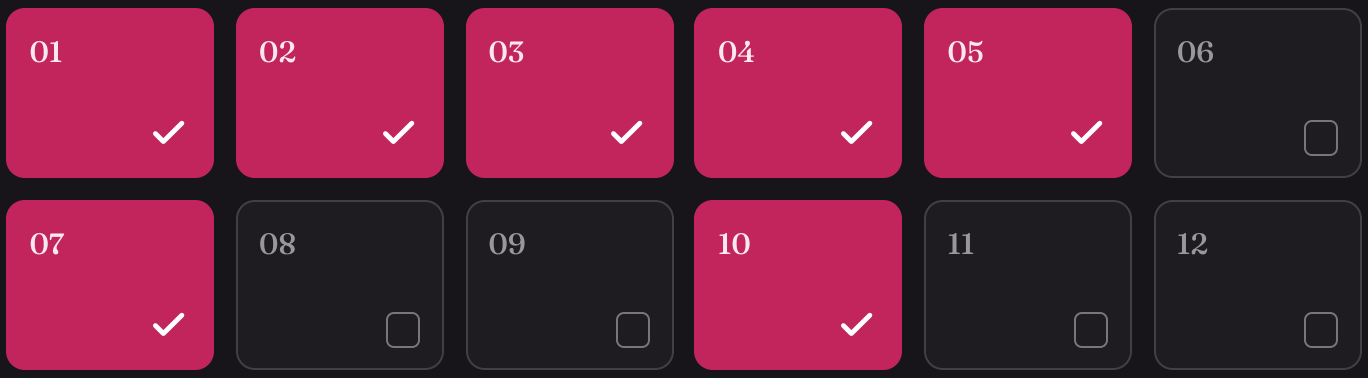
Boredlisted

2026 EDITION · PRINTABLE

SEO FOR BEGINNERS

The On-Page SEO Checklist

12 fixes to run on every blog post, with before and after examples you can copy.



WRITTEN BY

Denjie Garcia

- One-page checklist
- Title and meta formulas
- Before and after examples
- Post tracker

START HERE

Small fixes, done every time, *add up.*

An on-page SEO checklist is a short list of fixes you run on every post before and after you publish. Each one takes minutes. Together they help readers trust the page and help Google understand and show it.

HOW TO USE IT

1. **Print page 3** for every post. It is the quick pass you tick off before you hit publish.
2. **Use pages 4 to 7** when a fix is unclear. Each one has a before and after example from the same sample post.
3. **Steal the formulas** on page 8 for titles, descriptions, slugs and alt text.
4. **Log every post** on the tracker (page 9) so nothing slips through.

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FOUR PASSES, TWELVE FIXES

PASS 1

The search result

What do searchers see before they click?

Fixes 01 to 03

PASS 2

The match

Does the post match what people searched for?

Fixes 04 to 06

PASS 3

The read

Is the post easy to read and use?

Fixes 07 to 09

PASS 4

The connection

Is the page connected and indexed?

Fixes 10 to 12

THE SAMPLE POST

Every example in this checklist uses one beginner guide targeting the keyword **how to write a cover letter**, so you can see exactly what changes from fix to fix.

PRINT ONE PER POST

Pre-publish checklist

POST TITLE _____

PRIMARY KEYWORD _____

PUBLISHED _____ REVIEWED _____

PASS 1 The search result

☐	01	**Title tag**	Keyword near the start, clear benefit, ~50 to 60 characters
☐	02	**Meta description**	1 to 2 sentences, keyword once, ~140 to 160 characters
☐	03	**URL slug**	Short, lowercase, hyphenated, no dates

PASS 2 The match

☐	04	**Keyword in the opening**	Keyword appears naturally in the first 100 words
☐	05	**Search intent**	Format matches what already ranks
☐	06	**Heading structure**	One H1, logical H2s and H3s, no skipped levels

PASS 3 The read

☐	07	**Answer first**	Direct answer in the first 2 to 3 sentences
☐	08	**Skimmable format**	Short paragraphs, lists, a table, mobile check
☐	09	**Images**	Descriptive file names, alt text, compressed

PASS 4 The connection

☐	10	**Internal links**	A few related links with descriptive anchors
☐	11	**External sources**	1 to 3 links to primary sources
☐	12	**Indexing check**	No noindex, in sitemap, inspected in Search Console

SCORE _____ / 12

Last step after publishing: inspect the URL in Google Search Console and request indexing if it is not indexed yet.

