

WUNDERLANDMEDIA

Monthly SEO Maintenance Checklist

So nothing breaks while you sleep. 90 minutes per month to protect your traffic.

By Kemal | wunderlandmedia.com

90

Minutes / Month

30+

Checklist Items

7

Focus Areas

Month: _____

1 Google Search Console Check (15 min)

15 min The single most valuable 15 minutes you can spend on SEO each month. This is where I start every time, and it catches 80% of problems before they become emergencies.

INDEXING & COVERAGE

- ☐ **Check Pages report for new "Not indexed" pages**
Pages > Not indexed. If pages that should be indexed suddenly aren't, that's your early warning system.
- ☐ **Investigate any indexing drops since last month**
Common culprits: accidental noindex tags after plugin updates, broken canonical URLs, server errors blocking crawling.
- ☐ **Verify new pages are being discovered and indexed**
Any content published this month should appear in the index. If not, check sitemap inclusion and internal links.

CORE WEB VITALS

- ☐ **Review Core Web Vitals report for any new issues**
If anything went red since last month, something changed on your site. Usually an unoptimized image, new script, or layout shift.
- ☐ **Compare LCP, INP, CLS to previous month**
Look for trends, not just pass/fail. A metric moving from "good" toward "needs improvement" is a warning sign.

Metric	Target	Watch	Fix Now
LCP (Largest Contentful Paint)	≤ 2.5s	2.5 - 4.0s	> 4.0s
INP (Interaction to Next Paint)	≤ 200ms	200 - 500ms	> 500ms
CLS (Cumulative Layout Shift)	≤ 0.1	0.1 - 0.25	> 0.25

SECURITY & MANUAL ACTIONS

- ☐ **Check Security & Manual Actions (should always be clean)**
If anything shows up here, drop everything else and fix it. A manual action can tank your entire site overnight.

MOBILE USABILITY

- ☐ **Review mobile usability report for new issues**
More than half your traffic is probably mobile. Flagged issues directly impact rankings.
- ☐ **Open your site on your actual phone and click around**
Fill out a form, read an article, navigate the menu. You'll catch things no automated tool will.

Don't Skip This

I lost a client \$14,000/month in revenue because nobody was checking Search Console. A plugin update broke their sitemap, three pages returned 404s, Core Web Vitals tanked. The fix took 2 weeks. Recovery took 5 months.

2 Content Freshness & Refresh (30 min)

34%

average year-over-year traffic decline for B2B websites between 2024-2025. 73% experienced significant loss. The pattern: things hold steady for 1-2 months after you stop maintaining, then the decline begins.

IDENTIFY DECLINING CONTENT

- ☐ **Compare last 28 days to previous period in Search Console**
Performance > Search results > Date filter. Look at both clicks and impressions for a complete picture.
- ☐ **Flag any page that lost 20%+ clicks**
These deserve a closer look. Check if a competitor published better content, if a SERP feature appeared, or if the content is stale.
- ☐ **Check for pages dropping from page 1 to page 2**
Position 8 to position 12 means going from visible to invisible. These need immediate attention.

FLAG STALE CONTENT

- ☐ **Identify posts older than 6-12 months without updates**
Especially anything with stats, year references, or tool recommendations. "Best SEO Tools 2024" actively hurts you in 2026.
- ☐ **Check for outdated screenshots, broken examples, dead links**
Tools change their UI, companies rebrand, pages move. Outdated visuals signal stale content to readers and Google.

QUICK REFRESH ACTIONS

- ☐ **Update 1-2 stale posts with fresh information**
Add a new section on recent changes, update statistics, refresh examples. This is the highest-ROI activity in SEO maintenance.
- ☐ **Update publication dates (only if content actually changed)**
Don't just change the date without changing content. Google can tell. But if you did update, signal it.
- ☐ **Refresh internal links to point to newer content**
Your old posts should link to your new posts. Every content refresh is a chance to strengthen your internal link network.
- ☐ **Swap outdated screenshots and images**
Fresh visuals signal current content. Takes 5 minutes per post but makes a visible difference.

EFFECTIVE REFRESH

Added a new H2 on AI Overviews, updated 3 statistics, added 2 internal links to recent posts, refreshed the hero image.

USELESS REFRESH

Changed the publish date from 2024 to 2026, fixed one typo, called it "updated." Google isn't fooled.

The Freshness Pattern

Pages updated within the last 3-6 months consistently rank above equivalent stale pages. This isn't about gaming the system. It's about keeping your content accurate and useful. Google can tell the difference.

3 Broken Links & Technical Health (20 min)

404 ERRORS & BROKEN LINKS

- ☐ **Scan for new 404 errors in Search Console**
Pages > Not found (404). These are pages Google tried to crawl but couldn't reach. Usually caused by URL changes or deleted pages.
- ☐ **Fix or redirect any new broken URLs**
Set up 301 redirects from old URLs to the correct destination. Don't just delete the URL and leave a dead end.
- ☐ **Check for broken internal links**
Run Screaming Frog or use a browser extension. Every broken internal link is wasted crawl budget and a dead end for users.
- ☐ **Clean up redirect chains**
A > B > C? Point all redirects directly to the final destination. Each hop slows things down and dilutes link equity.

ROBOTS.TXT & SITEMAP

- ☐ **Verify robots.txt isn't blocking important pages**
Plugin updates can add disallow rules that block entire sections. Check [yoursite.com/robots.txt](#) manually.
- ☐ **Verify XML sitemap is accessible and error-free**
Check [yoursite.com/sitemap.xml](#). Should load without errors. New pages included, deleted pages removed.
- ☐ **Submit updated sitemap if structure changed**
If you added or removed pages this month, resubmit the sitemap in Search Console to speed up discovery.

