Joomla SEO
The definitive guide to dominate Top #1 Google with your Joomla site
SEO is a enoumours topic that requires profound knowledge to do it right. With Joomla, you even need more.

If you are lost in the world of SEO, or find it difficult for doing search optimization for Joomla, this guide will have everything you need to start getting back on track with SEO effort.

In this guide, we will comprehensively talk about all of the most needed Joomla SEO technique, tips, tricks and knowledge. We are confident to say that with this ultimate checklist, your Joomla site can dominate top #1 in any search engine.

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Configure Joomla SEO setting

Before taking you through any advanced SEO techniques or mastermind, let's go through all the little things we can optimize in Joomla for SEO.

It may seem long but it's very important for your SEO efforts and will take you about 5 - 10 minutes to do all of it, so be sure don't miss any of those.

Enable Search Engine Friendly URLs (SEF URL)

If you don’t want your URL to look something like this:

It’s hard to read for both humans and search engines, but more importantly, being URL friendly is counted as one of many factors for your site to get a high ranking. Therefore, be sure to enable Search Engine Friendly URLs in the Global setting.

Enable Search Engine Friendly URLs in Joomla

After that, all of your URL will be shortened, and be much more comfortable to read like this:

Remove index.php by using URL Rewriting

To truly achieve what search engine call URL Friendly, you need to remove the index.php at the end of your URL. And the method to get rid of it is simple, just by enabling URL Rewriting in SEO settings.
Enable URL Rewriting in Joomla (only when you have Enable SEF URLs)

However, in some websites, especially new ones, you may have to take an extra step further. And that is renaming the `htaccess.txt` file to `.htaccess` in your Joomla data folder.

Look for the `htaccess.txt` file in your Joomla data folder.
Remember to check back to see whether you have 404 error or not.

Note: Refer to these guidelines to change the name if you are not using Apache Servers.
  + For IIS 7 users
  + For Nginx users

Read more: SEF URLs - The complete guide from Joomla to SEO

Remove ID in URL
Joomla Default automatically adds a number in your URL as a counting mechanism. Majority of Joomla users and any SEO optimization guideline thinks its bad for your site. We also think that too. So let’s get rid of it. (if you have it on your site).

From Joomla 3.8, you can easily get it done with less effort.

Step 1: Go to Content/Articles then choose the "Options" button

Step 2: Click the "Integration" tab.

Step 3: Set URL Routing to "Modern".

Step 4: Set Remove IDs from URLs to "Yes".

Check back and see the result.

Configure the URL Routing in Integration Tab

[Image of Joomla configuration settings]
These are the steps for article's URL. I recommend you configure similar settings towards other pages like Contacts, News Feed, and Users.

Enable Gzip Compression in Joomla

Enabling this setting will make your website load faster. It works like a zip application when it asks your server to compress your file before sending them to the receiver. So, smaller files, better load speed.

Here is how you enable the setting.

Go to: **System/ Global Configuration** then find **Server Tab/ Enable Gzip Page compression**
Enable GZip Compression in Joomla 3

Note: You can check your site GZip Compression with many online applications such as this one.

![HTTP Compression Test](image)

Checking GZip compression setting with HTTP Compression Test

The results after enabling the setting is astonishing I must say - up to 77.5% file size reduction.
Other options on Joomla SEO setting

**SEO Settings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>No</th>
</tr>
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<td>Search Engine Friendly URLs</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Use URL Rewriting</td>
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<td>Add Suffix to URL</td>
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<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site Name in Page Titles</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

{} **Other settings in Joomla SEO you can use**

Besides that, there are some other things in **Joomla SEO basic setting** that you could pay attention to.

- **Add Suffix to URL**: not recommend since it will make your URL longer.
- **Unicode Alias**: if your URL use Non-Latin character, you should use it
- **Site name In Page Title**: It’s a good way to spread your brand name via a search result, however, if any of your title is too long, it can’t be displayed.
Recommended Joomla SEO Extension - Plugin

When it comes to SEO, there are countless tools or application go along the way. In Joomla, this is no exception. Our job is to determine which one is worth your money.

