

## Best and Worst Search Engine Optimization Practices

Best

Worst

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### 1. Best Practices

Keywords in <title> tag	This is one of the most important places to have a keyword because what is written inside the <title> tag shows in search results as your page title. The title tag must be short (6 or 7 words at most) with the keywords being at the beginning.
Keywords in URL	Keywords in URLs increase the keyword ratio e.g. ( <a href="http://visualwebz.com/seo-services.html">http://visualwebz.com/seo-services.html</a> , where "SEO services". A very important factor, especially for Yahoo! and Bing.
Appropriate Keyword density	Always ensure that the keyword ration is not excessive, more commonly known as keyword stuffing. A rule of thumb is around 10
Keywords in anchor text	A significant factor in terms of gaining a vote for inbound links.
Keywords in headings (<H1>, <H2>...)	Header tags should be used appropriately, where the H1 tag only placed once per page.
Reputable inbound links	Gaining as many inbound links will not serve your website better ranking, what you need to remember is to have in bound links from similar and high ranking websites. It indicates that the competition is voting for you and you are popular within your topical community.
Links from .edu and .gov sites	These links are precious because .edu and .gov sites are more reputable than .com. .biz, .info, etc. domains.
Unique content	Having more content (relevant content, which is different from the content on other sites both in wording and topics) is a real boost for your site's rankings.
Frequency of content change	Frequent changes are favored. It is great when you constantly add new content but it is not so great when you only make small updates to existing content.
Site Accessibility	Another fundamental issue, which that is often neglected. If the site (or separate pages) is not accessible because of broken links, 404 errors, password-protected areas and other similar reasons, then the site simply will have issues being indexed.

### 2. Best Practices

Around-the-anchor text	The text that is immediately before and after the anchor text also matters because it further indicates the relevance of the link – i.e. if the link is artificial or it naturally flows in the text.
Age of inbound links	The older, the better. Getting many new links in a short time suggests buying them.
Links from directories	Depends on which directories. Being listed in DMOZ, Google, Bing, Yahoo and similar directories is a beneficial for ranking. Having thousands of links from irrelevant directories will not help ranking.
Keyword formatting	Bold and italic are another way to emphasize important keywords and phrases. These should be used within reason and are beneficial in terms of increasing keyword ratios.
Age of document	Recent documents (or at least regularly updated ones) are favored.
Sitemap	All websites should have both HTML and xml sitemaps. Spiders will refer to these files when indexing the website.
Site size	Size does matter, it reflects that there is "quality" content, and remember Google generally focuses on content, content, and more content.
Site age	That's right old is gold! Basically older sites have established more trustworthy (they have been around and are here to stay) than a new site that has just come onto the scene and may soon disappear.

### 3. Best Practices

Named anchors	Named anchors (the target place of internal links) are useful for internal navigation but are also useful for SEO because you stress additionally that a particular page, paragraph or text is important. In the code, named anchors look like this: <A href="#dogs">Read about dogs</A> and "#dogs" is the named anchor.
IP address of inbound link	Google denies that they discriminate against links that come from the same IP address or C class of addresses, so for Google the IP address can be considered neutral to the weight of inbound links.
<Keyword> &	Yahoo and Bing use Keywords for ranking, use keywords that you have on the page.
<Description> meta tag	Though Google does not place a great deal of emphasis on the Meta tags, it's still a significant factor in terms of the description appearing in searches. Also Yahoo and Bing still use this for ranking.
File size	File size does matter in terms of the time it takes to download the page, and will play a key role in ranking. Keep the web page short. If you feel the page is becoming large, consider splitting it into several small web pages.
File Location on Site	File location is important and files that are located in the root directory or near it tend to rank better than files that are buried several levels below.
Sub Domains	Though sub domains (e.g. employment.visualwebz.com ) can have its benefits, having a separate domain is considered the best option.
Top-level domains (TLDs)	Not all TLDs are equal. There are TLDs that are better than others. For instance, the most popular TLD – .com – is much better than .net, .biz, or .info domains but (all equal) nothing beats an old .edu or .org domain.
Hyphens in URLs	Hyphens between the words in an URL increase readability and help with SEO rankings. This applies both to hyphens in domain names and in the rest of the URL.

