

# Content & Blog Writing — Workbook

This workbook turns the course into one finished, optimized article and a system you can run for years. Work through one section per module, completing the exercises, worksheets, and checklists, then follow the action plan to research, draft, optimize, and publish a real post. Use the included templates to plan keywords, brief each post, run your on-page SEO check, and manage a 90-day content calendar.

## Find Topics Worth Writing About

Prove a topic has demand and a clear intent before you write a single word.

### Exercise: Decode the Intent Behind a Query

Pick a candidate topic in your niche and search it in Google. Study the first ten results as a set, then label the dominant search intent and the format Google is rewarding. Repeat for two more topics so you can compare and choose the most promising.

- Which of the four intents (informational, commercial, transactional, navigational) does the top page serve, and what modifier words in the query gave it away?  
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- What single format dominates page one (listicle, how-to, comparison, definition), and would your planned post match it?  
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- Is there any sign Google is rewarding a different intent than you assumed, and should you change your angle?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Worksheet: Keyword Shortlist and Difficulty Check

Use a free or paid keyword tool plus Google autocomplete and People Also Ask to fill in five candidate keywords. Favor long-tail phrases with realistic difficulty for your site, then circle the one you will write first. Seed topic

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Candidate keyword 1 — volume / difficulty

\_\_\_\_\_  
Candidate keyword 2 — volume / difficulty

\_\_\_\_\_  
Candidate keyword 3 — volume / difficulty

\_\_\_\_\_  
Candidate keyword 4 — volume / difficulty

\_\_\_\_\_  
Candidate keyword 5 — volume / difficulty

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Chosen primary keyword

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Three to five secondary / related terms

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Tool used (Keyword Planner / Ahrefs / Semrush / Keywords Everywhere / other)

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### Worksheet: SERP Gap Analysis

Open the top five results for your chosen keyword and complete this analysis to find your angle. The shared subtopics are mandatory; the gaps are your opportunity to be better.

Dominant format on page one

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Approximate word-count range of the top results

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Subtopics every top result covers (your table stakes)

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Questions from People Also Ask and related searches to answer

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Gaps: outdated data, missing examples, weak visuals, unanswered questions

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Publish or update dates of the top results

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My one-line angle (why mine will be the better post)

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### Checklist: Topic Validated Before Writing

- I searched the keyword and confirmed the dominant intent
- My planned format matches what Google currently rewards
- The keyword has real search volume and a difficulty my site can realistically rank for
- I listed the subtopics every top result covers and will include them
- I pulled questions from People Also Ask to answer in the post
- I wrote a one-line angle that differentiates my post from the current top results

### Structure and Write the Draft

Earn the click with the headline, the scroll with the intro, and the time on page with structure.

### Exercise: Write Ten Headlines and Score Them

Write at least ten headline variations for your post using different formulas: number, how-to, question, and a negative or warning angle. Score each against the 4 U's (Useful, Urgent, Unique, Ultra-specific), then pick the strongest and confirm it fits within 60 characters.

- Which two or three headlines hit at least three of the 4 U's, and which U is hardest for your topic?
  - Does your winning headline include the primary keyword near the front and read naturally?
  - Is it 50 to 60 characters so it will not truncate in search results?
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## Exercise: Draft the Intro with the APP Method

Write your opening 100 words using Agree, Promise, Preview: agree with something the reader already believes, promise something better is coming, and preview what the post delivers. Cut any throat-clearing or unnecessary backstory.

- What belief do you agree with in the first line to confirm the reader is in the right place?

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• What specific payoff do you promise, and is it visible by the end of the intro?

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• Did you give the core answer early (inverted pyramid), or is it buried further down?

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## Worksheet: Persuasion Framework Selector

Choose AIDA or PAS for this post based on its goal, then map your draft onto the chosen framework so the piece persuades rather than merely informs.

Post goal (broad guide with CTA / problem-driven or product-adjacent)

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Framework chosen (AIDA or PAS)

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If AIDA — Attention / Interest / Desire / Action notes

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If PAS — Problem / Agitate / Solution notes

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Top three features rewritten as reader benefits

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One statistic, study, or example used as proof

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Primary call to action at the end of the post

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## Checklist: Draft Structure Pass

- [ ] Headline chosen from ten variations and tested against the 4 U's
- [ ] Intro hooks within the first 100 words and previews the payoff
- [ ] Most important information appears early (inverted pyramid)
- [ ] A descriptive H2 or H3 appears roughly every 200 to 300 words
- [ ] Paragraphs are mostly one to three sentences and cover one idea each
- [ ] At least one bulleted or numbered list breaks up dense content
- [ ] The post ends with a clear next step or single call to action

## Optimize for Search

Run the on-page SEO checklist and connect the post into a cluster that builds authority.

