Technical SEO Checklist (2026)

Forty-one checks we run on every build, in the order they matter. Crawlability first, content last.

1. Crawlability

- [ ] **1.** robots.txt allows the pages you want indexed and blocks nothing important (cart, search results, staging).
- [ ] **2.** No accidental sitewide noindex. Check the header of a live page, not just the CMS setting.
- [ ] **3.** XML sitemap exists, is listed in robots.txt, and is submitted in Search Console.
- [ ] **4.** Sitemap contains only 200-status, indexable, canonical URLs. No redirects, no 404s, no noindex entries.
- [ ] **5.** Crawl budget is not wasted on faceted or parameter URLs that generate near-duplicate pages.
- [ ] **6.** Server responds to Googlebot without rate limiting or a bot challenge. Test with a fetcher, not your browser.

2. Indexation

- [ ] **7.** Every important page has exactly one self-referencing canonical.
- [ ] **8.** Pagination, filters and variants point to a clean canonical rather than to each other in a loop.
- [ ] **9.** Old URLs 301 to the closest live equivalent in a single hop. No chains, no 302s standing in for permanent moves.
- [ ] **10.** www and non-www resolve to one host, on https, with the redirect happening at the edge or server, not in JavaScript.
- [ ] **11.** Search Console Pages report has no unexpected 'Excluded' groups such as 'Crawled - currently not indexed'.
- [ ] **12.** New pages are requested for indexing once published, rather than waiting for the crawl cycle.

3. Site structure and internal linking

- [ ] **13.** Every commercial page is reachable within three clicks of the homepage.
- [ ] **14.** The navigation is HTML links, not JavaScript-only handlers, so crawlers can follow it.
- [ ] **15.** Key pages receive internal links from more than one contextual location, with descriptive anchor text.
- [ ] **16.** Orphan pages are found and either linked or removed. Cross-check analytics landing pages against crawl data.
- [ ] **17.** Breadcrumbs are visible, use the correct markup, and match the URL hierarchy.
- [ ] **18.** Hub pages exist for each service or topic cluster and link down to the detail pages.

4. On-page

- [ ] **19.** Each page has one H1 that says something specific. It is not the logo or the menu label.
- [ ] **20.** Title tags are unique, front-load the primary phrase, and sit in a readable length rather than being truncated.
- [ ] **21.** Meta descriptions read like ad copy and are written per page, not auto-truncated from the first paragraph.
- [ ] **22.** Primary keyword appears in body copy naturally in the first screen, not stuffed into every heading.
- [ ] **23.** Images have descriptive alt text where they carry meaning, and empty alt where they are decorative.
- [ ] **24.** Thin pages are merged, expanded or removed. A page that says nothing is a liability, not an asset.

5. Structured data

- [ ] **25.** Organization markup with correct legal name, logo, URL and social profiles on the homepage.
- [ ] **26.** BreadcrumbList on every page that shows breadcrumbs.
- [ ] **27.** Service, Product or LocalBusiness markup matched to what the page actually is.
- [ ] **28.** Article or BlogPosting markup on editorial pages, with author and date published.
- [ ] **29.** FAQPage markup only where the questions and answers are genuinely visible on the page.
- [ ] **30.** Markup validates in the Rich Results Test with no errors, only acceptable warnings.

6. Performance signals

- [ ] **31.** Core Web Vitals pass in the field, not just in a lab test on your fastest machine.
- [ ] **32.** Hero images are compressed, correctly sized, and served in a modern format.
- [ ] **33.** Fonts are self-hosted or preconnected, with no layout shift when they load.

7. Measurement

- [ ] **34.** Search Console and analytics are both installed and verified with the same property name.
- [ ] **35.** Conversion events are defined and firing: enquiry form, call click, booking, checkout.
- [ ] **36.** Rank tracking covers a defined keyword set you actually intend to win, not vanity terms.
- [ ] **37.** A monthly review exists with an owner and a date. Unowned SEO decays.

8. Content and authority

- [ ] **38.** Every service page answers the question the searcher actually typed.
- [ ] **39.** Case studies link to the services they prove, and services link back to the proof.
- [ ] **40.** Duplicate or overlapping pages are consolidated with redirects rather than left to compete.
- [ ] **41.** Directory, citation and partner links are earned or built deliberately, with no paid link schemes.

How to use this list: run it in order, top to bottom. Crawlability and indexation faults make everything below them pointless, so fix 1 to 12 before writing a single word of new content. If a point cannot be confirmed in five minutes, it is unconfirmed, and it belongs on the fix list.