You can check out these Joomla SEO tools, which are most recommended by the Joomla community,

- EFSEO: Excellent choice if you want to manage all your metadata conveniently.
- Sh404sef: The most Complete SEO tool in Joomla, it can be seen as the Joomla version of Yoast SEO. Frequently update to latest Google changes.
- SEO-generator: Focus on metadata configuration. It’s simple to use.
- RSSEO: A handy Joomla SEO extension when you can do almost anything with it beside basic setting such as: generate sitemap, monitoring keywords, Google Analytic integration and so on.

For maximizing your efforts doing SEO, it’s best to have one of these tools.
Prepare your site for measurement

SEO or not, you will need to track your site constantly to see the overall health of your site through various metrics (session, bounce rate, time on site, etc).

And there is no other tool that is free, easier to implement and more powerful than the duo: **Google Analytics** and **Search Console**.

While Google Analytics gives you details of how your website is doing, Search Console focuses on analyzing organic traffic, and site technical problems.

**Read more**: [How to Add Google Analytics to your Joomla site](#)
Keyword Research

When you have done configuring all the Joomla Basic SEO setting, adding Google Analytics to your site, your next step is making the actual SEO plan.

**Keyword research is the first chapter in your SEO plan**, it will not just determine what should you focus on but also what you need to leave behind. So with careful research, you can maximize all of your resources to its full capacity.

In this section, I am not going into details of how you actually research it because it is pretty much everywhere, and there are better articles for it like this one by Backlinko. I will just remind or summarize for you the essential parts in keyword research.

1. Research and find a topic that relates the most to your business

Before you start with any keyword research tools, let’s take a closer look at your business, your customers or targeted audience. **Find out what topic they are talking about, what topic they are searching for when they don’t search directly for your service or your product.**

For example: if you are doing business in spa and massage services, your customer may look for back pain solutions or stress relief topics first. And they may be the topics to focus more on besides topics about spa and massage.

By doing this, it will be easier to come up with keywords idea.

2. Do not rely solely on any single keyword research tool.

Keyword research tool nowadays is pretty accurate, but with each tool comes a different mechanism for researching. Not only that, do you know there is approximately **15% of a daily search query that has never been searched before?**

Therefore, to have a really thorough keyword research list, besides any tool, you should ask your customers, read the forum, or even come up with your own ideas, and so on. **Combine all methods and tools you could do for a complete keyword list.**

Some of the most effective and free keyword tools you should pay attention to:

- Google suggest system
- Google Keyword planner
- **Keyword everywhere**
- Ubersuggest
- **Keywordtool.io**
- **Answer the public**
Google suggest system is a great method for keyword research

And very useful premium tools:
- Ahrefs
- Semrush
- Moz

3. Pay more attention to long-tail keyword

Long-tail keywords have low search volume but it is often close to the customers action, and brings more conversion. Meanwhile, 1 or 2-word length queries can generate up to a thousand searches a month but they also come with various intentions which usually is an informational search.

4. Be sure to also research LSI keyword

LSI keywords or latent semantic indexing keywords are keywords that are related to your main term keywords.
For example: If your service is selling car, and your main keyword is “car”, then your LSI keywords could be: “BMW”, “Engine”, “motor” etc. It will let the search engines know that your page is talking about cars, the vehicle but not “Car” a Disney Animation.

Search Engine is getting smarter every day, **LSI keyword is an essential factor to determine your SEO ranking.**
Best way to come up with article ideas.

When you have done your keyword research, you may have come up with some topics and articles to begin with. However, to be sure you and your customer are thinking the same thing, you have to **pay attention to its search intent, the real reason behind any query.**

It’s usually come in 4 different categories for a search intent.

- **Information**: when they want to know more about something.
- **Navigation**: when they want to look for a specific website. We often type Facebook on Google is one popular example for this case.
- **Transaction**: when they want to buy something.
- **Commercial intent**: when they search various things about the products such as price, best ones, etc to decide what they will buy in the future.

