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Squarespace SEO Guide

Search engine optimization, or SEO, is the process of improving your site's ranking in search results. The exact factors search engines like Google use to rank sites are not publicly known and change frequently, Squarespace builds all known SEO best practices into the core of its platform.

This guide will walk you through how to use Squarespace's tools + other best practices that will help you rank as highly as possible in search engines.

WEBSITE SETUP

- SITE TITLE / TAG LINE
- BUSINESS INFORMATION
- SITE DESCRIPTION
- SEARCH ENGINE DESCRIPTION
- BLOGGING PANEL
- SECURITY AND SSL PANEL

Site Title & Tag Line

Squarespace uses the info in these fields to populate your main navigation if you're not using a logo image. Chances are, you are using a logo image of some sort, so this is a great opportunity to add key words to these fields.

 [DESIGN > LOGO & TITLE](#)

Business Information

Fill this in as completely as possible but pay special attention to the **Business Address** and **Physical Location** fields, especially if your physical address is important to your business. This will help search engines make results more relevant to people in your service area.

 [SETTINGS > BUSINESS INFORMATION](#)

Site Description

Some templates (Aviator, Aubrey, Five, and Native) display this information on your site. Even if you're not using one of those templates, it's still a good idea to fill this field out. Search engines will crawl all text associated with your URL to assess site content, but note that this site description is different from the Search Engine Description.

 [SETTINGS > BASIC INFORMATION](#)

Search Engine Description

This is pretty self-explanatory, but you'll be ahead of the game if you fill this out at all. Many Squarespace users miss it all together. This is the text that will be displayed as an excerpt in search engine results. Use as many keywords as possible while also making it human readers, not just the internet crawl bot.

 **SETTINGS > SEO**

Blogging Panel

Remove %y, %m and %d from **'Post URL Format'** so that only %t (Title) remains in the field. This will take date stamp out of your blog post URLs and force search engines to pick up keywords relating to your post rather than just the date. While you're in the blogging panel, go ahead and turn on **'Simple Liking'** and **AMP**.

 **SETTINGS > BLOGGING**

Security & SSL Panel

At the time of writing this, security may not have a huge impact on ranking, however, Google has announced that SSL-secured websites may receive a minor ranking boost. The importance of this could change at any time, so it's better to be ahead of the game.

 **SETTINGS > SECURITY & SSL**

WEBSITE CONTENT

- PAGE TITLES & DESCRIPTIONS
- HEADINGS
- IMAGE TAGGING
- IMAGE SIZING
- BLOG POSTS
- 404 PAGE
- OPT-IN GIFTS

Page Titles & Page Descriptions

Every page in your Squarespace site has a Navigation Title and Page Title. Many people don't know that you can title these separately.

Use the page title to promote keywords for search engines, but keep the navigation title short so it fits in your navigation menu. When sharing your web address on Facebook, the page title will be what shows up in the preview along with the site's preview image.

Search engines might use your page description in search results if they can't find more relevant content to a visitor's search terms.

Use keywords, but don't stuff your page descriptions with keywords in a way that doesn't form cohesive sentences—Google can detect that.

Page descriptions are displayed differently in each template family. [Click here for a detailed description of how page descriptions are used.](#)

Navigation Title

Home

The name for this page, as it appears in navigations.

Page Title

Minimalist Design—Web Designer & Squarespace Expert

The name of this page, as it appears in the top of the browser window.



Enabled

Enabled pages are publicly visible. Disabling a page makes it inaccessible to visitors.

Description



Minimalist Design is an Ottawa-based web design firm that helps entrepreneurs and small business owners showcase their passion online with bespoke websites built on Squarespace.

Optional. Some templates surface this description, for instance in the header area. Furthermore, it's used if this page is indexed by a search engine.

URL Slug

/home

The unique location slug for this page.

Password

A password required to access this page. Note that certain contributor permissions (Administrator, Content Editor) automatically bypass this password.

CANCEL

DELETE

SAVE

Headings

Squarespace creates HTML <H1>, <H2> & <H3> tags automatically when you create those heading styles in a text block. Try to include keywords in your website's headings wherever possible, but don't cram keywords into your H1 tags in a way that keeps it from making sense. Google can detect this type of deception.

Image Tagging

Alt and title tags are important because search engines can't "see" images the way we can. Squarespace automatically generates proper image <alt> and <title> tags, improving search engine indexing, but you have to do your part too. Put keywords in your image's caption area (Even if you're not displaying it. You can fill it out, then select 'Do not display caption' if you don't want a visible caption) and filename box. Don't leave the filename box blank, or with the automatically populated file name.

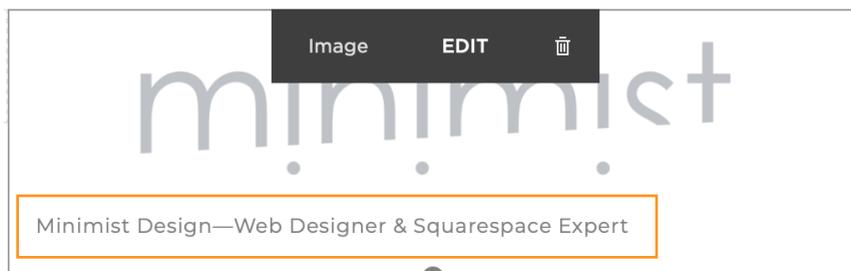


Image Sizing

It is recommended that you use image files less than 500 kilobytes. When it comes to images on the web, bigger isn't always better, as uploading larger images can affect site performance which will affect your search engine ranking. [Click here](#) to learn more about image best practices.