### 4. Little or no impact on SEO

Keyword Mistypes	If you know that your target keywords have popular misspellings or alternative spellings (i.e. specials or specails), you might be tempted to optimize for them, and include them in the keyword area. In doing so do avoid typos in the main content.
Inbound links from link farms and other suspicious sites	This does not affect you in any way, provided that the links are not reciprocal
JavaScript	If the content is displayed through JavaScript, it will make it more difficult for spiders to follow it. JavaScript is great in moderation, as is everything else.
Images in text	Always include an <alt> tag with a meaningful description of an image but don't stuff it with keywords or irrelevant information, also don't have a page with just images.
URL length	Generally doesn't matter but if it is a very long URL, this starts to look suspicious, so avoid having more than 10 words in the URL (3 or 4 for the domain name itself and 6 or 7 for the rest of address is acceptable).
IP address	Could matter only for shared hosting or when a site is hosted with a free hosting provider, when the IP or the whole C-class of IP addresses is blacklisted due to spamming or other illegal practices.
Adwords and Adsense will boost your ranking	Adwords or Adsence (online advertising) will have no impact on ranking, but will allow your business additional online exposure.

### 5. Bad SEO Practices

Many outgoing links	Google does not like websites with just links, so avoid having WebPages with just links.
<Refresh> meta tag	The <Refresh> meta tag is one way to redirect visitors from your site to another. Only do it if you have recently migrated your site to a new domain and you need to temporarily redirect visitors. When used for a long time, the <refresh> meta tag is regarded as unethical practice and will hurt your ratings. Redirecting using 301 is the best approach.
Hosting downtime	Hosting downtime is directly related to accessibility because if a site is frequently down, it can't be indexed. But in practice this is a factor only if your hosting provider is really unreliable and has less than 97-98% uptime.
Dynamic URLs	Spiders prefer static URLs, though you will see many dynamic pages on top positions. Long dynamic URLs (over 100 characters) are really bad and in any case you'd better use a tool to rewrite dynamic URLs in something more human- and SEO-friendly.
Images instead of text links	Using images instead of text links is bad, especially when you don't fill in the <alt> tag. But even if you fill in the <alt> tag, it is not the same as having a bold, underlined, 16-pt. link, so use images for navigation only if this is really vital for the graphic layout of your site.

### 6. Bad SEO Practices

Keyword dilution	When you are optimizing for an excessive amount of keywords, especially unrelated ones, this will affect the performance of all your keywords and even the major ones will be diluted in the text.
Content separation	From a marketing point of view content separation (based on IP, browser type, etc.) might be great but for SEO it is bad because when you have one URL and differing content, search engines get confused what the actual content of the page is.
Poor coding and design	Search engines say that they do not want poorly designed and coded sites, though there are hardly sites that are banned because of messy code or ugly images but when the design and/or coding of a site is poor, the site might not be index able at all, so in this sense poor code and design can harm you a lot.
Frames	Frames are very, very bad for SEO. Avoid using them unless really necessary.
Flash	Spiders don't index the content of Flash movies, so if you use Flash on your site, don't forget to give it an alternative textual description.
Session IDs	This is even worse than dynamic URLs. Don't use session IDs for information that you'd like to be indexed by spiders.
Bans in robots.txt	If indexing of a considerable portion of the site is banned, this is likely to affect the no banned part as well because spiders will come less frequently to a "noindex" site.

### 7. Bad SEO Practices

Keyword stuffing	Any artificially inflated keyword density (10% and over) is keyword stuffing and you risk getting banned from search engines.
Outbound links to link farms and other suspicious sites	Unlike inbound links from link farms and other suspicious sites, outbound links to bad neighbors can drown you. You need periodically to check the status of the sites you link to because sometimes good sites become bad neighbors and vice versa.
Single pixel links	when you have a link that is a pixel or so wide it is invisible for humans, so nobody will click on it and it is obvious that this link is an attempt to manipulate search engines.
Invisible text	This is a black hat SEO practice and when spiders discover that you have text specially for them but not for humans, don't be surprised by the penalty.
Cloaking	Cloaking is another illegal technique, which partially involves content separation because spiders see one page (highly-optimized, of course), and everybody else is presented with another version of the same page.
Doorway pages	Creating pages that aim to trick spiders that your site is a highly-relevant one when it is not, is another way to get the kick from search engines.
Duplicate content	When you have the same content on several pages on the site, this will not make your site look larger because the duplicate content penalty kicks in (ensure that there are not websites with identical pages, content that virtually the same but has been altered slightly, Product descriptions that are not the same across e-commerce sites, and do not post identical articles on different websites) . To a lesser degree duplicate content applies to pages that reside on other sites but obviously these cases are not always banned – i.e. article directories or mirror sites do exist and prosper.
Redirects (301 and 302)	The target page might not open, or worse – a redirect can be regarded as a black hat technique, when the visitor is immediately taken to a different page.