

# The Essential Website Audit Checklist

| Priority | Issue                                      | Why It Matters                                                           | How to Check                                                                                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|----------|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| CRITICAL | Pages accidentally set to noindex          | Google literally cannot index these pages—they're invisible in search    | Check source code for <b>&lt;meta name="robots" content="noindex"&gt;</b> or use Screaming Frog | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| CRITICAL | Broken or missing XML sitemap              | Google doesn't know what pages exist on your site                        | Google Search Console > Sitemaps section                                                        | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| CRITICAL | <i>Robots.txt</i> blocking important pages | Prevents Google from crawling key content                                | <b>yoursite.com/robots.txt</b> + GSC URL Inspection tool                                        | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| CRITICAL | Site is not mobile-friendly                | Google uses mobile version for ranking; 60%+ of traffic is mobile        | Google Mobile-Friendly Test + GSC Mobile Usability Report                                       | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| CRITICAL | 5xx server errors or 5+ second load times  | Google thinks your server is down or unreliable                          | Google Search Console > Coverage Report + PageSpeed Insights                                    | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| CRITICAL | No HTTPS or mixed content warnings         | Security issue that Google flags; browsers warn users                    | Check URL bar for lock icon; use Why No Padlock tool                                            | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| CRITICAL | Important pages returning 404 errors       | Dead pages that should exist tank user experience and waste crawl budget | Google Search Console > Coverage Report                                                         | <input type="checkbox"/>            |

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| <b>CRITICAL</b> | Incorrect canonical tags                          | Tells Google to index the wrong version of your pages   | View page source or use Screaming Frog          | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| <b>HIGH</b>     | Missing or incorrect schema markup                | Reduces chances of rich results and featured snippets   | Google Rich Results Test                        | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| <b>HIGH</b>     | Core Web Vitals failing (LCP, CLS, INP)           | Direct ranking factor affecting user experience         | PageSpeed Insights + GSC Core Web Vitals Report | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| <b>HIGH</b>     | Duplicate content across multiple URLs            | Confuses search engines about which page to rank        | Use site: search operator or Siteimprove        | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| <b>HIGH</b>     | Broken internal links                             | Creates dead ends and wastes crawl budget               | Screaming Frog or Ahrefs Site Audit             | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| <b>HIGH</b>     | Missing meta descriptions or title tags           | Reduces click-through rates from search results         | Google Search Console or Screaming Frog         | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| <b>HIGH</b>     | Orphan pages (no internal links pointing to them) | Pages Google may never discover or consider unimportant | Screaming Frog or sitemap vs. crawl comparison  | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| <b>HIGH</b>     | Images missing alt text                           | Hurts accessibility and image search visibility         | Manual review or accessibility checker tools    | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| <b>HIGH</b>     | Multiple or missing H1 tags                       | Weakens page structure and keyword signals              | View page source or SEO browser extensions      | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| <b>HIGH</b>     | Crawl errors in Search Console                    | Indicates pages Google tried to access but couldn't     | Google Search Console > Coverage Report         | <input type="checkbox"/>            |

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|----------|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| MEDIUM   | Redirect chains (multiple redirects to reach final URL) | Slows page load and wastes crawl budget                    | Screaming Frog or Redirect Path extension | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| MEDIUM   | Unoptimized images (large file sizes)                   | Slows page load times                                      | PageSpeed Insights or GTmetrix            | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| MEDIUM   | No caching strategy                                     | Forces pages to rebuild on every visit, slowing load times | GTmetrix or PageSpeed Insights            | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| MEDIUM   | Render-blocking CSS/JavaScript                          | Delays page rendering and visual content                   | PageSpeed Insights                        | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| MEDIUM   | Missing breadcrumb navigation                           | Reduces usability and limits breadcrumb rich results       | Manual site review                        | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| MEDIUM   | Poor URL structure (long, unclear URLs)                 | Harder for users and search engines to understand content  | Manual URL review                         | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| MEDIUM   | Weak internal linking structure                         | Doesn't distribute page authority effectively              | Screaming Frog or manual content audit    | <input type="checkbox"/>            |