

Content analysis factors

The Yoast SEO for WordPress plugin gives you valuable feedback on how to optimize your text. In this lesson, we'll discuss this feedback. The content analysis consists of two scores: an SEO score and a readability score. Of course, these two are interconnected, as readable content is incredibly important if you want your site to rank. We'll explain what these scores entail and how they help you to improve your text.

SEO analysis factors

Yoast SEO measures many aspects of your content and gives you real-time feedback, so you'll receive feedback while writing. First, we'll talk about the SEO score. The SEO analysis gives you feedback on different aspects of your text, like the length, the focus keyphrase, and whether or not your text contains enough links. Let's dive into the different aspects of the SEO analysis.

Length

The first aspect the SEO analysis covers is the overall length of your text. The plugin checks whether your text has a good length. Of course, this depends on the topic you're writing about, but in general, we advise a minimum of 300 words. That's because a blog post should contain at least 300 words to rank well in the search engines. [Long posts will rank more easily than short posts.](#)



● [Text length](#): The text contains 1471 words. Good job!

Image 1: Feedback text length

Focus keyphrase

You can enter your focus keyphrase in the SEO tab of the Yoast SEO meta box and at the top of the Yoast SEO sidebar. As we've discussed in a previous lesson, your focus keyphrase is the keyphrase you would like

your post to rank for. Ideally, this should be a keyphrase that emerged from your keyword research and which you have kept in mind during the entire writing process. If you're using Yoast SEO Premium, you can also enter a related keyphrase in the +Add related keyphrase heading in the SEO tab. It is also possible to add a related keyphrase in the Yoast SEO sidebar. The plugin checks three things regarding your focus keyphrase:

- **Location**

Your focus keyphrase should appear in several important locations in the text. These include the title, the first paragraph, subheadings, and the image descriptions. All of these locations are important markers that give readers an idea what the text is about. Including your focus keyphrase in these places will make sure that visitors to your site can immediately grasp the topic of your post. That's why Yoast SEO checks if you have included the keyphrase in each of these spots.

- **Frequency**

We also check how often you use the keyphrase. Yoast SEO calculates the keyphrase density. This score indicates how many times the keyphrase has been used in relation to the length of the text. You should use the keyphrase often enough, but not too often, because that can make your text sound unnatural to your readers. Besides, Google doesn't like pages that are stuffed with keyphrases. That's why we have set a keyphrase density margin. If you stay within this margin, you can be sure that your keyphrase is neither mentioned too little, nor too often.

- **Right keyphrase**

The last part Yoast SEO analyzes is whether you're using the right keyphrase. You must set a unique keyphrase for each post that you write. After all, you don't want to compete with your own content for a position in Google. If you optimize two different articles for the same focus keyphrase, you'll be telling Google: these two are both suitable for people searching for my keyphrase. You would like both of them to turn up in the search results, and that's very hard to do. That's why it's important that you don't optimize a post for a keyphrase you've

already used before. To avoid this, we have a handy reminder that will warn you if you set a keyphrase you've already used before.

Keyphrase distribution (Premium only)

If you use Yoast SEO Premium, we'll also check your keyword distribution. That means that we'll check whether you have used your keyphrase (and/or synonyms and related keyphrases) through the whole text, in a balanced way.

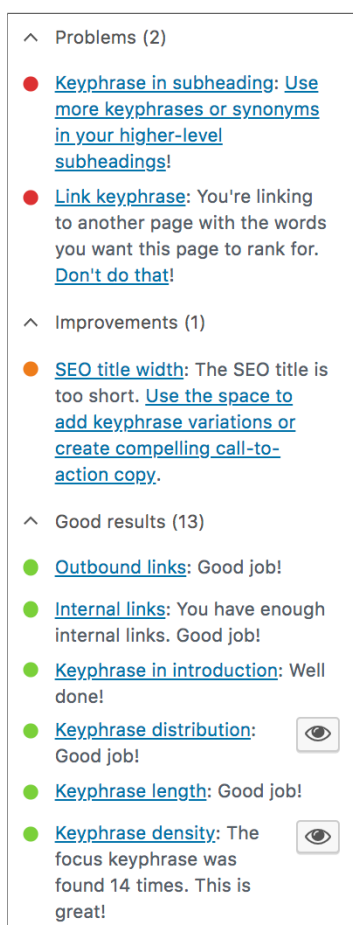


Image 2: Feedback on focus keyphrase

These checks also apply to any related keyphrases you've entered, but they're more strict for your focus keyphrase.

Links

Yoast SEO also checks the presence of links in your article. Every post should contain at least one internal link – a link going to another page on your site. It should also contain at least one external link – a link going to

a different website than your own. This is because you should avoid dead ends. Users shouldn't land on your page, read your article, and not be able to click through to new content.

