# SEO Fundamentals

## How to Increase Search Engine Visibility

BRANDING + DIGITAL MARKETING + WEB + PUBLIC RELATIONS + SEO + DESIGN + PRINTING

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# What is Search Engine Optimization?

**Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is the process of improving the quality and quantity of traffic to a website or web page from the organic search results, also known as "natural" or "unpaid" results. Organic search results can include web pages, images, video and business listings.**

## Why is SEO Important?

The better visibility a website has in the organic search results, the more likely it is to attract visits from new and returning customers.

- 93% of all online experiences begin with search engines
- 92% of global traffic comes from Google Search, Google Images and Google Maps
- 53% of all website traffic comes from organic search
- More than 60% of searchers will only consider a business if they can find it online

# Search Engine Results Page (SERP)

# Search engines work through three primary functions:

## 1. Crawling

**Search engines crawl hundreds of billions of pages** using their own web crawlers, commonly referred to as bots or spiders. A search engine spider navigates the web by following links.

## 2. Indexing

**Search engines process and store the information** they find in an index — a massive database of all the content they have discovered and deem good enough to serve up to searchers.

## 3. Ranking

**When someone performs a search, a search engine scours** its index for relevant content. The results are ordered by relevance, which is known as ranking. The higher a website is ranked for a given query, the more relevant the search engine believes that site is to the query.

**To determine relevance, search engines use algorithms.**

# Search Engine Algorithms

**Each search engine has its own proprietary algorithm it uses to rank web pages. Google's algorithm evaluates more than 200 different factors, and makes minor tweaks to its algorithm every day. Major changes to Google's algorithm occur every year or so.**

## These are the most influential ranking factors in Google's algorithm:

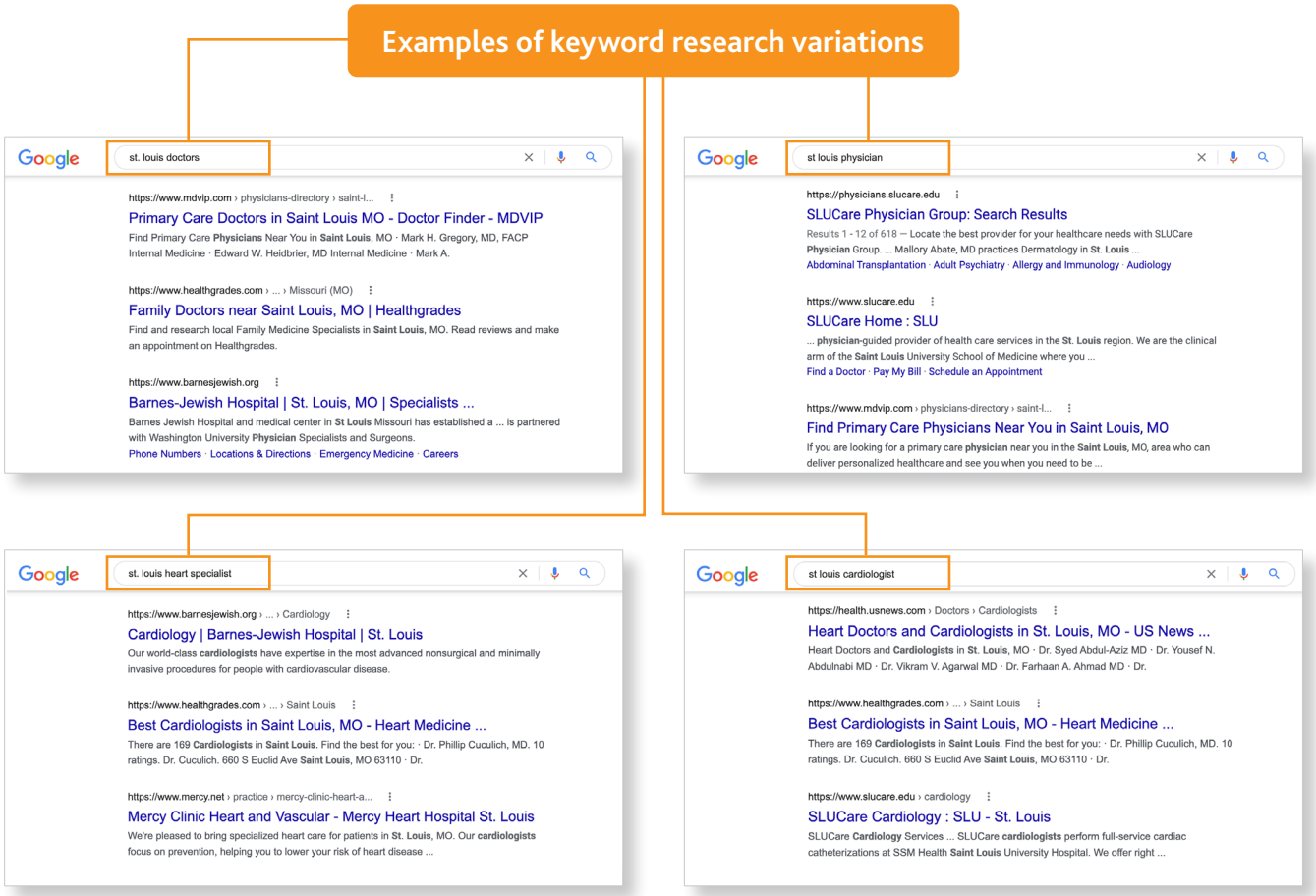
- Mobile friendliness
- Time on site
- Backlinks
- Content length
- Website security (HTTPS)
- Page title tags
- Meta description tags
- Image alt text
- Content freshness
- Domain age
- Page speed
- Anchor text
- Internal linking
- Site architecture
- Bounce rate

