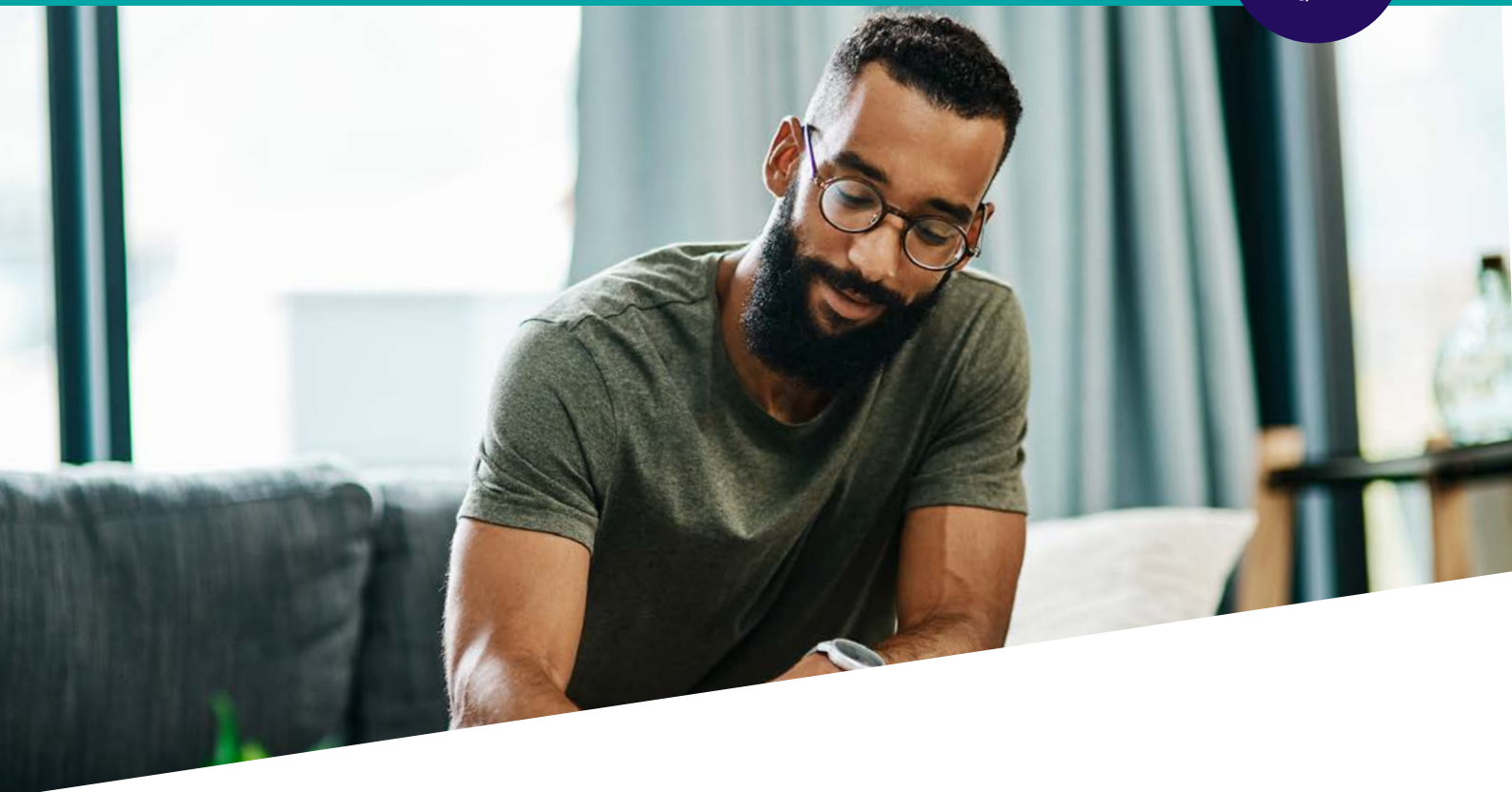**THE UK DOMAIN**
by NOMINET

# 10 SEO Tips
**to help write content that ranks in Google**

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## DEFINITION

### Search term

Search terms or keywords are the words and phrases people use to find what they're looking for online, so commonly what they type into search engines like Google.

## DEFINITION

### Keyword research

Analysing search data, trends and broader data sets to identify the search terms you want your content to show up against.

# START

**1. Start with strategy: Build strong foundations by identifying a key search term first**

Start with a search term you want to rank for and then cover everything the searcher would want answered. In comparison to writing an article first then trying to fit a keyword in, you'll end up with a much better piece of content and likely include additional related keywords which you stand a strong chance of ranking for.

To identify the right search term, you'll need to **conduct keyword research**.

