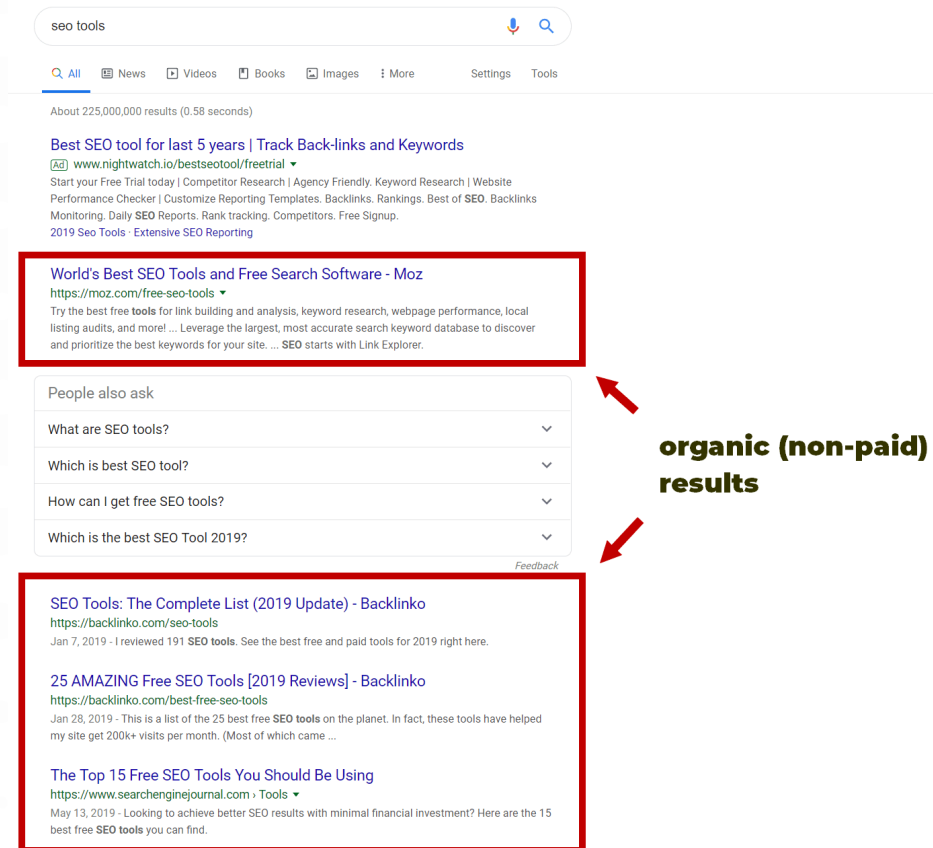


SEO Basics

Are you new to SEO? Do you wonder how it works and what matters most? You're at the right place!

What is SEO?

Search engine optimization (SEO) is a process of improving positions in organic (non-paid) search results in search engines. The higher the website is, the more people see it.



The history of SEO dates back to the 90s when the search engines emerged for the first time. Nowadays, it is an essential marketing strategy and an ever-growing industry.

If you want to learn SEO, you should be ready for a lot of creative, technical and analytical work. There are many techniques with different goals, however, the main point will remain the same – to be among the highest results in organic searches.

Simply said, SEO is about running the right website for the right people.

It isn't only about a perfect structure or technical background of the website. Your website has to be filled with quality and well-optimized content tailored to the needs of your audience.

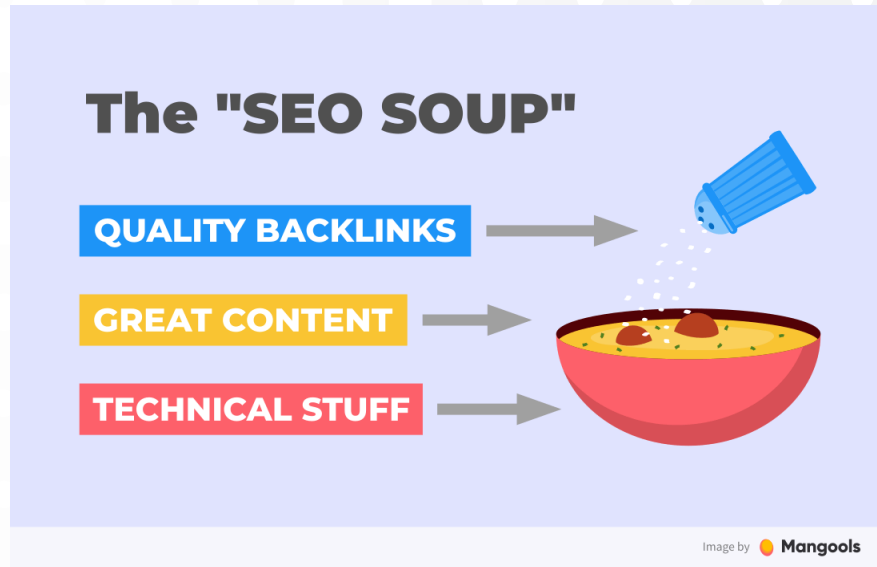
And of course, it has to be good enough to be linked from other websites.