PASS 1 · FIXES 01 TO 03

The search result

These three fixes shape your listing on the results page. They decide whether anyone clicks at all.

1 2 3 4

01 Write a title tag that earns the click

The title tag is your headline in search results and the browser tab. Google may rewrite it, but it usually starts from yours.

- [ ] Primary keyword near the start
- [ ] One clear, specific benefit
- [ ] Roughly 50 to 60 characters
- [ ] Unique across your whole site

BEFORE

~~Cover Letters: Some Thoughts and Tips~~

✓ AFTER

How to Write a Cover Letter: A Simple 5-Step Template

02 Write a meta description that sells the page

It does not directly change rankings, but a clear one can lift clicks. Write it as a pair with your title tag.

- [ ] One or two plain sentences
- [ ] Keyword included once
- [ ] Around 140 to 160 characters
- [ ] Says exactly what the reader gets

BEFORE

~~This post is about cover letters and everything you need to know about them.~~

✓ AFTER

Learn how to write a cover letter in five steps, with a fill-in template and examples you can adapt for any job application.

03 Clean up the URL slug

Short, readable slugs are easier to share and tell readers and Google what to expect before they land.

- [ ] Lowercase words joined by hyphens
- [ ] Main keyword kept, dates and filler dropped
- [ ] Set before publishing (later changes need a redirect)

BEFORE

~~example.com/2026/10/15/post-4471-cover-letter-tips-and-tricks-for-everyone~~

✓ AFTER

example.com/how-to-write-cover-letter

PASS 2 · FIXES 04 TO 06

The match

A good title earns the click. These fixes keep the reader once they land.

1 2 3 4

04 Use the primary keyword early and naturally

It reassures readers they are in the right place and helps Google connect the page to the query.

- [ ] Keyword or close variant in the first 100 words
- [ ] Used once in the opening, never stuffed
- [ ] Related words and synonyms after that

BEFORE

~~Job hunting can be stressful, and many parts of it confuse people in today's market.~~

✓ AFTER

Knowing how to write a cover letter can turn a generic application into an interview. Here is a five-step method that works for almost any role.

05 Match the search intent

Intent is the job the searcher wants done. The wrong format struggles, however polished it is.

- [ ] Searched the keyword and studied the top results
- [ ] Format matches: guide, list, comparison or tool
- [ ] Beats them on clarity and depth
- [ ] Writing for the US and UK? Check both (resume vs CV)

BEFORE

~~An opinion piece on why cover letters are outdated.~~

✓ AFTER

A step-by-step guide with a template, a sample letter and a short section on when you can skip one.

06 Build a clear heading structure

Headings let readers skim and show Google how the page is organized.

- [ ] H2s for main sections, H3s inside them
- [ ] No skipped levels and only one H1
- [ ] Each heading says what the section delivers
- [ ] Some phrased as real reader questions

BEFORE

~~Intro / More Info / Final Thoughts~~

✓ AFTER

What should a cover letter include? / How long should a cover letter be? / A cover letter template you can copy

PASS 3 · FIXES 07 TO 09

The read

On-page SEO is not only for search engines. These fixes are where people-first content shows.

1 2 3 4

07 Answer the main question first

Readers who need the short version get it fast, and a tight answer is easier to show as a featured snippet or AI summary.

- [ ] Direct answer in the first 2 to 3 sentences
- [ ] Short enough to quote on its own
- [ ] Detail and nuance come after

BEFORE

~~Since the early days of the modern job market, applicants have wondered about the true purpose of the cover letter.~~

✓ AFTER

A cover letter is a one-page letter that explains why you fit a specific job. Open with the role, show two or three wins, and close by asking for an interview.

08 Format for skimming

Most visitors skim before they decide to read. Structure is what turns a skim into a read.

- [ ] Paragraphs of 2 to 4 sentences
- [ ] Numbered lists for steps, bullets for options
- [ ] A table wherever readers compare
- [ ] Bold used sparingly; previewed on a phone

BEFORE

~~One 300-word paragraph covering all five steps at once.~~

✓ AFTER

A numbered list of five steps, each with one or two sentences and a short example line.

09 Optimize every image

Images help readers and can bring image-search visits, but only if Google can understand them.