# DISCOVER

## 2. Discover the intent behind the search term to ensure your content aligns

To rank for a term, your content must not only comprehensively answer the searcher's question but also match their intent.

For example, if you're Googling *"how long to boil an egg"*, you'll likely be looking for a quick answer and may not even click on a search result as Google often presents the answer
in a rich snippet above any other result.

Whereas if you Google *"learn python online"*, chances are you likely want access to an in-depth online course.
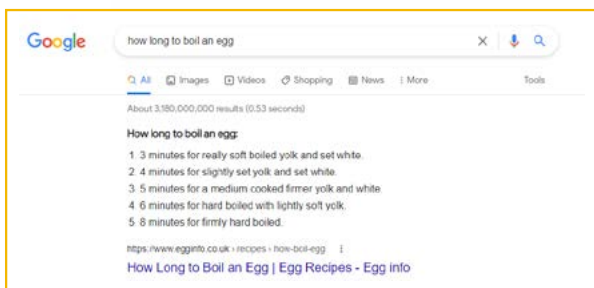
# SET-UP

## 3. Set-up internal links in and out of the content to build a network of SEO benefits

Based on the academic model of citations, links pointing to your content is a way to flag to Google the importance of the page. One way to achieve this is by having internal links going across your site.

**DEFINITION**

### Citations

A citation is a way to flag certain material originated from another source. Typically, this appears as a number in the content which references a list showcasing the original work title, author's name and year of publication. In SEO, a citation is a mention of your business' name and contact details from a third-party website and is thought to be a key ranking factor for local SEO.

You get additional brownie points for matching the link anchor text to the target search term – just make sure you do this in moderation.

# INCLUDE

## 4. Include your search term in the title, meta title and description to produce easy SEO wins

If you start by writing your piece around a search term, you should have already naturally included your target term within the title, meta title and description.

It's worth noting your meta title and description is what shows up in your Google result and can be configured to be different to your page title (which auto populates as your meta title) through the use of SEO plugin tools like **Yoast**.

All three act as another flag to Google that your content matches what the searcher is looking for. In addition, Google bolds the searcher's search term to matching phrases in your title and description helping to boost your click-through rate.
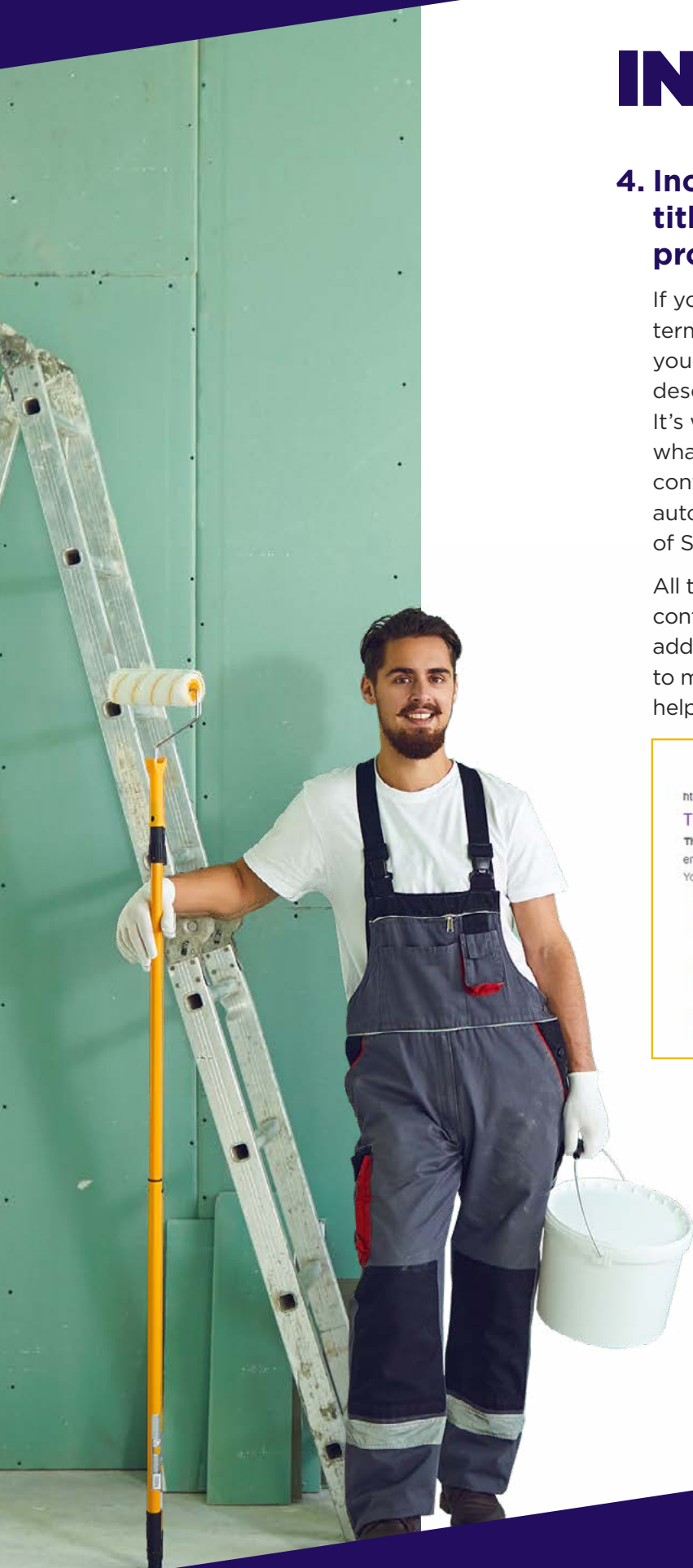
# IMPROVE

