

Website Migration SEO Checklist

Keep your rankings intact from start to finish

1. BEFORE THE MIGRATION

Run a complete site crawl

Use Screaming Frog or Semrush to catalog every URL. Export to a Google Sheet.

Map out your top-level pages

Review schema, metadata, SEO titles, alt tags, and other on-page elements for your highest-priority pages.

Record current keyword rankings

Document where your top keywords rank in Google Search Console before anything moves.

Back up everything

Full database backup, all site files, and a working copy of your current site.

Build your URL redirect map

Spreadsheet matching every old URL to its new destination. Include page priority, redirect status, and notes.

Set up regex rules for bulk redirects

For larger sites, use regex-based redirect rules for pages that follow predictable URL patterns.

2. DURING THE MIGRATION

Implement 301 redirects for every URL change

Each old URL should point to its closest equivalent. Never mass-redirect everything to the homepage.

Check for redirect chains

Each redirect should point straight to its final destination. No A > B > C chains.

Transfer all on-page SEO elements

Title tags, meta descriptions, header structures (H1–H3), image alt text, structured data, and internal links.

Website Migration SEO Checklist

Keep your rankings intact from start to finish

2. DURING THE MIGRATION (CONTINUED)

Manually verify metadata transferred correctly

Plugins like Yoast and RankMath can export/import SEO metadata, but always verify manually.

Test redirects before launch

Spot-check as many redirects as possible. A few minutes of testing prevents hours of cleanup.

Verify mobile-friendliness and page speed

A migration doesn't automatically fix existing performance issues. Test on multiple devices.

3. AFTER THE MIGRATION

Resubmit your sitemap to Google Search Console

Especially important if you've changed your domain, deleted pages, or restructured your URLs.

Check robots.txt for leftover dev settings

Make sure there's no Disallow: / or noindex tags blocking search engines from your live site.

Monitor crawl errors in Search Console

Watch for 404 errors on previously working pages, slow indexing, and broken internal links.

Track organic traffic and keyword rankings weekly

Some dips are normal. If you're not seeing recovery by week six, something needs attention.

Update external links you control

Social media profiles, email signatures, directory listings, Google Business Profile.

Reach out about high-value backlinks

Contact webmasters of sites linking to your old URLs and request they update their links.

Website Migration SEO Checklist

Keep your rankings intact from start to finish

Helpful Tools & Plugins

Site Crawling	Screaming Frog, Semrush
Rank Tracking	Google Search Console
Backups	UpdraftPlus, Solid Backups
Redirects	RankMath, Redirection, Yoast
SEO Metadata	RankMath, Yoast
Performance	Google PageSpeed Insights

Need help with your migration? Let's talk.