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On-Page SEO Checklist

The specific on-page elements worth getting right on every page you publish
— 36 checkpoints, prioritized by actual impact, not a generic best-practice list.

A free checklist from The Nexa Solutions · thanexasolutions.com

How to Use This Checklist

On-page SEO is one of the few areas where being thorough on a small number of pages beats being sloppy across a hundred. Run every important page — homepage, service pages, key blog posts — through this checklist before considering it “done.”

This isn't a generic “best practices” list. Every item here is something that measurably affects how a page is understood by search engines or how likely someone is to click through and stay — not a rule included just because it's commonly repeated.

Use this per page, not once per site

Copy this checklist for each important page rather than treating it as a one-time, site-wide task. A new blog post or service page should pass through all six sections before it's published, not after.

SECTION 1

Title Tags & Meta Descriptions

6 items

- ☐ **The title tag includes the primary keyword, naturally, near the beginning.**
Search engines and users both weight the start of the title tag more heavily.
- ☐ **The title tag is unique across the entire site — no two pages share one.**
Duplicate titles confuse search engines about which page to rank for a given query.
- ☐ **The title tag is under roughly 60 characters so it doesn't get cut off in search results.**
A truncated title looks unfinished and can hide the most important words.
- ☐ **The meta description accurately previews the page and includes a reason to click.**
It doesn't directly affect rankings, but it directly affects click-through rate.
- ☐ **The meta description is under roughly 155–160 characters.**
Longer descriptions get cut off with an ellipsis in search results.
- ☐ **Every page has a title and description written specifically for it — none are left as generic defaults.**
A generic, site-wide fallback signals thin, low-effort content to both users and search engines.

SECTION 2

Headings & Content Structure

5 items

- ☐ **The page has exactly one H1, and it clearly describes the page's topic.**
Multiple H1s (or none) makes the page's main topic ambiguous to search engines.
- ☐ **H2s and H3s are used to create a logical outline, not just for visual styling.**
Headings should reflect the actual structure of the content, not just look like a heading.
- ☐ **The primary keyword or a close variation appears in at least one heading.**
Reinforces topical relevance without needing to force it into every heading.
- ☐ **Paragraphs are short and scannable, not dense unbroken blocks of text.**
Both users and search engines favor content that's easy to scan for relevance.
- ☐ **The most important information appears early on the page, not buried at the bottom.**
Users (and increasingly, AI-generated search summaries) weight what appears first.

SECTION 3

URL & Internal Linking

5 items

- ☐ **The URL is short, readable, and includes the primary keyword.**
e.g. /services/ai-automation, not /services/page-id-4471.
- ☐ **The URL uses hyphens to separate words, not underscores or spaces.**
Search engines treat hyphens as word separators; underscores can merge words together.
- ☐ **The page is linked to from at least one other relevant page on the site.**
Orphaned pages with no internal links are harder for search engines to discover and rank.
- ☐ **Internal links use descriptive anchor text, not generic “click here” phrasing.**
Descriptive anchor text tells both users and search engines what the linked page is about.
- ☐ **Important pages are reachable within a few clicks from the homepage.**
Pages buried deep in the site structure receive less crawl attention and less authority.

SECTION 4

Images & Media

4 items

- ☐ **Every meaningful image has descriptive alt text, not a blank or generic filename.**
Alt text is both an accessibility requirement and a ranking signal for image search.
- ☐ **Image file names are descriptive before upload, not generic camera or screenshot names.**
e.g. ai-automation-dashboard.jpg, not IMG_4821.jpg.
- ☐ **Images are compressed and reasonably sized so they don't slow down page load.**
Page speed is a direct ranking factor, and oversized images are the most common cause of slow pages.
- ☐ **Decorative images that carry no information use empty alt text, not a forced description.**
Forcing alt text onto purely decorative images adds noise for screen reader users.

SECTION 5

Content Quality & Search Intent

5 items

- ☐ **The content actually answers the question someone searching this term is trying to answer.**
Matching search intent matters more than keyword density — a keyword-stuffed page that doesn't answer the question won't rank well or convert.
- ☐ **The page covers the topic in enough depth to be genuinely useful, not just long for its own sake.**
Length should come from thoroughness, not padding.
- ☐ **The content is not a close paraphrase of a competitor's page on the same topic.**
Search engines favor genuinely original analysis, examples, or perspective over reformatted competitor content.
- ☐ **There's a clear, relevant next step for the reader (a link, a form, a related article).**
Every important page should have a purpose beyond just being informative.
- ☐ **The content is kept current — outdated statistics, prices, or screenshots are updated periodically.**
Stale content is a common, quiet reason a previously well-ranking page starts to slip.

SECTION 6

Technical On-Page Basics

5 items

- ☐ **The page has a canonical tag pointing to itself (or the correct version, if duplicate content exists).**
Prevents search engines from splitting ranking signals across duplicate or near-duplicate URLs.
- ☐ **The page renders correctly and is easy to use on a mobile screen.**
Search engines primarily use the mobile version of a page for ranking (mobile-first indexing).
- ☐ **Relevant structured data (schema markup) is present where applicable — articles, products, FAQs, reviews.**
Structured data enables rich results in search (star ratings, FAQ dropdowns) that increase click-through rate.
- ☐ **The page loads reasonably quickly — checked with a real tool, not just a guess.**
Use Google PageSpeed Insights or a similar tool rather than assuming a page is fast.
- ☐ **The page returns a proper 200 status code and isn't accidentally set to noindex.**
An easy, invisible mistake that silently removes a page from search results entirely.

How The Nexa Solutions can help

If working through this checklist surfaced more gaps than expected, that's common — on-page SEO tends to degrade quietly over time as a site grows. We run full on-page and technical SEO audits and fix what we find. Visit thanexasolutions.com/contact to book a free consultation.