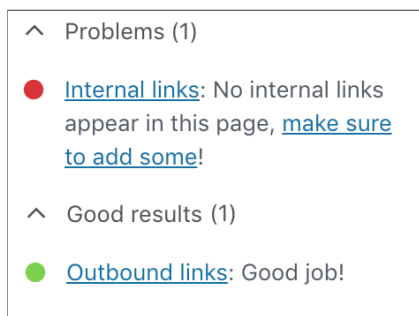


Image 3: Feedback on links

Meta description

Another thing the plugin's SEO analysis gives feedback on is your meta description. It checks whether your meta description has the right length, and whether or not it contains the focus keyphrase. After all, visitors should see right away what your page is about when they read your meta description.

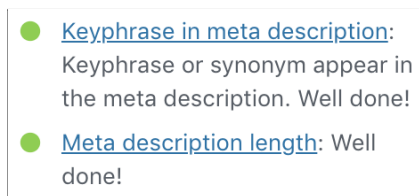


Image 4: Feedback on meta description

SEO title and slug

Lastly, Yoast SEO gives you feedback on the length of your SEO title and lets you know whether it is too short or too long to be fully shown in the search results. We also make sure that your slug contains your focus keyphrase.

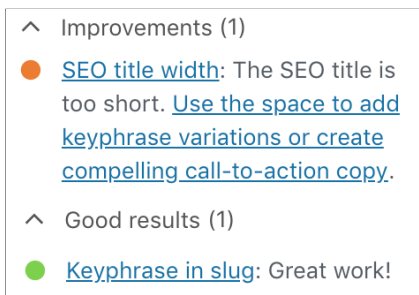


Image 5: Feedback on SEO title and slug

Images

Images, when used well, often contribute to a positive user experience. In addition, adding proper alt attributes to your images can improve the accessibility of your content and help search engines understand what an image is about. That's why we've created 2 separate image assessments:

- An **Image presence assessment**: checks whether you've added at least one image to your post. For product pages we raise the bar a bit: you should add multiple images to a product page to receive a green bullet.
- An **Image alt attribute assessment**: checks whether at least one image in the post has got an alternative text containing the focus keyphrase or a synonym.

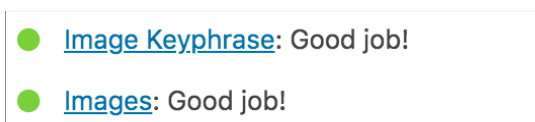


Image 6: Feedback on the use of images

Readability analysis factors

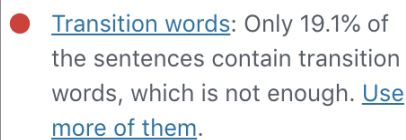
The second part of the Yoast SEO content analysis is the readability analysis. The readability analysis is interconnected with the SEO analysis because making your text easily readable is incredibly important for your overall SEO. You want to be able to captivate your readers and keep them engaged. You should avoid risking losing the interest of your readers with poorly structured and confusing texts.

The readability analysis uses an algorithm to determine how readable your post is. We've carefully crafted this algorithm to make it as valuable

as possible without being too strict. It features several checks that'll give you advice when you write your post. In other words, by following the advice, you can make your text easier to read and understand. Next to most of the textual feedback, you'll find a small button with an eye on it. If you click this button, the result matching the feedback will be highlighted in the text. Now, let's take a closer look at the different checks.

Transition words

Using transition words like 'most importantly', 'because', 'therefore' or 'besides that' improves the flow of your article as they provide hints to the reader about what is coming next. Yoast SEO recognizes these words and phrases in several languages and will give you feedback on whether you use enough transition words in your text.

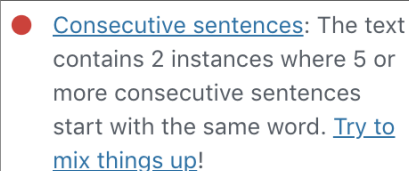


● [Transition words](#): Only 19.1% of the sentences contain transition words, which is not enough. [Use more of them](#).

Image 7: Feedback on transition words

Sentence beginnings

Consecutive sentences that start with the same word lead to repetition, which your readers may find annoying. It's important to mix up your sentences to keep your article readable and free of obstacles. This is why the plugin also gives you feedback on your sentence beginnings.



● [Consecutive sentences](#): The text contains 2 instances where 5 or more consecutive sentences start with the same word. [Try to mix things up!](#)

Image 8: Feedback on sentence beginnings

Flesch Reading Ease

Yoast SEO also provides a Flesch Reading Ease score for your text. The Flesch Reading Ease test is a world-famous test that analyzes texts and

grades them on a scale from 1–100. A low score indicates that the text is difficult to read. Texts with a very high [Flesch Reading Ease](#) score (about 100) are very easy to read. They have short sentences and no words of more than two syllables. Usually, for web copy, it is acceptable to have a reading ease score of 60–70.

