
- Keep your permalinks as short as possible so use only keywords.

### **HTTP Status code:**

**Whenever a search engine send request to web server, always look for returning codes**

**200** means ok

**301** means redirect permanent moved to other address.

**302** means temporary redirect.

**404** means error which can be temporary or permanent.

**410** means permanent Gone.

**500** means internet server error.

**503** service unavailable. (temporary).

If you change your permalinks later, whole structure would be changed and on old URL visitors will get a 404-error message. To avoid that and to optimize SEO better practice is to set a redirect. You can install a redirect plugin for that and set it up and it will work automatically in case of any change.

For big websites regex use b should to redirect automatically.

## **HTTPS:**

**HTTPS vs HTTP:** HTTP communicates between two systems e.g. web browsers and web server.

HTTPS communicates in encrypted manner, which is very important for security and sensitive information.

### **Migrating to HTTPS:**

Really Simple SSL is a great plugin to migrate HTTP to HTTPS.

### **Robots and Sitemaps:**

Every WordPress site has a default robots.txt file.

A robots.txt file tells search engine crawlers which pages or files the crawler can or can't request from your site. This is used mainly to avoid overloading your site with requests; it is not a mechanism for keeping a web page out of Google.

You can install a do-in-all plugin like RankMath and can edit robots.txt file from its settings.

You can test your robots.txt file from different online tools like Merkle robots.txt Tester.

### **Sitemaps:**

Sitemaps are an easy way for webmasters to inform search engines about pages on their sites that are available for crawling. In its simplest form, a Sitemap is an XML file that lists URLs for a site along with additional metadata about each URL (when it was last updated, how often it usually changes, and how important it is, relative to other URLs in the site) so that search engines can more intelligently crawl the site.

Sitemaps can be created in 2 types html and xml. XML is better but its bit technical to make it.

Easiest method is to install a plugin like RankMath and go to its settings-dashboard and activate sitemap.

Sitemaps can be created manually in some special cases e.g you have a very static site which rarely changes or you want to support multiple languages. you can use screaming frog and select your options and save the file and can open your xml file in any editor and can put in server.

### **Site Hosting:**

- A good web host is important because:
- Increase website load time.
- Less likely to have website down time
- Better security (https)
- Frequent website backups if anything were to go wrong
- Better support if anything were to go wrong

- Search engine rankings & SEO

### **Amazon LightSail is a good example.**

A **content delivery network** (CDN) refers to a geographically distributed group of servers which **work** together to provide fast **delivery** of **Internet content**. A CDN allows for the quick transfer of assets needed for loading **Internet content** including HTML pages, javascript files, stylesheets, images, and videos.

**Cloudflare WordPress Plugin.** Cloudflare's free plugin for WordPress accelerates page load speeds, improves SEO, and protects against DDoS attacks and WordPress-specific vulnerabilities.

Cloudflare offers a dedicated WordPress plugin for one-click WordPress-optimized settings. The plugin lets you quickly set up Cloudflare on your WordPress site, add web application firewall (WAF) rulesets, automatically purge the cache, and more.

### **Domain Structure:**

SubDomain.SecondLevelDomain.TopLevelDomain.

Whether you choose www or non www you should be consistent on it.

Re-directing is important , if URL of website is entered without www or with www it should redirect to same website. You can write redirect rules on your htaccess file and can also test it in some htaccess online tool like madewithlove.

### **Canonicals:**

A canonical URL refers to an HTML link element, with the attribute of rel="canonical", found in the <head> element of your webpage. It specifies to search engines your preferred URL. What that means is that the canonical URL element informs Google and other search engines to crawl a website, and what URL to index that specific page content under. This is important because URLs can have variations, based on a variety of factors, but be serving up the same or similar content.

### **Schema or Structured Data:**

Schema.org is a collaborative, community activity with a mission to create, maintain, and promote schemas for structured data on the Internet, on web pages, in email messages, and beyond.

Schema.org vocabulary can be used with many different encodings, including RDFa, Microdata and JSON-LD. These vocabularies cover entities, relationships between entities and actions, and can easily be extended through a well-documented extension model. Over 10 million sites use Schema.org to markup their web pages and email messages. Many applications from Google,

Microsoft, Pinterest, Yandex and others already use these vocabularies to power rich, extensible experiences.

Easiest way to put structured data in your site is through some plugin like Rank Math or Yoast.

In Rank Math activate RichSnippets and go in the settings.

You can go to each post in WordPress and can use Rank Math to fill up structured data for it.

### **Image Optimization:**

WP Smush plugin is best for image optimization in WordPress. Every image should have an alt attribute. Screaming Frog can show which image misses alt.

### **Speed:**

Before launching your website, you should perform a mobile-friendly test. Tools are available online.

Don't use unnecessary animations. They can slow the page.

Measure site performance. One of the best tools is in Google Chrome inspection tools. You can audit your site performance from there.

Setting up a cache for your website increases its speed and performance. WordPress plugin W3Cache can do the task.