PERFORMANCE & SECURITY

- ☐ **Run PageSpeed Insights on homepage + top 3-5 pages**
Compare to last month's scores. Significant drops mean something changed. Check both mobile and desktop.
- ☐ **Check SSL certificate status**
Is it valid? Expiring soon? An expired SSL triggers browser warnings and tanks traffic overnight. Set a renewal reminder.
- ☐ **Update CMS and plugins, then test the site**
Outdated plugins are security risks and can cause compatibility issues. Update them, but always test afterward.
- ☐ **Check for mixed content warnings (HTTP on HTTPS pages)**
Images or scripts loaded over HTTP on an HTTPS site trigger browser warnings. Check the console for errors.

Silent Killers

Broken links and redirect chains are the silent killers of SEO. They waste crawl budget, frustrate users, and quietly erode authority. Skip this for six months and you'll spend a full day cleaning up the mess. 10 minutes monthly prevents it.

4 Keyword Rankings & SERP Monitoring (15 min)

"I see business owners checking rankings daily and panicking over every fluctuation. Don't do that. Rankings move. That's normal. What matters is the monthly trend."

From the post

TOP KEYWORDS REVIEW

- ☐ **Review your top 20 keywords for 30-day trend**
Are they stable, trending up, or trending down? A slow downward trend is more concerning than a single bad day.
- ☐ **Flag any page 1 to page 2 drops**
Position 8 to 12 means visible to invisible. These pages need immediate attention: content refresh, internal links, or both.
- ☐ **Note any keywords with rising impressions but low clicks**
This means Google is showing you but nobody's clicking. Fix the title tag and meta description to be more compelling.

SERP FEATURE CHANGES

- ☐ **Check if new SERP features pushed your results down**
Featured snippets, video carousels, AI Overviews can steal 60-80% of clicks while you maintain the same position.
- ☐ **Monitor AI Overview appearances for your key terms**
If AI Overviews now appear for your keywords, your content needs self-contained answer blocks to get cited.
- ☐ **Check if competitors gained featured snippets you could own**
Search your top keywords, look at what's in position 0. Could your content answer that question better?

OPPORTUNITIES

- ☐ **Look for accidental rankings (unexpected keyword wins)**
Sometimes pages rank for keywords you didn't target. These are opportunities. Consider creating dedicated pages for them.
- ☐ **Identify keywords ranking position 11-20 (striking distance)**
These are almost on page 1. A content refresh, better title tag, or a few internal links could push them over.

60-80% of click-through rate can be lost when a SERP feature appears, even if your ranking position stays the same. Monitor the SERP layout, not just your position number.

5 Google Business Profile (5 min)

- ☐ **Respond to ALL new reviews (good and bad)**
Google tracks your response rate and speed. Every review gets a response. Thank positive ones, address negative ones professionally.
- ☐ **Verify business hours are correct**
Especially around holidays or seasonal changes. Wrong hours lead to bad reviews, which lead to lower rankings.
- ☐ **Add 1-2 new photos**
Fresh photos signal an active business. Team photos, project shots, office updates. Even one per month compounds over time.
- ☐ **Post an update (share a blog post, tip, or news)**
GBP posts don't get massive reach, but they signal activity. Share your latest blog post or a quick industry tip.
- ☐ **Check for and answer any new Q&A**
Anyone can ask questions on your GBP. If you don't answer, someone else will, and it might not be accurate.

6 Backlink Monitoring (5 min)

- ☐ **Check for new backlinks from spammy or irrelevant sites**
If a gambling site suddenly links to your accounting blog, note it. Don't panic, but keep a record.
- ☐ **Check for lost backlinks from high-authority sites**
Sometimes pages get restructured or removed. A quick outreach email can recover valuable lost links.
- ☐ **Review any new referring domains**
New links from relevant, authoritative sites are positive signals. Note where they're coming from to guide future outreach.

Disavow Carefully

Only disavow links if they're genuinely from clearly spammy sources. Google is generally good at ignoring low-quality links on its own. Over-disavowing can hurt more than it helps. When in doubt, leave it alone.

7 Competitor Check (5 min)

- ☐ **Check if competitors published new content targeting your keywords**
Google your top 5 keywords. Any new competitors in the top 10? Read their content. What angle are they using?
- ☐ **Note any competitor pages that overtook yours**
If you dropped and they rose, study what they did differently. More depth? Better structure? Fresher data?
- ☐ **Look for content gaps competitors are exploiting**
Are they covering topics you haven't? These are future content opportunities.

Time Bucket	Tasks	Items
5 min each	Security check, GBP reviews, GBP hours, GBP photo/post, mobile spot-check, backlink scan, competitor check	7
15 min each	Indexing/coverage review, Core Web Vitals, 404 scan, keyword rankings (top 20 + trends), SERP feature changes	5
30 min each	Declining content audit, stale content flagging, 1-2 post refreshes, redirect cleanup, broken link fixes, PageSpeed check, robots/sitemap/SSL, plugin updates, striking-distance keyword push	9

Monthly Time Budget

Small site (under 50 pages): 60-90 minutes. **Medium site (50-200 pages):** 90-120 minutes. **Large site (200+ pages):** 2-3 hours.

That's one afternoon per month to protect what might be your biggest source of leads and revenue.

"I've watched businesses lose 60-70% of their organic traffic because nobody spent two hours a month looking at the basics. Rebuilding from that kind of loss takes months of work and thousands of dollars. The math is simple."

Kemal, Wunderlandmedia

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Notes / Issues Found This Month

Completed on: _____ **Next check:** _____

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