The best way to find out what they are really means, **let’s search for yourself and look for the top 10 search results in Google.** It will tell you accurately about what the searchers usually want with that query.

After that, you will have a list of all the topic you need to cover in your article.
Google Top 10 Result is closest to user intent
On-Page SEO

Optimize every ranking factor for search engine within your site. The nice thing about On-Page SEO is you get 100% control over it.

Page Title

**Insert your targeted keywords** in your title, the number of characters for a **page title should 60 -70 character** to be displayed fully in search engine.

Also, come up with great and attractive search titles will help you increase the CTR - Click through rate. The higher the CTR, the better your search ranking.

To change Page title in **Joomla**, there are 2 ways:

**For a Menu**: Go to Page Display Tab In Menu Item

![Menus: Edit Item](image)

**Change Page Title for a Menu in Joomla**

**For an article**: Go to Options Tabs then change the Browser Page Title at the end.
Meta Description

Like Page Title, you should include your keywords in your meta description and limit it to 160 characters for full display. Although not being counted as a ranking factor, meta description helps you increase your CTR.

In Joomla, you can change the meta description for your Article and Menu. Here is how:

For Article, you will find the Meta Description field in Publishing Tab
For Menu, you can change the Meta Description under Metadata Options.

URL Optimization
In Joomla, your URL may be very unfriendly for both humans and search bots. However, if you have configured your Joomla SEO settings like above, you have nothing to worry about.

Beside basic settings, there are 2 important things you need to be assured of your URL
+ Insert keywords in your URL.
Keep your URL short and understandable.

For example, an optimized URL for keyword “joomla-seo” will look like this: www.joomlashine.com/joomla-seo.html

You can read this guide for more detailed information.

Image Optimization

Having images in your content not only enrich your information, they make it easier to understand for your reader but also offer extra value for SEO.

If you tend to upload your images, be sure to follow this best practice:

- **Fill in your Image Alt Tag/ Title** - Make it easier to understand for your reader. You should have your keyword in your Alt Tag/ Title but avoid keyword stuffing.

- **Optimize your Image size**. Nice, quality image is good, but it often comes with enormous size and results in slow load speed. This problem will directly affect your site UX, and SEO. There are various free solutions that will help you solve this problem by reducing the size of your image significantly and still keep your image quality. I could name a few such as: TinyPng or ImageOptim.

In Joomla, even default content editor like TinyMCE or JCE Editor have a function to insert Alt Tag/ Title nicely. With the upcoming Joomla 4 version, you can also edit, resize an image within your back end.

Video

Apart from being a great way to demonstrate your idea, providing video within your content will **significant boosts your reader dwell time** or **time on site**, a ranking factor.

Even if you can’t produce original work, put on other videos relevant to your content in the form of Youtube links could also be a plus point for SEO.

Internal link

Their initial purpose is for website navigation. When coming to content, it’s also a method for reference. For a search engine, it provides a clear path for search bot, past “ranking power” from one site to another, and prolongs the user’s session.

Despite its great benefits, over or uncarefully inserting internal link will do your SEO effort, and website navigation more harm than good. So, how do you best use it:
+ **Create internal links that are natural for the reader.** It means that the link you create must fit with the context, and not something you try to force into it.

+ **Use relevant anchor text**

+ **Set a Do-follow link.** A No-follow link will block search bots to crawl your site.

+ **Don’t insert internal link for the sake of numbers.**

### Outbound link

Contrast to internal link, an outbound link is just for reference. Some may fear that giving outbound links will transfer your “ranking power”, making your reader wander to other sites. It’s true but it’s not as negative as you think, and only occurs when you give the link a Do-follow instruction.

Therefore, in the case of outbound link, **you should use No-follow link, and keep it in a reasonable number.** However, it is much better for your reader when you have a solid reference for what you write. And that is the most important. After all, there is the saying: “Giving is receiving”

### Clear navigation on your site

Your website design may look amazing with all the meaningful content in the world. That’s great, however, when your reader or customer can’t find what they want due to the un-logical, messy structure of your site, it will make all of your hard work in vain.

