

ULTIMATE SITE MIGRATION - CHECKLIST/BEST PRACTICE

1. Migration Strategy & Risk Setup

- Define migration type - Platform, domain, URL, HTTPS, or design change. Each type has a different SEO risk.
- Create an SEO migration plan - Set traffic goals, success rules, and a rollback path if issues appear.
- Assign team roles - SEO, developers, content, hosting, and analytics teams must have clear tasks.

2. Data Protection & Benchmarking

- Full site backup - Save files, database, Google Analytics, Search Console, ranks, and backlinks.
- Full site crawl & audit - List all live URLs, status codes, canonicals, and links.
- Find high-value pages - Mark pages that bring the most sales, visits, and backlinks.

3. Content & URL Decision Control

- Page action plan - Decide which pages stay, merge, redirect, or get removed.
- Clean weak pages - Thin, copied, or old pages must not go live by mistake.

4. Staging Environment Setup

- Correct test setup - Use the final URL format, domain, and HTTPS.
- Block public access - Use robots.txt and login lock, so Google cannot index the test site.
- Add GA4 & Tag Manager - Test page views, events, and sales tracking.

5. Pre-Launch SEO Validation

- Technical SEO check - Review index rules, crawl depth, scripts, and schema.
- Page speed check - Test LCP, INP, and CLS on key pages.
- Googlebot test access - Allow short, controlled scans if needed.
- Final SEO review - Check titles, meta, canonicals, hreflang, pagination, and domain version rules.

6. Launch Readiness

- Lower DNS TTL - Set a low TTL of 24 to 48 hours before launch for faster switch.

7. Launch Execution

- Push live & update DNS - Point the domain to new hosting, CDN, and SSL.
- Remove all blocks - Remove robots rules, login locks, and noindex tags.
- Turn on redirects - Use 301 for page moves and 410 for removed pages.

8. Post-Launch Search Control

- Search Console setup - Submit sitemap, use Change of Address if the domain changed, and inspect key pages.
- Fix errors fast - Act on crawl and index errors in the first 7 to 14 days.

9. Performance Tracking

- Daily checks - Track rank, traffic, and sales for the first two weeks.
- Weekly checks - After two weeks, monitor trends to confirm stability.