## 5. Improve your click-through rate (CTR) by looking at your metadata copywriting

The click-through rate of content (percentage of searches clicking on your result in Google) plays a big part in your ranking position.

One easy way to boost this is by ensuring your meta titles and descriptions are enticing. Building in curiosity alongside numbers, brackets, power words and emotion all help with this.

In an ideal world, your search term would also be front loaded (included at the start). A good litmus test is asking yourself: *"Would I click on this?"* A quick search of the target search term will show you what you're up against.

# BOOST

## 6. Boost your CTR even further by ensuring your URL, meta title and description are within the permitted limits

Ideally, you want your URL to be as short as possible, perhaps just being your search term (and never containing capital letters or spaces). Meta titles and descriptions are truncated (shortened) by Google if they go beyond a certain length.

Typically, titles are limited to 50-60 characters and descriptions at 155-160 characters. This helps the readability to boost your click-through rate further.

# MAGNIFY

## 7. Magnify the UX (User Experience) signals you send by optimising your introduction

*Pogo-sticking* is a term used by Google to describe when someone clicks on a search result before immediately bouncing back to the results page. This flags to Google the visitor didn't find what they were looking for.

In addition, *dwell time* is the time the user remains on your site. Not only does a high *dwell time* act as a SEO **friendly flag**, but from my own experience has typically resulted in a better conversion rate as you have a longer duration to sell to your users.

Both can be boosted through getting to the heart of your content quickly. Whilst introductions can be a great way to introduce a topic or build excitement, all too often they labour on for too long.

# IMPROVE READABILITY

### 8. Improve your readability by keeping your paragraphs short

A factor Google has recently started to weigh more heavily is UX (User Experience). One way to negatively impact this is by using long paragraphs which form as walls of text and make content hard to read.

In addition, Google recently switched to mobile first indexing. This means when reviewing your content, they view it through the eyes of a mobile device which typically has a far narrower screen. This can cause paragraphs of text to appear even longer for the viewer.

Personally, when writing web content, I try to keep the content at three paragraphs or less (on desktop when live on a webpage) which I find works well enough on smaller mobile devices.

# BREAK UP

## 9. Break up your content to improve your readability and SEO

Not only do subtitles break up your content making it far easier for users to comprehend (boosting *dwell time* and reducing *pogo-sticking*), when your target search term is held within a heading tag (e.g. <h1>,<h2>,<h3> etc.) it acts as another positive flag to Google.

Making these subtitles benefit driven boosts your content further. Find out more about the **features vs benefits approach**.

# SPEED UP

## 10. Speed up your site, improve SEO and adhere to usability standards by optimising your images

**Page Speed continues to be a key SEO ranking factor**. In addition to the SEO benefits, a fast-loading page has been proven to increase *dwell time* and conversion rates.

The easiest optimisations typically come from imagery. Large images even if resized in the content editor often still load full size, meaning a user may download a 2MB+ image only for it to reveal a small icon.

Hence, you're better off uploading an image already at the required dimensions. Furthermore, compressing the image ahead of uploading often results in an even smaller file size with little to no detrimental effects on the image itself.

Both resizing and compression can be achieved quickly using a free service like **Squoosh**.

Once you've resized and compressed your image, you should ensure the file name makes sense to the user (including your target search term) alongside having a suitable title and an alt-tag.

### 🔍 DEFINITION

#### Alt-tag

Stands for alternative tag and is used by screen readers to identify what images contain and is often required to achieve certain accessibility standards. Search engines also use it as a signal.

Not only will this boost your image SEO considerably, having a suitable alt-tag enables screen readers to work and is an essential requirement of most usability standards.

Well, that's the 10 tips covered!
We hope you learned something interesting.

For more SEO tips, take a look at our
**BEGINNER'S GUIDE FOR NEW WEBSITES**

Please feel free to **get in touch** with
**The UK Domain by the Nominet Marketing Team**