Blog Posts

It is widely believed that the average length of your blog posts can influence your search engine ranking. There are many varying opinions about which length is ideal; the least being 300 and the most being around 3,000. The most important thing is to just create lots of relevant, useful and niche (if you can) information. With each new page a blog post generates, you will be adding a new opportunity to rank for a keyword. You also have more pages of information that other websites can link to, eventually establishing your domain's authority through backlinks.

404 Page

A 404 page is an error message displayed indicating that an address can't be found. Squarespace generates a default 404 page, but it's not very nice. You can create your own custom 404 page. Create a new page in the 'not linked' section of your page browser. Include links back to your other content, like blog post summaries, galleries, or a search bar. You could even include a contact form or FAQs. Your goal is to keep visitors on your site as long as possible. Once you've created this page, set it as your default 404 page.



**SETTINGS > ADVANCED > 404 ERROR/PAGE NOT FOUND >
[SELECT YOUR NEWLY CREATED PAGE]**

Opt-In Gifts

Everyone loves something free. Create something of value to your target audience (like this guide) and give it away. It doesn't need to be anything crazy; but you're slowly spreading your content across the web in as many ways as possible. This is a great way to increase referrals and boost your website's search engine ranking as a result.

SEARCH ENGINE SETUP

- GOOGLE SEARCH CONSOLE
- BING WEBMASTER TOOLS
- GOOGLE ANALYTICS

Google Search Console

There are quite a few steps that have already been documented by Squarespace support, but I'll leave this here just to say that if you are serious about your business and ranking your website, this is a vitally important step. NOTE: Squarespace lists indexing your site as optional, but I would disagree and say it is pretty important.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW DETAILED 'SEARCH CONSOLE' INSTRUCTIONS >](#)

Bing Webmaster Tools

People often scoff at Bing, but serious SEOers should not overlook this tool.

In addition to it's own search page, Bing has powered Yahoo's search results since 2010 and AOL's search results since 2016. Even if Bing only accounts for 10-20% of your traffic, ask yourself if you would be willing to lose that amount of traffic.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW DETAILED 'WEBMASTER TOOLS' INSTRUCTIONS >](#)

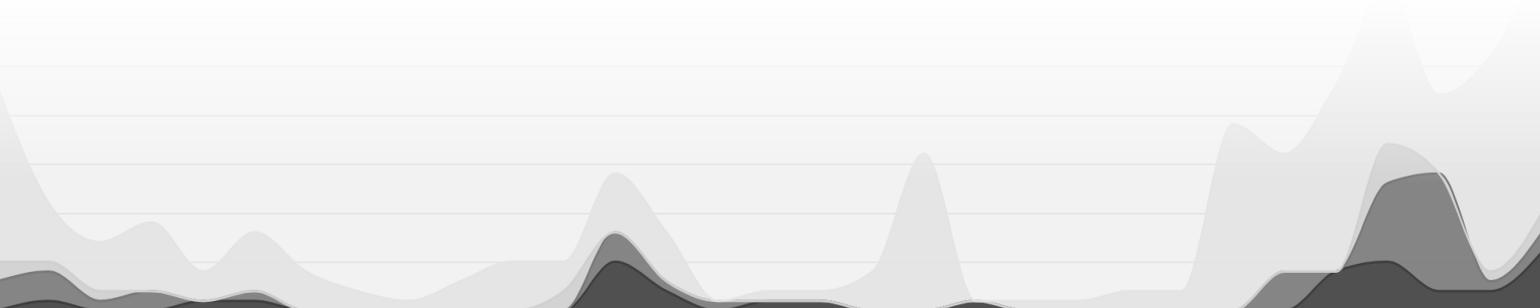
Google Analytics

Head over to <https://analytics.google.com> and set up Google Analytics. Grab your unique tracking ID and add it to your Squarespace site.

 **SETTINGS > ADVANCED > EXTERNAL SERVICES**

New for 2018, adding your site to Google Analytics will allow for Google Search Keywords analysis right inside the Squarespace Analytics panel. Over time you'll be able to see which of your key words are performing (or not performing) and optimize accordingly.

 **ANALYTICS > GOOGLE SEARCH KEYWORDS**



SOCIAL MEDIA

- BLOG SHARING
- PIN IT BUTTONS
- GOOGLE ANALYTICS

Blog Post Sharing

Blogging is one of the best ways to get your content out there—content marketing is another name for this and it has been proven to be highly effective. But how does it get to more people if you can't share your blog posts? Make sure you have your share buttons. Turn on as many as you think are appropriate for your audience.

 **SETTINGS > MARKETING > SHARE BUTTONS**

Pin-It Buttons

Pin it buttons are yet another way to encourage people to share the content on your website quickly and easily. The best way to get people to do things is to make it easy; there's no harm in adding pin it buttons and Pinterest is a surprisingly powerful tool to promote blog content marketing.

 **SETTINGS > MARKETING > PIN IT BUTTONS**

The primary goal of SEO is to get noticed. Everything in this guide will help with your SEO efforts. However, your biggest takeaway should be that anything you can do to share your content with your audience will be beneficial to your site's visibility to search engines.

Cast a wide net, make useful content that others want to link to, and share, and watch your traffic numbers take off.

— Karl



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