# Keyword Research

**Keyword research is the essential first step in search engine optimization. A keyword strategy is the blueprint for all online marketing efforts. The purpose of keyword research is to define the words and phrases that are most frequently searched. It also provides valuable information for other tactics: including branding, direct marketing and PR.**

## Keyword Research Variety

There are countless ways to search for the same thing. Demographics can also play a role in how people search. For example, do you say “pop,” “soda,” or “Coke?”



# What Do Keywords Tell Us?

## Keywords Tell You:

- What your potential customers are searching for
- Topics of interest to use for content generation
- How to speak to your website visitors and clients

## Keywords Tell Search Engines:

- What you do
- Who you are targeting
- How relevant you are
- Why they should rank you higher

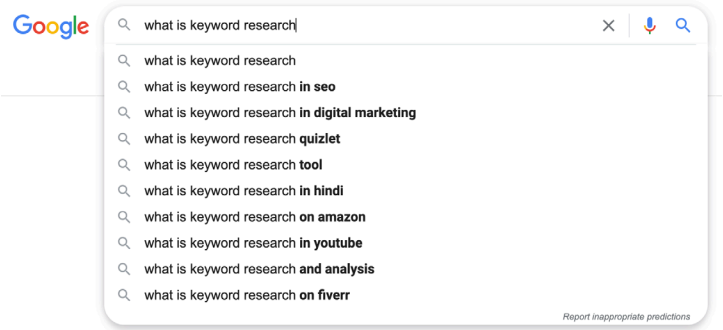
### Keyword Research Tools

- **AnswerThePublic.com**
  *Limited number of free searches per day*
- **SEMRush.com**
  *Paid tool with free trial*
- **Ahrefs.com**
  *Paid tool with free trial*
- **KeywordTool.io**
  *Paid tool with free trial*
- **Soovle.com**
  *Free*
- **Google**
  *Free*