- [ ] Descriptive file name
- [ ] Alt text that says what the image shows
- [ ] File compressed for fast loading
- [ ] Decorative images get empty alt text

BEFORE

~~IMG_0042.png · alt: cover letter cover letter template cover letter~~

✓ AFTER

cover-letter-template-example.png · alt: Sample one-page cover letter with the opening, skills and closing paragraphs highlighted

PASS 4 · FIXES 10 TO 12

The connection

The last pass links the post into your site and confirms Google can actually find it.

1 2 3 4

10 Add useful internal links

They help readers go deeper, help Google discover new posts and signal which pages matter most.

- [ ] A few links to closely related posts
- [ ] Descriptive anchor text, never click here
- [ ] One or two older posts now link to this one

BEFORE

~~For more information, click here.~~

✓ AFTER

Once your letter is done, read our guide to tailoring a resume for each job.

11 Cite strong external sources

Linking to the source of a fact makes claims easy to check and shows readers you did the work.

- [ ] Facts link to primary sources
- [ ] Official docs, government sites or original research
- [ ] One to three well-chosen links

BEFORE

~~Studies say most hiring managers prefer short letters. (No link, no named source.)~~

✓ AFTER

The claim links to the official career guidance it came from, or it is cut because no reliable source exists.

12 Confirm Google can index the page

None of the other fixes matter if Google cannot crawl and index the page.

- [ ] No leftover noindex tag
- [ ] Works well on a phone
- [ ] Included in your sitemap
- [ ] URL inspected in Google Search Console

BEFORE

~~Published with a leftover noindex tag from a test site. It never appears in search.~~

✓ AFTER

Indexing allowed, URL inspected in Search Console, and the page shows as indexed.

COPY, FILL IN, PUBLISH

Formulas that save you thinking time

TITLE TAG FORMULAS

`How to [outcome]: A [number]-step [format]`

How to Write a Cover Letter: A Simple 5-Step Template

`[Number] ways to [outcome] in [year]`

9 Ways to Speed Up a WordPress Site in 2026

`[Option A] vs [Option B]: Which is better for [audience]?`

Notion vs Obsidian: Which Is Better for Students?

`[Keyword]: [specific promise]`

On-Page SEO Checklist: 12 Fixes Every Blog Post Needs

META DESCRIPTION FORMULA

`[What they will learn] + [what is included] + [who it is for or why now]`

Learn how to write a cover letter in five steps, with a fill-in template and examples you can adapt for any job application.

ALT TEXT FORMULA

`[What the image is] + [the detail that matters in this post]`

Sample one-page cover letter with the opening, skills and closing paragraphs highlighted

NUMBERS TO REMEMBER

Rules of thumb, not hard limits

50 to 60 characters in a title tag	**140 to 160** characters in a meta description	**3 to 6** words in a URL slug	**100** words: place the keyword before this	**2 to 4** sentences per paragraph	**1 to 3** external links to primary sources

FIVE MISTAKES TO AVOID

- ✕ Repeating the keyword until it reads like a robot wrote it
- ✕ Using the same title tag on more than one post
- ✕ Changing a live slug without adding a redirect
- ✕ Linking with vague anchors like click here or read more
- ✕ Publishing with a noindex tag left on from testing

SLUG RULES

- ✓ Lowercase words joined by hyphens
- ✓ Keep the main keyword
- ✓ Drop dates, IDs and filler words
- ✓ Decide it before you publish

`/how-to-write-cover-letter`

KEEP A RUNNING RECORD

Post tracker

Log each post as you publish or update it. Tick a fix once it is done, then add up the score.

POST TITLE OR URL	DATE	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	SCORE
		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
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		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

01 Title tag
02 Meta description
03 URL slug
04 Keyword in the opening
05 Search intent
06 Heading structure
07 Answer first
08 Skimmable format
09 Images
10 Internal links
11 External sources
12 Indexing check



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Denjie Garcia is the writer behind Boredlisted, a self-taught developer, content creator and digital strategist based in Manila. He has spent nearly 20 years hands-on with web development, SEO and digital marketing, and writes practical, no-hype guides for people who want answers they can use today.

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Google Search Console setup guide
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Free tools, templates and guides
boredlisted.com/resource-library

OFFICIAL READING

Google: How title links work
developers.google.com/search

Google: Controlling search snippets
developers.google.com/search

Google: Creating helpful, people-first content
developers.google.com/search

Pick one post that gets impressions but few clicks. *Run all twelve fixes on it this week.*

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Note. Search engines change how they work. This guide reflects Google's public guidance as of October 2026, and no ranking result is guaranteed.

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