With Joomla, **you can make a deep site structure with ease thanks to the logical Menu/Menu item system.** So you only need to think of how to create a logical, unconfuse sitelink structure:

+ **Think ahead of your hierarchy structure**

+ **The number of the main categories should be from 2 - 7.** (For most business, information site)

+ **Don’t try to deepen your site link structure when it’s not necessary.** **3 level in depth is often enough.**
Joomla Menu system helps you easily create clear navigation

Mobile-friendly, responsive design

According to Techjury research, 40% of people search only on a smartphone. That number speaks for itself. Moreover, Google has released Mobile-first indexing in 2018, which is a search algorithm that crawls and indexes website based on how it renders on a mobile device. This put a ton of weight on the value of how mobile-friendly your website is.

Therefore, the ability to adapt to any mobile screen is a critical factor for any website. If you are using Joomla, it’s best to look for responsive Joomla templates or any Joomla extension that helps you create a mobile-friendly site.
Page speed

The faster page loading speeds, the better page ranking. Not to mention how irritating it would be if your site takes forever to load.

Thus, you should invest your time, and effort to improve your site loading speed to its best. Start with checking the current situation of your loading speed. Page speed insight is a great tool for this job.

In Joomla, you can enable Gzip Compression and Caching System for better page speed. Besides, there are many conventional ways will help you further increase your site loading speed:

+ Choosing reliable hosting
+ Using CDN
+ Minimize the use of blocking JavaScript/ Render-blocking CSS
+ Optimize Image Size
+ Using Joomla page speed optimized extensions
+ Using AMP for your mobile device version.

Read more: 8 Tips to Speed Up Your Joomla 3.x Website
Off-Page SEO

Off-Page SEO activity focuses on how you generate traffic and backlink through others site.

FYI, **backlink** is a link on another site that to your site. It's an important factor to determine your ranking for any search engine.

Participating in community forums

This is an act of **providing extra valuable information, answered to a specific topic through the online community** (forum, blog, social platform) in exchange for traffic, backlink or brand name mention.

The most popular platform you can look at to is Quora and Reddit, but any similar platform or forum in your industry or country could work too. However, be sure to **follow all the rules and regulations of the website**, and **don't be greedy for links** (you are likely to get banned!).

The most important thing is that **your answer or contributing content must have real value** or else it will be overlooked.

Social Sharing

**Create your online presence wherever your targeted customers are** because social media like Facebook, Twitter, etc could be a potential way to generate huge traffic, which is one of the most important ranking signals.

**Share your new content**, or **curate your content in a different form** (picture, infographic, video, etc) is how you can optimize social sharing for traffic. Sadly, social links don’t count as backlink because they will automatically get no-follow instruction.

Guest blogging

A popular and effective way to do Off-Page SEO. By **providing valuable content on other sites that are related to your business**, you can have a solid source of traffic and backlink through your site. Aim for high ranking, trusted site and offer for a guest blog. **The better the site is, the better the backlink you will get.**

Here is a brief guideline of how you progress the activity:

**Step 1**: Find guest post opportunity
**Step 2**: Contact with the site you want to do a guest blog to request.
**Step 3**: If you have granted a request, prepare the guest blog.
**Step 4**: Post and monitor the result it brings to your site.
Here is the more ultimate detail guide on how you do a guest blogging for Off-Page SEO

**Note:** In order for this guest blog to work, you**r guest blog site and your site need to be in the same industry.** You can't ask for a car guest blog in a real estate site.
Technical SEO

SEO for Joomla or any CMS require technical optimization beside content making and link building.

Use SSL - Https

SSL or Secure Sockets Layer is a security advanced technology that creates an encrypted link between a web server and a browser. You can tell if a site has this security technology or not by spotting the if there is any Https in your URL. (Not Http)

Google has put more weight in ranking for a site that enables https than sites that don’t use a long time ago. And in 2018, Google’s Chrome browser will make an extra step when marking not Https site as not secure.