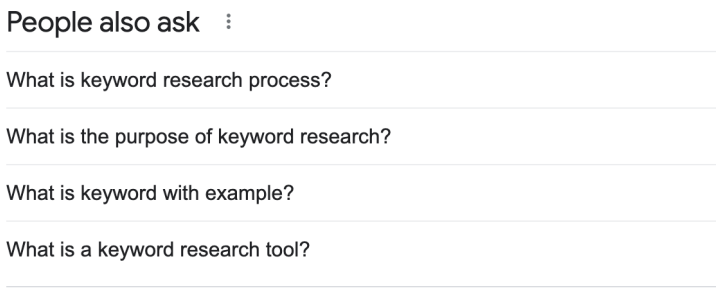
# Keyword Suggestions

**Google has several tools to help users find other relevant keywords.**

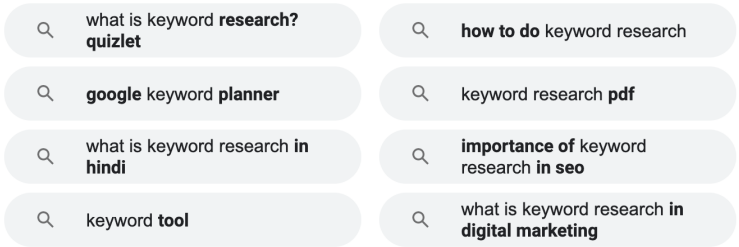
## Autocomplete Predictions




## People Also Ask (PAA)



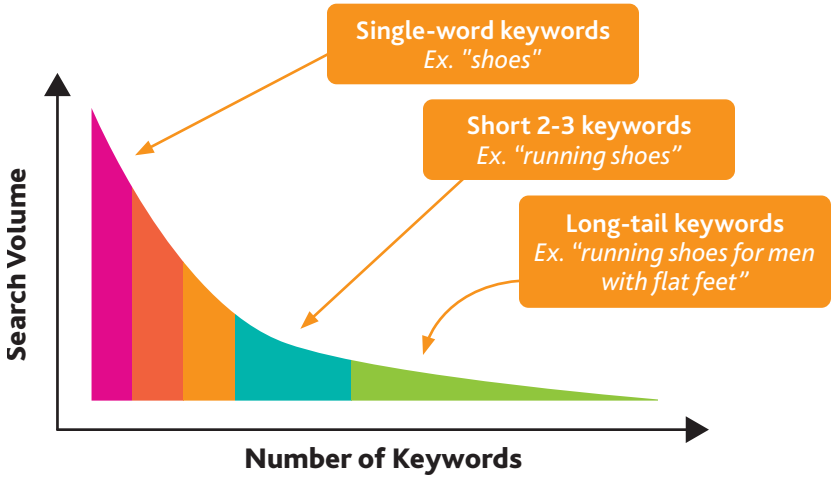

## Related Searches



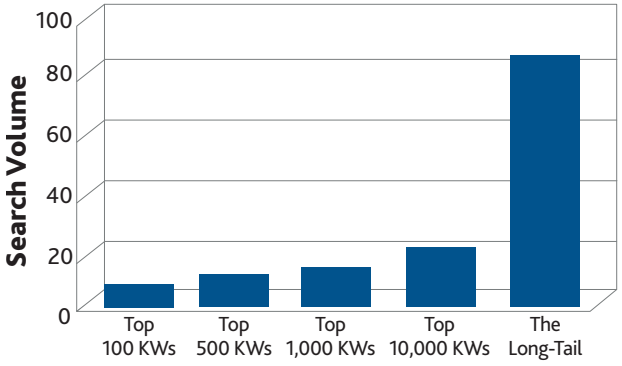
# Long-Tail Keywords

**Long-tail keywords are typically longer and more specific than common keywords.**

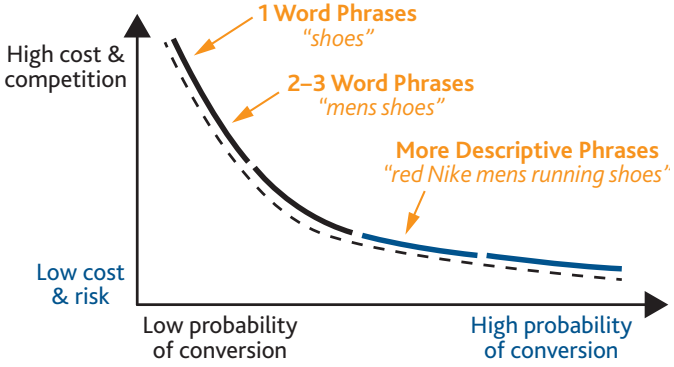
- Long-tail keyword searches have a click-through rate up to 5% higher than generic searches.
- 70% of search queries contain four words or more.
- The average conversion rate for a long-tail keyword is 36%.