A screenshot of a feedback message from the Flesch Reading Ease test. It features a green circular icon on the left, followed by the text: "Flesch Reading Ease: The copy scores 70.7 in the test, which is considered fairly easy to read. Good job!". The text is enclosed in a thin black border.

Image 9: Feedback from Flesch Reading Ease test

Paragraph length

Using long paragraphs makes your text look like one big blob of text. This makes it difficult to read your text. The plugin analyzes the length of your paragraphs and your use of subheadings. Subheadings are important to guide the reader through the text and to show them what the important points are. If your paragraphs turn out to be too long, you should break them up, use shorter paragraphs, and insert subheadings.

A screenshot of a feedback message about paragraph length. It features an orange circular icon on the left, followed by the text: "Paragraph length: 1 of the paragraphs contains more than the recommended maximum of 150 words. Shorten your paragraphs!". The text is enclosed in a thin black border.

Image 10: Feedback on paragraph length

Sentence length

Sentence length is one of the core issues that makes a text hard to read. If your sentences are too long – over 20 words – people might lose track of your point. Often, readers have to jump back a few words to find out what you mean. This is very tiring and inefficient. Try to keep the number of words in a sentence in check. Shorten your sentences. Aim for easy understanding, not a complex literary masterpiece. That’s why Yoast SEO has a check that makes sure there are not too many long sentences in your text.

● [Sentence length](#): 37.5% of the sentences contain more than 20 words, which is more than the recommended maximum of 25%. [Try to shorten the sentences.](#)

Image 11: Feedback on sentence length

Passive voice

Another thing to watch out for when you’re writing your texts is not to overuse the passive voice. The passive voice is a grammatical construction. The easiest way to explain the passive voice is by contrasting it with the active voice. The active voice is the standard English sentence structure. The simplest possible sentences feature an actor (the subject), who does (the verb) something to either a person, animal, or thing (the receiver).

Word	Mom	hugged	me.
Semantic function	actor	direct verb	receiver

Table 1: Active voice

In the passive voice, the actor and the receiver are switched around. The receiver becomes the grammatical subject. Note that the meaning of the sentence stays exactly the same. The only difference is the word order.

Word	I	was hugged	by mom.
Semantic function	receiver	direct verb	actor

Table 2: Passive voice

In some passive sentences, you can omit the actor. ‘*I was hugged.*’, for example, is a perfectly sensible passive sentence, although it provides less information.

Using a lot of passive voice in your text makes it appear distant, and your message will be less clear. There are two main reasons for this. The first

one is that sentences in the passive voice are wordy; the passive alternative to an active sentence is simply longer. The second reason is that the passive voice uses a sentence structure that requires more cognitive effort. Your reader will spend valuable working memory on making sense of the sentence, which decreases the likelihood of getting your message across.

So whenever you use the passive voice, always consider whether a better, active alternative is available. In the readability analysis in our plugin, we recommend using the passive voice in a maximum of 10% of your sentences. Yoast SEO detects passive sentences in your text and lets you know if you're using too many of them.

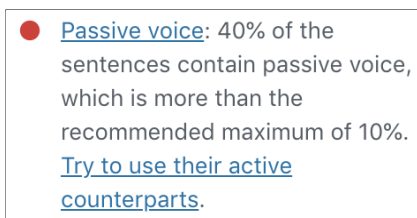


Image 12: Feedback on passive voice

Cornerstone content

Cornerstone content pieces are those articles on your website you're most proud of. Articles that reflect your business, communicate your mission, and are extremely well-written. In the Yoast SEO plugin, you can mark your article as cornerstone content. For these cornerstone articles, the content checks are stricter. This is because we really want you to optimize these articles as well as you can.

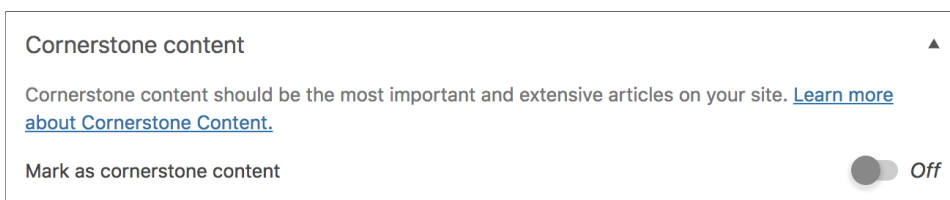


Image 13: Cornerstone content in the Yoast SEO plugin

Conclusion

In this lesson, we've talked about the content analysis of the Yoast SEO plugin. We've seen that the content analysis is divided into two scores: an SEO score and a readability score, which both consist of various individual assessments. We've discussed what these different assessments entail and how they can help you with optimizing your content.