Is SEO difficult?

Search engines such as Google, Bing, Yahoo! and others index websites to create an order based on various ranking algorithms. Can we identify these algorithms? Yes and no.

Google uses more than 200 ranking factors. Though we know many of them: quality content, backlinks, or technical things such as site speed, there are many of them kept as a secret.

Of course, you don't need to know all the factors to rank with your website. To understand what SEO is all about, imagine a bowl of soup. There are three important aspects:



The bowl represents the technical stuff behind the website (technical and on-page SEO) – without proper bowl, the soup would spill all over the table.

The soup represents the content of your website – it is the most important part. Bad content = no rankings, it is that simple.

The seasoning represents the quality backlinks increasing the authority of your website – the last ingredient to make your SEO soup perfect.

The search engines are used by internet users when they are searching for something. And you want to be that "something. It doesn't matter whether you sell a product, service, write a blog, or anything else, search engine optimization is a must.

Your website needs to be indexed by search engines. Otherwise, you're lost.

Wise SEO activities improve your rankings in the search engine results page (SERP). Higher rankings mean higher traffic. If the traffic is engaged, it will bring conversions.

To sum it up, if you plan to succeed with your website, you need to do SEO. Some aspects are more complicated, but very often, the SEO success stands on common sense and a few best practices.

How can I learn SEO? Do I need someone's help?

Even the basic changes can make a huge difference in how search engines see your website. In this ultimate SEO guide for beginners, we'll cover all the critical topics and SEO basics. You'll gain enough knowledge to proceed with SEO on your own.

If you wonder how to learn SEO in 2019, we have a simple answer for you: You'll need a lot of study and practice. The good thing is that you'll find tons of information on the internet for free (including this SEO guide) but you should choose wisely. On top of that, you can attend various courses, classes or webinars.

If you don't want to bother yourself that much or don't have time, you can ask SEO consultants, specialists or agencies for help. Keep in mind that this way won't be for free compared to this guide.

Basic terms vocabulary

On-page vs. off-page SEO

- White hat vs. black hat vs. grey hat SEO
- On-page vs. off-page SEO

Doing On-page (on-site) SEO means optimizing your website to affect the organic search results. It's everything you can do on the website – from content optimization through technical aspects:

- meta tags
- headings
- URL structure
- images optimization
- content
- structured data
- website size and speed

... and many others.

Off-page (off-site) SEO covers all activities you can do to improve the website SEO authority through getting backlinks from other websites. There are many ways to get them:

- email outreach
- guest blogging
- submissions
- social media efforts
- cooperation with influencers
- writing valuable content, so people would love to link to your website

... and many others.

White hat vs. black hat vs. grey hat SEO

Black hats vs. white hats have their origin in Western movies. It's like bad guys vs. good guys. But don't take these words too seriously. Opinions on both SEO approaches tend to differ.

Black hat SEO is a set of unethical practices to improve rankings of a website in the search engine results page. They are designed to affect search engines while not taking human factor into consideration.



BLACK HAT SEO

- cloaking and sneaky redirects
- hidden text
- keyword stuffing
- link manipulation
- irrelevant backlinks
- PBN / link farms
- comment spam

VS



WHITE HAT SEO

- useful, well-written content
- natural links
- brand building
- content strategy
- on-page optimization
- keyword research
- focus on quality

Image by  Mangools

Black hat SEO can get you to the top of the SERP in a short time, however, search engines will most probably penalize and ban the website sooner or later.

Lists of violating practices can be found in Google's Webmaster Guidelines or Bing's Webmaster Guidelines.

White hat SEO is a set of ethical techniques sticking to the guidelines and rules. The basic parts of white hat SEO are:

- quality and relevant content
- overall website optimization
- link building

White hat SEO is a long-term strategy oriented to improve the user

experience. Generally speaking, being a good guy in the world of SEO is considered the proper direction.

There's also a term called the Grey hat SEO, a practice when you may risk less when compared to the Black hat techniques. Grey hat techniques aren't clearly defined by Google so you can gain thousands of website users while not being penalized or lost all your rankings a day after.

Generally speaking, you don't want to make Google your enemy.

Source: Mangools