## Long-Tail Search Traffic




## Long-Tail Conversion Rate



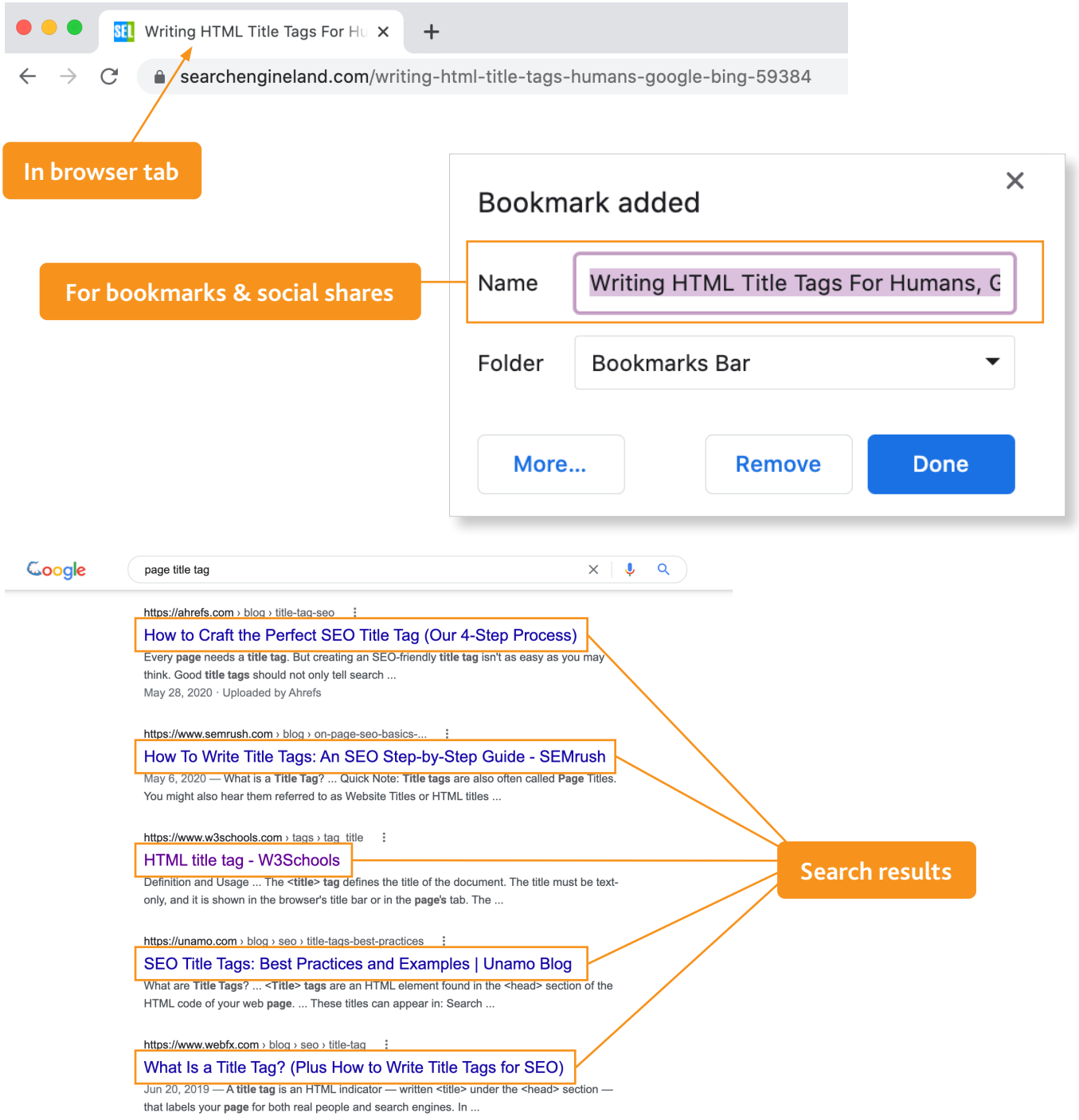
# What Are Page Title Tags?

