

# SEO BASICS

## Technical SEO

FOR BEGINNERS

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## TECHNICAL SEO BASICS

*Technical SEO is the first step of any SEO strategy or endeavor.*

Issues with technical SEO are extremely counterproductive, and will cancel out any other SEO effort (i.e., keyword optimisation) exerted. This is because technical SEO is what shapes the accessing, crawling, interpretation, and indexing of your site by search engines. If the search engine can't execute those steps successfully, any other optimisation efforts will go unnoticed.

### Domain configuration

Specifics are important. In an SEO sense, a domain which has "www" in front is *not* the same as a domain without it.

In short, there is a *massive* difference between the below sites:

- <https://www.thisisourexample.com>
- <https://thisisourexample.com>

Additionally - two websites with the exact same content is detrimental to SEO. Technical SEO allows you to decipher which domain would be optimal for your goals.

### Which pages should you index?

Automatically, search engine Crawlers will attempt to index all published and publicly available content on the internet.

However, this may not always be the best thing for your SEO goals. For instance, your domain may have pages that are only in the interest of particular people (i.e., "Your Basket" is only of interest to customers already on your site - no one will Google search for their own or someone else's basket).

Technical SEO is what allows you to control the indexing of your website's pages. A file called *robots.txt* (found in the root folder of your websites) is what controls the pages Crawlers have access to, and thus, index.



### Website structure and navigation

A hierarchical structure of your pages is essential to helping Crawlers browse your website with ease, thereby improving your rankings. Unfortunately, many web designers overlook site structure and prioritise the visual appearance of the pages. However, site structure and navigation are equally, if not more important.

A simple rule of thumb to follow: Any page of your website should be easily accessible from the homepage with less than 3 clicks.

### URL structure

URLs, also known as *slugs* or *permalinks*, are optimised when they accurately and concisely describe what the page is about. "Good" URLs are easy to understand and clearly identify the focus of the page in question. Consider the below URLs:

- <https://www.thisisourexample.com/847/jd/page.html>
- <https://www.thisisourexample.com/technical-seo>

Did you see how much simpler it is to glance at the second URL and understand the page content?

Now, imagine you are a Crawler with millions of other URLs to record - which URL would you prefer?

### 404 Errors

404 Error pages are the blank pages that sometimes have technical terms an ordinary browser wouldn't understand. As unhappy as users are with these pages, Crawlers feel the same. The difference is that the Crawlers will immediately impact your SERP rankings and SEO results.

In these situations, it's best to redirect users to find what they are actually looking for. This way, you can harness more control over your site and SEO standing.



### Page Speed

The reason why SEOs must have a lot of patience is to compensate for the lack of patience of users and search engines. Both search engines and users prefer pages that load quickly.

As an SEO, page speed optimisation can be managed through analysing and adjusting server infrastructure, as well as other factors that contribute to site speed (i.e., file size).

### Website security

In addition to speed, users and search engines heavily prioritise and depend on security. An SSL ensures security for users, and is therefore no longer an option.

### Mobile-friendliness

Over 60% of search queries now take place from mobile phones. This is a crucial statistic seeing as websites must now have a dual-front: desktop *and* mobile-friendliness.

User experience and mobile-friendliness is prioritised by most search engines under the user experience analysis. In fact, Google has created a *mobile-first index* which caters to mobile searches. This means that Google crawlers may exclude your page from the mobile SERP if it's not optimised for mobile-phone usage.

A simple way of ensuring that your website is optimised for all devices is by simply testing and navigating your website from all devices you have available, and focusing on the navigational and experiential issues (i.e., layout, structure, and legibility) you take note of. In today's economy, this *must* be a routine practice in your technical SEO procedures.

### Multilingual websites

Websites that are available in multiple languages require special attention from a specific multilingual SEO configuration.

If you have a page or post that is broken down into a number of pages (due to availability of multiple languages), the multilingual SEO configuration must be applied so that Google can understand that one post is separated into multiple versions/parts.

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