NativeCode

FREE CHECKLIST · 2026 EDITION

AI search optimization checklist

40 checks to see how ready your site is to be found, understood and cited by ChatGPT, Gemini, Perplexity, Copilot and Google AI answers.

HOW TO USE IT

Score your site in an afternoon.

Work through the six sections with whoever owns SEO and whoever owns the code. Mark each check Yes, Partly or No, then tick the box only when the answer is a clear yes.

Start with sections 01 and 03. If crawlers cannot reach your pages or read your structured data, the content work in later sections cannot pay off.

SECTION 01

Access and crawling

AI assistants can only quote what their crawlers can reach and read.

- [ ] 01 **Robots.txt allows the AI search crawlers you want** — YES PARTLY NO
  Check OAI-SearchBot (ChatGPT search), PerplexityBot, Claude-SearchBot, Bingbot and Googlebot. Training crawlers such as GPTBot, ClaudeBot and Google-Extended are a separate decision. Blocking them does not remove you from Google AI Overviews, which rely on Googlebot.

- [ ] 02 **Your CDN and firewall let them through** — YES PARTLY NO
  Cloudflare and similar services can block AI crawlers at the edge even when robots.txt allows them. Check bot settings and your server logs.

- [ ] 03 **Key content is in the HTML** — YES PARTLY NO
  Many AI crawlers do not run JavaScript. Prices, specs, answers and reviews should be in the server-rendered page, not loaded afterwards.

- [ ] 04 **Important pages return 200 and are indexable** — YES PARTLY NO
  No stray noindex tags, canonicals pointing elsewhere or login walls on pages you want quoted.

- [ ] 05 **Sitemaps are current** — YES PARTLY NO
  XML sitemaps list live URLs with accurate lastmod dates and are submitted in Google Search Console and Bing Webmaster Tools.

- [ ] 06 **Bing is covered** — YES PARTLY NO
  Verify Bing Webmaster Tools and turn on IndexNow. Copilot and some other assistants draw on Bing's index for live answers.

SECTION 02

Entity and brand clarity

AI tools describe brands they can identify with confidence.

- [ ] 07 **One clear description of what you are** — YES / PARTLY / NO
  The same company name, category and one-line description on your site, profiles and directories.

- [ ] 08 **Organization schema with sameAs links** — YES / PARTLY / NO
  Name, logo, URL, contact points and links to official profiles such as LinkedIn, Crunchbase and Wikidata where they exist.

- [ ] 09 **An About page that states facts** — YES / PARTLY / NO
  Founding year, leadership, locations, what you sell and who you serve, written plainly enough to quote.

- [ ] 10 **Named authors with credentials** — YES / PARTLY / NO
  Author pages for the people who write or review content, linked from each article.

- [ ] 11 **Profiles that match** — YES / PARTLY / NO
  Google Business Profile, LinkedIn, review sites and industry directories carry the same name, address, phone and category.

- [ ] 12 **A page for each product and service** — YES / PARTLY / NO
  AI answers cite specific pages. One services page with everything on it rarely gets quoted.

- [ ] 13 **Third-party descriptions are accurate** — YES / PARTLY / NO
  Ask ChatGPT, Gemini and Perplexity about your brand. Fix wrong facts at the source pages they cite.

SECTION 03

Structured data

Schema tells machines exactly what each page is about.

- [ ] 14 **Schema matches the visible page** — YES / PARTLY / NO
  Every value in your JSON-LD also appears on the page. Mismatches cost trust.
- [ ] 15 **Product and Offer data for ecommerce** — YES / PARTLY / NO
  Price, currency, availability, brand, GTIN or SKU, and ratings where you have them.
- [ ] 16 **Article data with dates and authors** — YES / PARTLY / NO
  datePublished, dateModified and author on every article and guide.
- [ ] 17 **FAQPage only where questions are visible** — YES / PARTLY / NO
  Mark up real questions and answers that readers can see. Never add hidden ones.
- [ ] 18 **Breadcrumbs that mirror your navigation** — YES / PARTLY / NO
  BreadcrumbList on every page below the homepage, matching the menu and URL structure.
- [ ] 19 **Validated with no errors** — YES / PARTLY / NO
  Test key templates in Google's Rich Results Test and the Schema.org validator after every release.