**The page title tag is one of the first on-page elements search engines look at, and creates the user's first impression of your website. Every page on your website should have a unique, keyword-rich page title tag.**

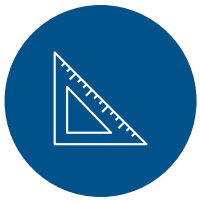
Words like *Best, Review*, and *Ultimate* can entice users to click on a website. Words such as *How, Why, What,* and *Where* help people understand what content they will find.

The page title tag is a snippet of code that can be edited using plugins or your website's CMS, as seen below:

# Page Title Tag Visibility



# Creating Optimized Page Title Tags



Keep your page title tag between 50 to 60 characters long, including spaces

Start the tag with the highest priority keyword for the page

Colons and ampersands are your friends

Use Title Capitalization

Describe the content on the page

Make the title natural and structure it like a sentence

End the title tag with your company name

**Easy Title Tag Formula**

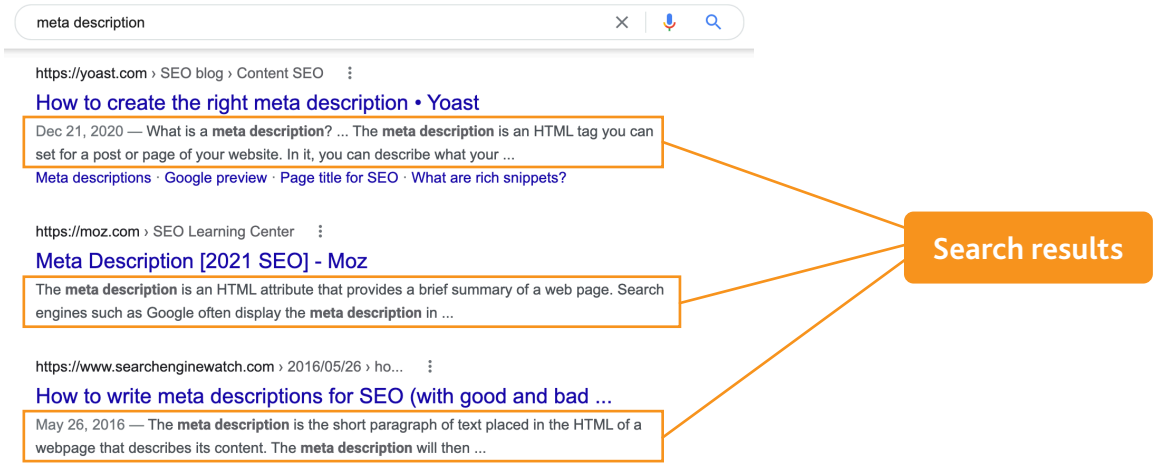
Keyword 1: Keyword 2 & Keyword 3 at Brand Name

***Example:*** St. Louis Plumbers: Residential & Commercial Plumbing by Unclogged Inc.

# What Are Meta Description Tags?

**The meta description tag is a snippet of code that describes the content of a webpage for users and search engines. Meta description tags can impact a page's click-through rate (CTR), which is a Google ranking factor.**

# Meta Description Visibility




# Creating Optimized Meta Descriptions

Keep your meta description tags between 120-160 characters in length, including spaces

Use active voice and make it actionable

Include a call-to-action

Use high priority keywords

Describe the content on the page

# What is On-Page Content?

**On-page text is what the search spider uses to define the topic of the page. Content has consistently been a top factor in Google's algorithm. Quality content is written for the human user, not search engines.**

## Tips to Improve Your Content's Keyword Optimization

- Avoid Duplicate Content
- Replace Pronouns with Keywords:
  *We provide 5-star customer service.* → *Our residential plumbers provide 5-star customer service.*
- Be specific instead of generic
  *No one does what we do better.* → *Unclogged Inc. is a top-rated St. Louis-area plumber.*

# Creating Quality Content for SEO

Know your audience and their interests

Know your topic and be the expert

Write the way your customers speak

Edit any grammar, spelling and punctuation errors

Include target keywords

Use headings and subheadings, formatted with H tags

Include at least one call-to-action on every page

Add interest with images and video, which can be optimized for search result placements

Use hyperlinks to internal and external pages

Write in Q&A style to answer questions, and use bullet points and lists

# Have a Project?

## We can't wait to hear about it!

**Give us a call or send us an email to get started.**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