So make sure your Joomla site has used SSL - Https

Create a Sitemap for your Joomla site

A sitemap is an XML file that has all your website URL arranged in a logical hierarchy. With a sitemap, search engine bot can crawl your site faster and effectively.

To create a sitemap in Joomla, you can use an online sitemap generator or a Joomla Sitemap creator extension.

Add structured data markup (microdata)

A systematic code added to your website to help search engines better understand the content on it. If implemented successfully, beside title, url, and meta description, you can display extra information like the picture below. Depending on your type of structure data, the extra information can be displayed differently.

This method can significantly enhance your CTR, generate more traffic to your site.


https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Avengers_(2012_film) 

Marvel's The Avengers or simply The Avengers, is a 2012 American superhero film based on the Marvel Comics superhero team of the same name, produced by ...

Story by: Zak Penn; Joss Whedon  Production company: Marvel Studios
Produced by: Kevin Feige  Release date: April 11, 2012 (El Capitan Theat...

Plot · Cast · Production

With structure data, there are more information get displayed.
Read more: 7 questions and answers about how to use Microdata in Joomla

Consider using AMP for your site

**AMP** or **Accelerated Mobile Pages** is an open-source project aimed at allowing mobile website content to load nearly instantly. It strips down all styled design code, leaves only what is essential for the reader which are text, image, and video.

However, if your source of traffic comes mainly through desktop or not by blog reader, using AMP doesn’t bring much impact, and could be a waste of resources.

To implement AMP for your Joomla Site, either you hired an experienced developer in this field or using a Joomla extension.

Read more: Top 3 AMP extensions in Joomla

Duplicate content issue in Joomla

Duplicate content issue in Joomla is a tricky problem since the CMS itself has so many ways to generate the issue:

- A page is reachable from multiple menu items.
- URL generates from Joomla Editor preview feature
- Included index.php or index.html at the end of a URL.

So, you need to be cautious of this issue since it will harm your SEO efforts badly. Your solutions to prevent this issue in Joomla are:

- Prevent multiple URL creation from one page
- Add a canonical link to every main content

Read more: 9 Dos and Don’ts when solving duplicate content in Joomla
Bonus: Joomla vs WordPress – Which one is better for SEO?

The thing I notice when start using Joomla is that people often doubt the SEO for Joomla could be harder than WordPress.

Is it true? Well, until now, with my experience and research, I can confidently say that there is no CMS is better for SEO than the other. Both has its own advantages and disadvantages.

While Joomla has an SEO setting come right out of the box such as Search Engine Friendly URL, or the flexibility to change title or meta description, WordPress, on the other hand, its SEO ability relies on SEO extensions like Yoast SEO.

To be frank, Joomla SEO extension is very good, has all the function you needed, but not as optimize in UI/UX like their counterpart on WordPress.

However, the most important point I want you to remember is that Google or any Search Engine has only one purpose:

“To organize the world’s information and make it universally accessible and useful”

To achieve this goal, hundreds of ranking factors, algorithms have been created. Just to make sure that with each search query we put in, there are meaningful answers pop up in the Search Result Page.

Therefore, you don’t need to care about which CMS is better than which. What you need to concentrate on is your content, your user experience. Is your page answer the search query intent? is it easy to read and browsing?

With the upcoming era of machine learning, the content related factor will be even more emphasized.

Bottom line, you can feel free to develop any website with Joomla, the ability to SEO is not affected.
In Summary,

Joomla SEO or Search engine optimization in any CMS or website management platform will never be an easy job to do. There is a multi-billion dollar industry built around this topic to help any website dominate the top ranking in Google.

It requires a clear strategy, hard work, dedication and countless tips and tricks to do the job right. I hope with this guide, you will have an overview of what needs to do to SEO your Joomla Site for Top #1 in Google or any search engine.