SECTION 04

Content built to be quoted

Answers get lifted section by section, so every section has to stand on its own.

- [ ] 20 **Answer first** — YES / PARTLY / NO
  A direct one or two sentence answer under each question-style heading, then the detail.
- [ ] 21 **One topic per page** — YES / PARTLY / NO
  Clear H2 and H3 structure, so any section still makes sense when quoted alone.
- [ ] 22 **Tables, steps and definitions** — YES / PARTLY / NO
  Comparisons in tables, processes in numbered steps and terms defined in one line.

- [ ] 23 **Facts others do not have** — YES PARTLY NO
  Original data, prices, specs, test results or examples from your own work.
- [ ] 24 **Dates and sources on the page** — YES PARTLY NO
  Show last updated dates and link to the sources behind your claims.
- [ ] 25 **Honest comparison pages** — YES PARTLY NO
  Cover X vs Y, best X for Y, pricing and alternatives queries, including where a competitor fits better.
- [ ] 26 **Pages for each use case, industry or location** — YES PARTLY NO
  Match the way buyers phrase their questions, one page per real need.
- [ ] 27 **Key pages refreshed on a schedule** — YES PARTLY NO
  Review your top pages at least quarterly and update facts, prices and dates.
- [ ] 28 **Nothing important hidden** — YES PARTLY NO
  Key content is not locked inside PDFs, images, late-loading tabs or chat widgets.

SECTION 05

Authority and citations

Assistants lean on sources the rest of the web already trusts.

- [ ] 29 **Mentioned where AI tools look** — YES PARTLY NO
  Industry publications, review sites, comparison lists, forums and YouTube channels that answers in your category cite.
- [ ] 30 **Recent, plentiful reviews** — YES PARTLY NO
  A steady flow of reviews on Google and the review sites your buyers use.
- [ ] 31 **Digital PR with real news** — YES PARTLY NO
  Data studies, expert commentary and launches that earn coverage and links.
- [ ] 32 **Know which sources get cited for your prompts** — YES PARTLY NO
  List the pages AI answers cite for your top questions, then earn a place on them.
- [ ] 33 **Internal links point to your best pages** — YES PARTLY NO
  Strong pages link to the pages you most want quoted, with descriptive anchor text.

SECTION 06

Measurement

If you do not measure AI visibility, you cannot tell what is working.

- [ ] 34 **AI referral traffic tracked in GA4**
  A channel group for chatgpt.com, perplexity.ai, gemini.google.com, copilot.microsoft.com and claude.ai.
  YES PARTLY NO

- [ ] 35 **A fixed prompt set**
  25 to 50 real buyer questions, tested monthly in ChatGPT, Gemini, Perplexity, Copilot and Google AI Overviews and AI Mode.
  YES PARTLY NO

- [ ] 36 **Mentions and citations logged**
  Record whether you are named, whether you are linked, which page is cited and which competitors appear.
  YES PARTLY NO

- [ ] 37 **Search Console trends watched**
  Impressions and click-through rate for informational pages, where AI answers change click behavior first.
  YES PARTLY NO

- [ ] 38 **Lead forms ask about AI**
  Add ChatGPT or another AI tool as an option in your how did you hear about us field.
  YES PARTLY NO

- [ ] 39 **Branded search tracked**
  Rising branded search often follows more mentions in AI answers.
  YES PARTLY NO

- [ ] 40 **A quarterly review**
  Compare prompt results, citations, AI referrals and leads each quarter, then pick the next fixes.
  YES PARTLY NO

YOUR SCORE

Count the ticked boxes.

34 to 40	Strong foundation. Focus on authority and on the prompts where competitors still appear instead of you.
24 to 33	Real gaps. Fix the No answers in sections 01 to 03 this quarter, then build the content in section 04.
Under 24	AI tools are likely skipping or misreading your site. Start with crawl access and structured data before writing anything new.

NEXT STEP

Want a second pair of eyes?

NativeCode runs these checks at the start of every SEO and AI search program, then fixes what it finds. Run the free automated audit, or send us your site and we will walk you through the results.

app.nativecode.ai nativecode.ai/company/contact hello@nativecode.ai