## Worksheet: On-Page SEO Setup

Complete every on-page element for your post. Keep the title tag and meta description within their character limits and work related terms in naturally rather than repeating the exact keyword.

Title tag (50 to 60 characters, keyword near front)

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Meta description (150 to 160 characters, click-worthy)

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URL slug (short, readable, keyword-bearing)

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H1 containing the primary keyword

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Primary keyword placed in the first 100 words (yes/no)

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Secondary keywords used in H2 or H3 subheadings

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Related / semantic terms included (from Clearscope, Surfer, or Frase if available)

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### Exercise: Plan Internal Links and a Topic Cluster

Identify the pillar this post belongs to and the cluster posts around it. List two to five existing posts to link to from this article, and the older posts that should link back to it, using descriptive anchor text for each.

- What broad pillar topic does this post support, and does a pillar page exist or need creating?
  - Which two to five relevant existing posts will you link to, and what descriptive anchor text will you use?
  - Which older posts should add a link back to this new one to spread authority?
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### Worksheet: Image Optimization Log

For each image in the post, record the details below so every image loads fast, is accessible, and can rank in image search.

Image purpose or caption

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Descriptive file name (e.g., content-calendar-template.jpg)

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File size after compression (target under ~100 KB)

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Format used (WebP / JPG / PNG)

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Alt text (descriptive, includes keyword only where natural)

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Compression tool used (TinyPNG / Squoosh / other)

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### Checklist: On-Page SEO Complete

- Title tag and meta description are written and within character limits
- URL slug is short, readable, and keyword-bearing
- Primary keyword appears in the H1 and the first 100 words
- Related and synonym terms are used instead of stuffing the exact keyword
- Two to five internal links use descriptive anchor text
- Every image is compressed, well-named, and has alt text
- An author byline and credible sources are present to support E-E-A-T

## Build a Publishing System

Edit ruthlessly, plan a calendar, and distribute so one post becomes a repeatable habit.

### Exercise: Run the Four Editing Passes

Set the draft aside for at least a few hours, then edit in four separate passes: structure, clarity, concision, and line. In the concision pass, aim to cut roughly ten percent of the words, and run the result through the Hemingway Editor to check readability.

- What whole section or paragraph did the structure pass move or cut?  
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- How many words did you cut in the concision pass, and did the meaning survive?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- What readability grade did Hemingway report, and is it within the 6-to-8 target for general readers?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Worksheet: Content Brief Template

Before drafting your next post, complete this one-page brief so you write fast against a plan instead of a blank page. Reuse it for every future post.

Working title  
\_\_\_\_\_

Primary keyword and search intent  
\_\_\_\_\_

Target word count (based on SERP analysis)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Angle / differentiator  
\_\_\_\_\_

Outline of H2 subheadings  
\_\_\_\_\_

Internal links to include  
\_\_\_\_\_

Primary success metric (e.g., organic clicks/month, signups)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Target publish date  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Worksheet: Distribution and Repurposing Plan

Plan how this post will reach readers and how you will recycle it across formats and channels so the writing works more than once.

Email send (list segment and date)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Social platforms and the hook for each  
\_\_\_\_\_

Communities where you will share it helpfully  
\_\_\_\_\_

Repurpose into a thread / short video / carousel / infographic  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Lead magnet offered to grow the email list

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Follow-up date to check early performance

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### Checklist: Publishing System in Place

- Draft edited in four passes and cut by roughly ten percent
- Readability checked in Hemingway and within the target grade range
- On-page SEO checklist fully completed before publishing
- A 90-day calendar exists with a pillar theme and supporting cluster posts
- A sustainable cadence is set and I am a few posts ahead
- A distribution and repurposing plan is ready for each post
- A primary success metric is defined and will be reviewed in Search Console

### Your Action Plan

1. Choose a topic, search it, and confirm the dominant intent and the format Google rewards before committing.
2. Run keyword research, shortlist five long-tail candidates, and pick one primary keyword with realistic difficulty.
3. Analyze the top five results to find the mandatory subtopics and the gaps that give you a one-line angle.
4. Write ten headlines, score them against the 4 U's, and pick the strongest within 60 characters.
5. Draft fast against a one-page brief, opening with the APP method and structuring with the inverted pyramid.
6. Choose AIDA or PAS, rewrite features as benefits, and end with a single clear call to action.
7. Edit in four passes, cut about ten percent, and confirm a grade 6-to-8 readability in Hemingway.
8. Run the full on-page SEO checklist: title tag, meta description, slug, headings, internal links, and image alt text.
9. Publish, then distribute by email, social, and communities, and repurpose the post into at least two other formats.
10. Set up a 90-day topic-cluster calendar and a quarterly schedule to measure, update, and refresh older posts in Search Console.











