



Get Started With Keyword Research

Somewhere along the line, you've probably heard about the value of "putting yourself in another's shoes." As it turns out, that notion applies to SEO too.

Learning what your customers are searching for and *why* is crucial to increasing your content's ranking and visibility.



Table of Contents

● **UNLOCKING SEARCH INSIGHTS**

● **GET STARTED:**

Identifying Keywords

● **GET TARGETED:**

Discover Search Intent

● **GET REFINED:**

Analyze Keyword Value

● **GET RESULTS:**

Apply Keyword Strategy

Unlocking Search Insights

When ranking pages, search engines look for content containing words people are likely to use in a search. But how do you find out what exactly your customers are searching for?

Some simple keyword research can help you find out.

Get Started: Identify Keywords

Even if you have some keywords in mind already, research will help you fine-tune your ideas and determine if they're aligned with actual search terms your customers use.

HERE'S HOW TO BEGIN BUILDING A KEYWORD LIST:

● Consider Your Goals

Identify which pages on your site would help you reach your business goals if they received more traffic.

Then head to [Google Trends](#) and see if your pages line up with what real people are looking for.

● Brainstorm Keywords

Based on the content of your target pages and insight from Google Trends, what are some realistic phrases people might type into a search engine?

Browsing social media can help you expand your list and see what your audience is *actually* looking for. You can also use AI to help you identify and group possible keywords.

● Scope Out the Competition

Plug potential keywords into Google to see what companies appear in the top results.

Use [Ahrefs Site Explorer](#) to see which keywords generate the most organic traffic for those competitors.



Get Targeted: Discover Search Intent

Keyword research solves the question of “what” your customers are searching for. However, that still leaves the question of “why” they’re searching.

This “why” is called **search intent**. Understanding intent helps shape the type of content you create, how you craft it, and where you put it.



FIVE TYPES OF SEARCH INTENT TO OPTIMIZE FOR

1

Informational

These are people looking for answers to queries like, “How many teaspoons in a tablespoon?” or “How do I ask for a raise?”

2

Navigational

These people type the name of a site, or a page within that site, directly into the address bar.

3

Transactional

These are users who already know what they want and are looking for the best place to get it. Keywords for this intent include brand, product, or service names.

4

Commercial Investigation

Searchers use commercial keywords when they’re narrowing down choices. They’re looking for reviews, advice, or guidance (i.e., “the best”).

5

Local

Nearly half of all searches come from people looking for something nearby or within a specific service area. Use this opportunity to do some [local keyword research](#).



Intrigued? [Learn more about search intent.](#)



Get Refined: Analyze Keyword Value

You've created your keyword list — congratulations! Now, you can dive into metrics and refine which keywords to use with tools like [Ahrefs' Keyword Explorer](#).

MAKING THE MOST OF THE METRICS



Monthly Search Volume

The average number of people who search for a particular keyword in a month, MSV indicates how many people might see your page if it lands on the first results page.



Clicks

This metric indicates the number of people who click a link after searching for a specific term. A number close to the monthly search volume suggests that most searchers are clicking through to a page. A very low number suggests that SERP features may sufficiently answer the query, resulting in little potential for organic traffic.



Traffic Potential

Gauge how much traffic top-ranking pages attract for a specific keyword.



Keyword Difficulty

Look at this metric to estimate how hard it is to rank in the top ten for a search term. Easy keywords might give you a higher rank, but fewer people search for them. Difficult keywords might take time and resources to rank for, but can dramatically increase organic traffic. Learn more with our [keyword difficulty guide](#).



Get Results: Apply Keyword Strategy

So you have your keywords. Now what?

MEET YOUR CUSTOMERS WHERE THEY ARE

Based on your goals, you can map your keywords to where your customers are in the buyer's journey, so your content not only ranks well, but builds trust and authority at each stage.

Awareness

🔍 Example Search Keyword: "How to buy a house"

- Top-of-the-funnel (ToFu) buyers don't know much about your brand. Opt for keywords that build awareness and incorporate them into blog posts with informational or instructional content.

Consideration

🔍 Example Search Keyword: "Best realtors near me"

- Middle-of-the-funnel (MoFu) customers are considering taking action. To help people move closer to choosing you, include keywords in deeper-level informational content like: benefits, outcome statements, blog articles, service pages, and case studies.

Decision

🔍 Example Search Keyword: "Schedule a showing"

- Bottom-of-the-funnel (BoFu) customers are ready to buy. Focus keywords on product pages to connect them directly to your offerings.

Establish a regular publishing schedule to see what's working. Adjust as needed and repeat!



Turning Insights Into Action

Ready to increase organic traffic?

Schedule a free site consultation to learn how leveraging SEO can help your business thrive.

LET'S TALK →

Already a Victorious Customer?

Ask your [Customer Success Manager](#) about our Search Intent Optimization service.

Get Refined: Analyze Keyword Value

- [Ahrefs Webmaster Tool](#)
- [Answer the Public](#)
- [Google Trends](#)
- [Keyword Generator](#)
- [Keyword Difficulty Checker](#)
- [QuestionDB](#)
- [SpyFu](#)

Expand Your Knowledge

[How to Craft High-Quality Content](#)

[How to Build Keyword Groups for a More Robust SEO Strategy](#)

[How to Use Google Trends for SEO](#)