



# Technical SEO Checklist for Founders, CEOs & CMOs

Most "technical SEO checklists" are long, tactical, and low-signal. This one is short and sequenced around how Google actually works: Discovery → Crawling → Rendering → Indexing → Ranking. If a task doesn't help one of these stages, it's usually not worth your time right now.

You'll use this in two ways:

- First to do: run the technical checks to unblock visibility so Google can find, fetch, see, and store your key pages.
- First to let go: once those stages are healthy, stop chasing technical busywork and shift the bulk of effort to relevance, usefulness, and growth.

This checklist is for founders, CMOs, and non-SEO leaders who need a clear, defensible "what matters now vs. later" list they can run with on their own or with their team or vendor.

## A) Discovery — Can Google find your important pages?

- ☐ Internal links point to money pages (Pricing, Product Detail Pages, main Category/Solution).
- ☐ XML sitemap lists only canonical, important URLs; submit in Search Console and fix errors.
- ☐ Meet Search Essentials so you're eligible to appear at all.

❌ **Ignore for now:** sitemap busywork (priority/changefreq tinkering) if key URLs are already found.

✅ **Proof of success:** Search Console shows important URLs as discovered/indexed.

## B) Crawling — Can Google fetch what it found?

- ☐ robots.txt is **surgical**: no blocking of revenue paths; use it to shape crawl, not to de-index.
- ☐ Crawl Stats look healthy (no big spikes in errors/latency).
- ☐ Facets/parameters aren't generating endless junk URLs; if they must exist, follow Google's parameter/faceted guidance.

❌ **Ignore for now:** "crawl budget" projects on small/medium sites that are already crawled promptly.

✅ **Proof of success:** steady crawl requests to key pages with low errors and short response times.

## C) Rendering — Can Google see what users see?

- ☐ Key text/links are present in rendered HTML (check with URL Inspection → Test live URL → View tested page).
- ☐ robots.txt does **not** block essential CSS/JS needed to render the page.

❌ **Ignore for now:** cosmetic JS tweaks that don't change whether core content/links are visible.

✅ **Proof of success:** rendered HTML contains your headlines, body text, and critical links.



## D) Indexing — Will Google store the right version?

- ☐ One canonical URL per page; sitemaps list canonicals; status codes are correct (301 for moves, 404/410 for gone pages).
- ☐ Use **noindex** (or 404/410) to keep a page **out of results**. Don't rely on robots.txt for removal.
- ☐ Page Indexing report shows your key URLs as **Indexed** and explains non-indexed cases.
- ☐ Never combine **disallow** + **noindex** (Google can't see the meta/header noindex if it can't crawl the URL). For PDFs/non-HTML, use **X-Robots-Tag: noindex**.

❌ **Ignore for now:** over-thinking canonicals when duplication doesn't exist.

✅ **Proof of success:** Search Console lists key URLs as Indexed; duplicates point to the canonical.

## E) Ranking — Now that you're visible, do you deserve to rank?

- ☐ Content actually solves the query better than alternatives; page experience is good, but you don't chase scores.
- ☐ Treat Core Web Vitals as an assist: target INP (responsiveness) and LCP (loading) on revenue pages, then pair with form completion / add-to-cart metrics.
- ☐ Stay inside **Search Essentials** and spam policies (e.g., site reputation abuse, helpful content).

❌ **Ignore for now:** perfect lab scores if intent coverage and usefulness are the true challenge.

✅ **Proof of success:** Non-brand impressions and clicks rise on queries for money pages.

## F) High-risk moments that justify a Tech SEO focus

- ☐ **Domain/URL migrations:** one-to-one 301s; update canonicals/internal links/sitemaps; use **Change of Address** in Search Console for domain moves; validate after launch.
- ☐ **CMS changes:** plan like a launch; monitor crawling, rendering and indexing stats.
- ☐ **Rebrands/redesigns:** keep core content/link visibility; no leftover noindex; staging is blocked with auth or noindex (don't rely on robots.txt); update sitemaps to canonicals.
- ☐ **Large eCommerce:** with thousands of URLs, you need a focused and clear index strategy.

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### Need a hand with your technical SEO?

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