

Checklist for Image Search Optimization

Nowadays, professional search engine optimizers give much greater attention to image search visibility. Image search optimization is especially interesting to website owners or publishers with a particularly visual product (for example, art galleries, clothes designers, or furniture manufacturers). What is more, everyone knows a picture is worth a thousand words.

There are a limited number of factors that influence image positioning. Print out the below check list and be sure you've done all you can to have your images well-optimized.

- First of all, your image should be an inherent part of a page and share the same theme. I.e. the page's title, headings, body text must tell visitors the same story that the image tells.
- Create an Images folder on your server to save all your pictures there. Make sure search engine crawlers are allowed to index it.
- Use descriptive keywords in your image files' names. Separate words in the file names with a hyphen, not an underscore.
- Provide a small description of an image in the alt attribute of the img tag, but do not fill the alt attribute with tons of keywords, even if they are relevant.
- Think of also using a short image title with keywords in them.
- Place the keyword-rich text in the body around the image that describes it.
- If the image constitutes a link, its anchor text is quite powerful in terms of optimization for high image-search rankings.
- On the other hand, if you have other pages of your site linking to the page with important images, create keyword-rich link anchor texts to such pages with images.
- Use high resolution images, if available. Provide different resolutions of images.
- Avoid putting a 'click to see larger image' link inside of a JavaScript link. Scripts may cause difficulties in the link indexing.
- Check how your image looks in thumbnail size. Stronger contrast is needed to better discern an image, which might lead to more people clicking on and linking to the image.
- Save photos as .JPG files, and other graphic image types as .GIF. Search engines tend to interpret a GIF image as a standard graphic image with 256 colors, while JPGs as photos with millions of colors.
- Re-upload your pictures from time to time, since image freshness is a contextual clue for the search engines and might affect relevancy.
- As promotional tactics, you may watermark your images with your site address — if they are linked to, people on other sites will learn about yours