

The SEO Migration Checklist

A printable, phase-by-phase checklist for protecting and enhancing SEO through a website redesign or platform migration.

Companion to “The SEO Migration Playbook.” Print it, work through each phase in order, and don't move to the next phase until the current one is signed off.

Client / Project _____

Migration Date _____

Prepared By _____

Reviewed By _____

Old Platform _____

New Platform _____

Phase A — Pre-Design Audit & Discovery

Complete before a single wireframe is built. Corresponds to Playbook Steps 1–5.

✓	Task	Verify With	Owner / Date
☐	SEO blueprint drafted and formally approved before wireframes start	Signed-off blueprint / project brief	
☐	GSC and GA access confirmed (admin or full read)	Access granted in-platform	
☐	16+ months of GSC history exported (clicks, impressions, position)	GSC Performance report export	
☐	16+ months of GA landing-page and conversion data exported	GA4 Explore export	
☐	Manual actions and security issues checked and resolved	GSC Security & Manual Actions	
☐	Full Screaming Frog crawl completed and saved	Screaming Frog crawl file	
☐	Backlink and keyword export pulled and cross-checked against crawl	Ahrefs / Semrush export	
☐	Reconciled master URL list built from crawl + GSC + sitemap	Combined spreadsheet, not sitemap alone	
☐	Business analysis completed: priority services, markets, competitor gaps	Stakeholder interview notes	
☐	Full page-copy export saved as single source of truth	Copy export file, timestamped	
☐	Ranking keyword set assigned to every existing URL	GSC + rank tracker data	

Phase B — URL Structure & Keyword Planning

Complete before slugs are finalized in design. Corresponds to Playbook Step 6.

✓	Task	Verify With	Owner / Date
☐	New URL taxonomy drafted around search intent and entities	URL map v1 vs. old sitemap	
☐	URL changes limited to what's structurally necessary	Change count vs. total URL count	
☐	Keyword and entity research completed before slugs are finalized	Keyword research doc	
☐	New URL list checked against old ranking URLs for 1:1 feasibility	Mapping spreadsheet	

Phase C — Copy Rewrite & Redirect Mapping

Complete before development begins building redirect rules. Corresponds to Playbook Steps 7–8.

✓	Task	Verify With	Owner / Date
☐	AI rewrite brief includes old copy, ranking keywords, and house guidelines	Prompt / brief document	
☐	Every rewritten page checked against original ranking terms and entities	Side-by-side old vs. new copy	
☐	Existing FAQ/Q&A content already earning citations is rebuilt, not dropped	AI citation log / old FAQ export	
☐	One-to-one redirect map built: old URL → new URL → type → signal to verify	Redirect map spreadsheet	
☐	No orphaned URLs default-redirected to the homepage	Redirect map audit	
☐	Redirect map reviewed for chains, loops, and dead ends before launch	Screaming Frog list-mode crawl of map	

Phase D — SEO & AEO Enhancement

Complete during template build, alongside development. Corresponds to Playbook Step 9.

✓	Task	Verify With	Owner / Date
☐	Schema rebuilt per template type (Product, Article, FAQPage, Org, Breadcrumb)	View source / schema testing tool	
☐	FAQ answers written as self-contained, directly quotable answers	Manual editorial review	
☐	llms.txt coverage reviewed for completeness, not just presence	llms.txt file audit	
☐	Internal linking mirrors the old site's link-equity flow	Screaming Frog internal link report	
☐	Core Web Vitals checked on new templates (not the old site's scores)	PageSpeed Insights / CrUX	
☐	Robots.txt and XML sitemap updated for the new structure	robots.txt + sitemap.xml review	
☐	GA4 and conversion tracking re-implemented and test-fired	GA4 DebugView / test events	

Phase E — Launch Day QA

Complete on launch day, before the old site is decommissioned or DNS is fully cut over.

✓	Task	Verify With	Owner / Date
☐	New site fully crawlable — no accidental noindex or disallow	Screaming Frog crawl of staging/live	
☐	Redirect map live and spot-checked on real URLs	Manual spot-check, 20+ sample URLs	
☐	XML sitemap submitted in Search Console	GSC Sitemaps report	
☐	Canonical tags verified on new templates	Screaming Frog canonical report	
☐	All schema types validated	Google Rich Results Test	
☐	GA4 and GSC confirmed receiving live data	Real-time reports, both platforms	

Phase F — Post-Launch Monitoring

Complete on the fixed schedule below. Corresponds to Playbook Step 10.

✓	Task	Verify With	Owner / Date
☐	Day 1: Crawlability, redirect spot-check, and analytics confirmed live	GSC Coverage + GA4 Real-time	
☐	Day 7: Indexing status checked; “Discovered – not indexed” flags reviewed	GSC Page Indexing report	
☐	Day 30: Rankings compared against pre-migration keyword set	Rank tracker vs. Step-5 baseline	
☐	Day 90: Organic sessions and conversions compared to same period last year	GA4 vs. historical export, seasonality-adjusted	

Rule of thumb: a phase is not “done” until every box is checked and the Owner/Date column is filled in. An unchecked box left behind is the most common reason migrations lose rankings quietly.