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SEO starter checklist.

The on-page, technical, local and content basics that help a small business website show up on Google. Tick each one off as you go.

On-page.

- ☐ **Give every page its own title**
Titles are the blue links in Google. Put the main topic first and keep it under about 60 characters.
 - ☐ **Write a description for every page**
Google often shows it under your title, and a clear one wins more clicks.
 - ☐ **Use one clear main heading on each page**
The H1 tells visitors and Google what the page is about at a glance.
 - ☐ **Keep page addresses short and readable**
yoursite.com/services/plumbing is easier to trust, share and understand than a string of numbers.
 - ☐ **Describe your images with alt text**
Google reads it to understand images, and screen readers read it aloud.
 - ☐ **Link your pages to each other with clear words**
Links help Google find every page and show which pages matter most.
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Technical.

- ☐ **Connect Google Search Console and Bing Webmaster Tools**
Both are free. They show which searches find you and warn you when pages cannot be indexed.
 - ☐ **Publish an XML sitemap and submit it**
It lists the pages you want found, so new pages are picked up sooner.
 - ☐ **Check robots.txt does not block important pages**
One wrong line can hide your whole site from search engines.
 - ☐ **Serve every page over HTTPS**
Google uses HTTPS as a ranking signal, and browsers warn visitors on pages without it.
 - ☐ **Make every page work well on a phone**
Google ranks the mobile version of your site, and most visitors arrive on a phone.
 - ☐ **Pass Core Web Vitals**
Loading (LCP), response to taps (INP) and layout shifts (CLS) are how Google measures page experience.
 - ☐ **Set a canonical address for each page**
When one page loads at several addresses, it tells Google which one to rank.
 - ☐ **Fix broken links and redirect old addresses**
A 301 redirect keeps the visitors and links an old page earned, where a 404 loses them.
 - ☐ **Add structured data for your business**
Schema markup such as LocalBusiness, Product or FAQ helps Google understand the page and can earn richer results.
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Local.

- ☐ **Claim and complete your Google Business Profile**
It decides whether you appear in the map results for searches near you.
 - ☐ **Use the same name, address and phone everywhere**
Matching details on your site, profile and directories help Google trust that they are correct.
 - ☐ **Ask happy customers for reviews, and reply to every one**
The number of reviews, their rating and your replies affect local ranking and whether people call.
 - ☐ **Say where you work on your website**
Name the towns, cities or countries you serve, so you can show up for searches there.
 - ☐ **List your business on Bing Places and Apple Business Connect**
They feed Bing search and Apple Maps, where some customers look first.
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Content.

- ☐ **Give each service its own page**
One focused page can rank for that service. A long list on one page rarely does.
 - ☐ **Use the words your customers use**
Search Console and Google's own suggestions show what people type. Use those words naturally.
 - ☐ **Answer the questions customers ask**
Clear answers in plain words match how people search, and save you the same phone call.
 - ☐ **Show who is behind the business**
An about page, real photos, qualifications and examples of your work help people and Google trust you.
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Want it done for you?

Work through the interactive version, which saves your progress and lists your next steps: lilacfragment.co.za/free/seo-checklist/

Lilac Fragment is a South African digital agency. We build websites, Shopify shops and automation, and fix the things on this list. Tell us what you need at lilacfragment.co.za/contact-us.

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Websites, Shopify shops, automation and digital marketing.

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