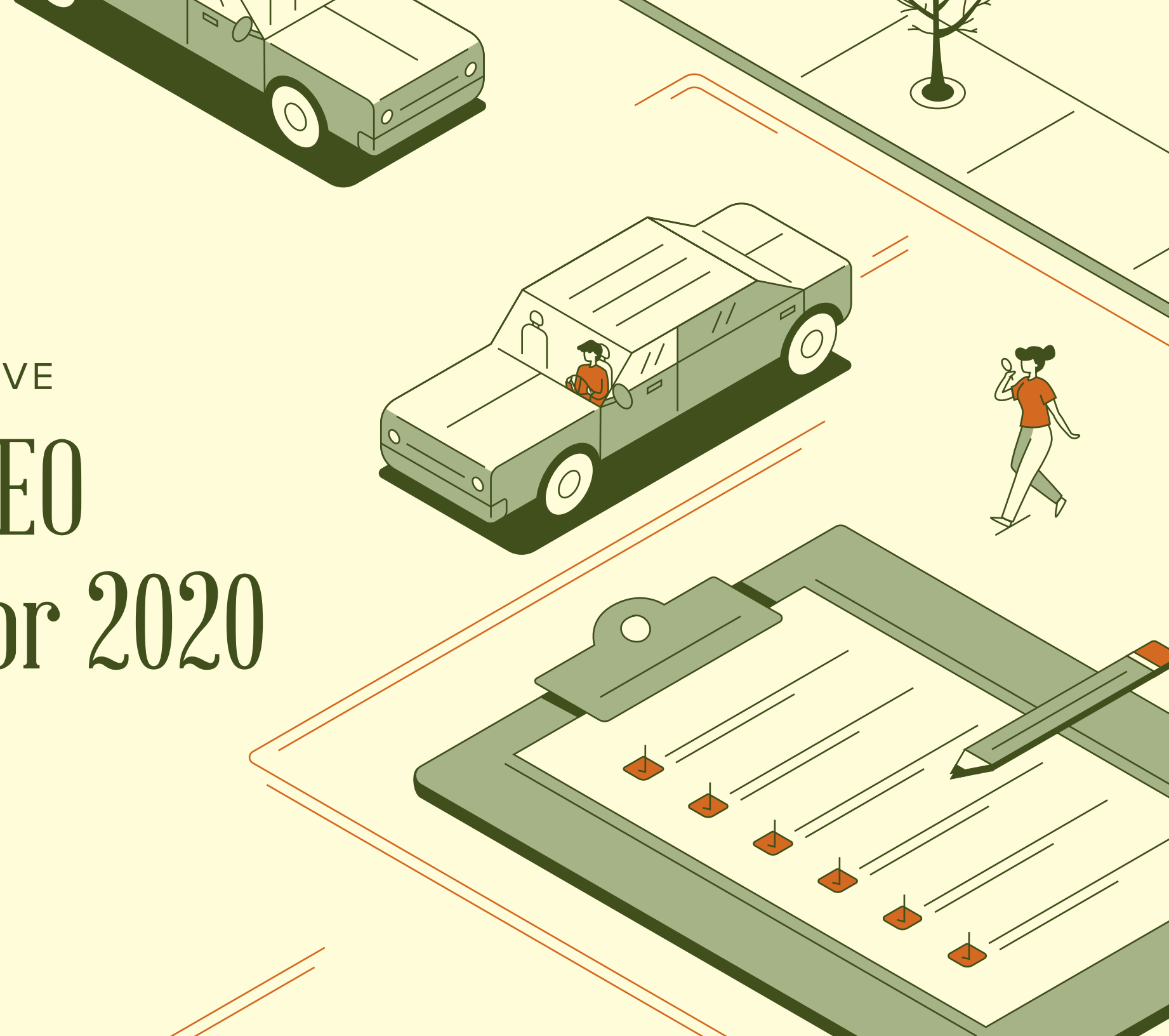


YOUR COMPREHENSIVE

Technical SEO Checklist for 2020



Page Speed

How quickly your webpages load is a direct ranking factor. It's also an indirect ranking factor – slow loading times increase bounce rate (number of users who leave after visiting one page). That's why it's important to **a)** test your page speed using the Google PageSpeed Insights tool and **b)** takes steps to optimize page speed to avoid ranking penalties and high bounce rates. Note that PageSpeed provides actionable steps to increase page speed and even links out resources such as WordPress plugins that can help you, like so:

The screenshot shows a list of optimization opportunities from Google PageSpeed Insights. The top four items are:

Opportunity	Estimated Savings
Eliminate render-blocking resources	0.65 s
Remove unused CSS	0.64 s
Serve images in next-gen formats	0.4 s
Minify CSS	0.16 s

Below the list, there is a tip about WordPress plugins and a table of CSS files:

URL	Size	Potential Savings
...css/style.css?ver=2.0.0 (www.brafton.com)	89 KB	28 KB

In this sense, the best checklist for page speed is **whatever PageSpeed Insights tells you to do**. However, nearly any website publisher can benefit from taking certain key steps. **(WARNING:** This is quite possibly the most technical section of this entire eBook.)



Optimize images: There are a few things to keep in mind here:



Use PNG for simple graphics with 16 or fewer images and JPEG for photos and advanced graphics.



Start using the SRCSET attribute in your HTML code. This lets you have multiple versions of images for different uses.



Use CSS sprites for images that you use frequently like logos and buttons. This essentially combines multiple images into a single image file so there are fewer HTTP requests.



Some of the main factors to consider when making your site mobile friendly include the following:

- ✓ **Use responsive design:** With responsive design, your website code automatically responds to the screen you're viewing it on. You can either use a responsive template (such as a WordPress theme), or you can manually make each page responsive.
- ✓ **Use Viewport Meta Tag:** Copy `<meta name="viewport" content="width=device-width, initial-scale=1">` in the code for each of your webpages. This technique is especially useful for publishers who need to manually make their site mobile friendly. However, your code may require some fine-tuning (e.g. CSS media queries to set relative width values for certain on-page elements).
- ✓ **Remove Flash from your site:** It's no longer supported by default on most major mobile devices.
- ✓ **Focus on page speed:** Page speed is even more important on mobile than on desktop, so it's that much more critical that you do everything we discussed on pages 6 and 7 of this eBook.

- ✓ **Use Accelerated Mobile Pages (AMP) only as a last resort:** AMP is an open-source project that isn't for everyone. It creates a compressed, stripped-down version of a page to improve its speed and performance. However, this means it eliminates some of your site's bells and whistles, and should therefore be used sparingly (if at all).

TOOLS YOU'LL NEED: Google's Mobile-Friendly Test, Lighthouse, PageSpeed Insights, Mobile Checker by W3C, BrowserStack.



WWW.BRAFTON.COM

moz.com/beginners-guide-to-seo/technical-seo | brafton.com/blog/seo/is-your-website-accessible-to-everyone-downloadable-web-accessibility-checklist/ | theguardian.com/music/2019/jan/04/beyonce-parkwood-entertainment-sued-over-website-accessibility | semrush.com/blog/what-is-schema-beginner-s-guide-to-structured-data/ | searchenginejournal.com/301-vs-302-redirects-seo/299843/#close