

SEO Blog Post Guide

A practical, beginner-friendly guide to writing blog posts that actually rank

Writing a blog post that ranks on Google requires more than good writing. It requires understanding what your audience is searching for, structuring your content so search engines can read it, and giving users genuine value that keeps them on the page. This guide walks you through every step — from keyword research to hitting publish.

Step 1 Pick a Topic With Search Demand

Why it matters	There's no point writing a blog post nobody is searching for. Before you write a single word, confirm that real people are actively searching for your topic on Google.
How to do it	Use free tools like Google's autocomplete, "People Also Ask" boxes, and related searches to find what your audience is genuinely typing. Look for topics where you can realistically compete — not mega-competitive terms like "digital marketing" but specific, answerable questions like "how to set up Google Ads for a restaurant."
What to look for	Question-based queries ("how to," "what is," "why does") make excellent blog post topics. They have clear intent, they're easier to rank for than generic terms, and they map naturally to a Q&A-style; post format that Google's AI systems increasingly favour in 2026.

Step 2 Choose One Primary Keyword (and a Handful of Related Terms)

Primary keyword	Your primary keyword is the main phrase you want the post to rank for. Choose one — not five. It should be specific, reflect genuine search intent, and be something your target reader would actually type.
Related/secondary keywords	These are variations, synonyms, and related phrases that naturally belong in the same piece of content. For a post about "how to set up Google Ads," related terms might include "Google Ads setup guide," "Google Ads for beginners," and "create first Google Ads campaign." Include these naturally — don't stuff them.
Where keywords belong	Your primary keyword should appear in: the page title (H1), the SEO meta title, the meta description, the first 100 words of the post, at least one H2 subheading, and naturally throughout the body. That's it — no need to repeat it in every paragraph.

Step 3 Understand Search Intent Before You Write a Word

What is search intent?	Search intent is what the person searching actually wants to accomplish. Google is very good at understanding intent — and if your content doesn't match it, your post will not rank regardless of how well-written it is.
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<p>The four types of intent</p>	<p>Informational: The user wants to learn something ("what is conversion tracking"). Navigational: They want to find a specific website. Commercial: They're comparing options ("best Google Ads agency Toronto"). Transactional: They're ready to act ("hire Google Ads agency"). Match your content type to the intent.</p>
<p>Practical test</p>	<p>Before writing, Google your target keyword and study the top 5 results. What type of content are they? Blog posts, listicles, how-to guides, comparison pages? How long are they? What questions do they answer? Your post needs to compete with — and ideally outperform — what's already ranking.</p>

Step 4 Write a Title That Earns the Click

<p>The H1 title vs the SEO title</p>	<p>Your H1 is the heading visible on the page. Your SEO title is what appears in Google's search results. They can be similar or different — but both should include your primary keyword, be under 60 characters for the SEO title, and be specific enough to set a clear expectation.</p>
<p>What makes a good title</p>	<p>Strong blog titles typically include a specific outcome ("How to Cut Your Google Ads CPA by 30%"), a time element ("in 2026"), or a format signal ("A Step-by-Step Guide," "7 Things You Need to Know"). They're specific enough to stand out in search results and honest enough to avoid bounce-rate-killing clickbait.</p>
<p>Title formulas that work</p>	<p>"How to [Achieve Outcome] Without [Common Obstacle]" "What Is [Topic]: The Complete Guide for [Audience]" "[Number] Ways to [Solve Problem] in [Year]" "Why [Common Belief] Is Wrong — And What to Do Instead"</p>

Step 5 Structure Your Post for Humans AND Search Engines

<p>Use H2 and H3 subheadings</p>	<p>Break your post into clearly labelled sections using H2 headings for main sections and H3 headings for sub-points within them. This makes the post scannable for readers and helps Google understand your content hierarchy. Each major section should answer a specific sub-question related to your main topic.</p>
<p>Write an intro that hooks immediately</p>	<p>The first 100 words are critical. State clearly what the post covers and why it matters. Don't bury the lede — if you take three paragraphs to get to the point, most readers (and Google) won't wait. One strong, specific opening sentence that addresses the reader's problem directly is more effective than a broad scene-setting intro.</p>

Keep paragraphs short	Online readers scan before they read. Short paragraphs (2–4 sentences), clear subheadings, and occasional bolded key phrases make your content dramatically easier to consume — and reduce bounce rate, which is an indirect ranking signal.
Use lists where appropriate	Bullet points and numbered lists are easier to scan, more likely to be pulled into featured snippets and AI Overviews, and signal clear, structured thinking. Use them for steps, examples, comparisons, and recommendations — not as a substitute for actual explanation.

Step 6 Optimise On-Page SEO Elements

Meta title and meta description	The meta title (under 60 characters) is what appears as the clickable headline in Google results. The meta description (under 160 characters) is the summary below it. Both should include your primary keyword and a clear reason to click. These don't directly affect rankings but significantly affect click-through rate.
Image alt text	Every image in your post should have a descriptive alt text that includes relevant keywords where natural. Alt text helps visually impaired users and gives Google additional context about your content.
Internal linking	Link to at least 2–3 other relevant pages on your website within the post. Internal links distribute authority across your site, help Google discover and index your pages, and keep readers exploring your content longer.
URL structure	Your post URL should be short, descriptive, and include your primary keyword. Avoid auto-generated URLs with dates or random strings. Example: <code>/blog/google-ads-setup-guide</code> is better than <code>/blog/2026/04/post-147</code> .

Step 7 Write With Depth and Genuine Expertise

Why thin content fails	A 300-word blog post that skims the surface of a topic will not rank in 2026. Google's quality systems strongly favour content that demonstrates genuine experience and expertise — not content that restates the obvious or pads word count.
Aim for completeness	A well-ranking blog post for a specific topic typically runs 800–2,000 words — enough to fully address the topic, answer follow-up questions, and provide practical value. Longer isn't always better; more complete always is.

Use original insights

Add value that isn't already available in the top-ranking results: a unique perspective, a practical example from your experience, a data point, a process framework, or a common mistake you've seen. This is what earns links, builds trust, and signals genuine expertise to both readers and Google.

Step 8 Add a Clear Call to Action

Every post needs a next step

What do you want the reader to do after reading your post? Contact you, download a resource, read another post, sign up for your newsletter? Be explicit about it. A clear, single CTA at the end of every post is standard practice — and it's one of the most commonly skipped steps.

Make it relevant

The best CTAs connect directly to the post's topic. If you've just written a guide to Google Ads setup, a CTA offering a free Google Ads audit is directly relevant and will convert at a much higher rate than a generic "contact us" button.

Quick Reference: Before You Hit Publish

- Primary keyword in H1 title, meta title, meta description, and first 100 words
- H2 and H3 subheadings break the content into clear, scannable sections
- URL is short, descriptive, and includes the primary keyword
- At least 2–3 internal links to other pages on your website
- All images have descriptive alt text with relevant keywords where natural
- Meta title is under 60 characters — meta description is under 160 characters
- Post is at least 800 words and fully addresses the topic with genuine depth
- A clear, relevant call to action appears at the end of the post
- Post has been proofread — spelling errors and grammatical mistakes harm trust
- Content has been checked against the top-ranking posts for your keyword

■ Want blog posts that actually rank — without doing it yourself?

The 6th Avenue writes and optimises SEO blog content for businesses across Canada, the US, and internationally. We handle keyword research, structure, writing, on-page optimisation, and internal linking — so you can focus on running your business.

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