

How Google finds and reads your site

What Google looks at on your site, what you can change yourself and what no one controls, in plain words.

When someone types a question into Google, Google answers from pages it has already visited and read. This article shows what it reads on your site, so the other search articles make sense. We can't promise rankings, traffic, calls or sales, but knowing this helps you keep each page clear for Google and for customers.

What Google reads on your site

- **Your words and photos.** The text and pictures on each page, the same things a customer sees.
- **How your pages are organized.** The headings on each page, the order things come in, how your menu is arranged and how your pages link to one another.
- **Details behind the page.** A title and short description for your site and for each page, each page's web address, the small icon in the browser tab, the descriptions of your photos (alt text), how fast the page loads and your business details. Customers don't see most of these on the page itself, but search engines can read them.

What you can't control

- **Google's own rules.** Google decides who appears and in what order, and it changes how it decides often. No one can promise you a spot.
- **What Google shows for your page.** Google sometimes swaps in a different title or description than the one you wrote, to show searchers what it thinks is most relevant. That choice is Google's.
- **Hidden items.** Something you hide on a page is still there behind the scenes. Search engines are expected to ignore what visitors can't see, so don't count on hidden text to help.
- **Old tricks.** Some settings screens have a box for a list of search words. Search engines don't use it to place a site, so you can skip it.

Where to start

1. Give each page its own title and description. See [Set a page's search title and description](#).
2. Describe your photos in plain words. See [Write alt text in plain words](#).
3. Make sure your business details are right and match everywhere. See [Check the business details search engines read](#).
4. Run a site check to see what's missing. See [Run a site check and fix what it finds](#).

Good to know

- It can take a while for Google to notice a change on your site.
- Keep the facts current. Hours, address and services that are right and easy to find serve Google and customers alike.
- On Growth plans we go over these things for you every quarter. See [What a quarterly search tune-up is](#).

Need a hand?

Email hello@zossoz.com with your business name, the page, and what you'd like done, and we'll take care of it. We reply within one business day. See [Request a change](#).

Related guides: [Set a page's search title and description](#) · [Write alt text in plain words](#) · [Check the business details search engines read](#) · [Run a site check and fix what it finds](#) · [What a quarterly search tune-up is](#)

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