Phase 1: Pre-Migration Planning & Analysis

01 **ASSEMBLE YOUR MIGRATION TEAM**
Gather your team, set SEO goals, and plan the launch for a quiet weekday. ☐

02 **BENCHMARK YOUR CURRENT SEO**
Collect 6-12 months of SEO data, including traffic, top pages, rankings, and site speed. ☐

03 **AUDIT YOUR EXISTING CONTENT**
Decide which content to keep, improve, remove, or redirect based on performance and relevance. ☐

04 **INVENTORY ALL CURRENT URLS**
Use a crawler like Screaming Frog to extract all live URLs, spot broken links and duplicates, and guide your redirect mapping. ☐

05 **PLAN YOUR URL STRUCTURE & REDIRECTS**
Stick to existing URLs, and 301 redirect any changed ones–including dynamic links, parameters, and media paths. ☐

06 **BACK UP EVERYTHING**
Save copies of all content, files, and SEO data–and keep multiple backups, just in case. ☐

07 **CHOOSE AN SEO-FRIENDLY CMS OR FRONT-END**
Pick a platform with clean URLs, editable tags, structured data, and SSR if headless. ☐

08 **PLAN YOUR ANALYTICS & TAGGING**
Audit your tracking tools and plan reimplementation. ☐

09 **SEARCH CONSOLE PREPARATION**
Verify your site in GSC and Bing Webmaster Tools, and back up indexed URLs. ☐

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10 **COMMUNICATE INTERNALLY**
Inform all departments about the migration timeline and expected traffic dips to avoid confusion post-launch. ☐

11 **CREATE A STAGING ENVIRONMENT**
Build a fully functional staging site, block it from search engines, and start testing functionality, layout, and SEO settings. ☐

12 **INITIAL TECHNICAL SEO AUDIT**
Crawl both current and staging sites to catch issues like duplicate titles or dead pages—fix them before launch. ☐

Phase 2: SEO During Site Build & Development

13 **URL STRUCTURE & NAVIGATION**
Keep the old site's URL structure where possible, using short, keyword-friendly URLs with key pages no more than 3 clicks deep. ☐

14 **CONTENT MIGRATION**
Copy over all content with original formatting, keep one H1 per page, and check each page matches the original for accuracy. ☐

15 **MEDIA & IMAGE OPTIMISATION**
Keep original image file names, add descriptive ALT text, and update internal links if image URLs change. ☐

16 **ON-PAGE SEO ELEMENTS**
Optimise titles, headings, canonicals, and meta tags for each page. ☐

17 **STRUCTURED DATA (SCHEMA)**
Reapply structured data (e.g. FAQ, Article, Product), and validate it with schema testing tools. ☐

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SEO CHECKLIST FOR WEBSITE REDESIGNS AND MIGRATIONS

18 **JAVASCRIPT SEO (FOR HEADLESS OR JS-HEAVY SITES)**
Enable SSR or prerendering to ensure content loads in raw HTML, avoiding hash-based navigation or delayed-rendered content. ☐

19 **INTERNAL LINKING & ANCHOR TEXT**
Update internal links and anchor text, fixing redirects and removing links to deleted pages. ☐

20 **404 PAGE DESIGN**
Design a branded 404 page with friendly messaging, key navigation links, and a search bar for easy site recovery. ☐

21 **ROBOTS.TXT SETUP**
Configure your robots.txt to allow public pages, block irrelevant areas (like /wp-admin/), and reference your XML sitemap. ☐

22 **XML SITEMAP GENERATION**
Generate an XML sitemap with all indexable, canonical URLs–use plugins or create it manually. ☐

23 **HREFLANG (IF APPLICABLE)**
For multilingual or multiregional sites, update hreflang tags to reflect the new URLs. ☐

24 **MOBILE OPTIMISATION**
Make sure your site is responsive–test layout, tap targets, and font sizes with Google's Mobile-Friendly Test. ☐

25 **SPEED & CORE WEB VITALS**
Optimise images, reduce blocking scripts, enable lazy loading, and aim for "Good" Core Web Vitals. ☐

26 **OPTIONAL CONTENT IMPROVEMENTS**
Update outdated content with FAQs, visuals, and examples– improve without disrupting existing keyword performance. ☐

27 **ANALYTICS & TAGGING SETUP**
Add GA4 and GTM to staging, test real-time data flow, and mark launch day with annotations. ☐

28 **THIRD-PARTY INTEGRATIONS**
Check forms, e-commerce tracking, CRM links, and chat widgets. ☐

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Phase 3: Pre-Launch
SEO Checks

29 **CONTENT ACCURACY**
Review top pages for accuracy—check text, media, and formatting against staging. ☐

30 **META DATA VERIFICATION**
Ensure all titles and descriptions are unique and complete, and that canonical tags correctly point to their intended URLs. ☐

31 **REDIRECT TESTING**
Test 301 redirects with tools and manually check key pages. ☐

32 **CRAWL THE STAGING SITE**
Scan for broken links, orphaned pages, duplicate content, or noindex tags—and fix any issues found. ☐

33 **DISABLE STAGING BLOCKS**
Remove all staging blocks: noindex tags, password protection, and disallow rules in robots.txt. ☐

34 **PERFORMANCE CHECKS**
Audit key templates using PageSpeed Insights and Lighthouse. ☐

35 **CROSS-DEVICE & BROWSER TESTING**
Check that layout, menus, and interactive elements function smoothly across devices and browsers. ☐

36 **ANALYTICS TESTING**
Trigger test events in GA4 or Tag Manager and confirm conversion tracking is working. ☐

37 **FINAL APPROVAL**
Get stakeholder approval on all content, pages, and site functionality. ☐

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38

LAUNCH PLAN
Reduce DNS TTL, retain the old server or a backup, and prep redirect rules for launch.

Phase 4: Launch Day & Post-Launch SEO

39

ACTIVATE REDIRECTS
Test live 301 redirects and fix any broken or misdirected links right away.

40

VERIFY ROBOTS.TXT & META ROBOTS
Make sure your robots.txt allows crawling, and use Search Console to confirm indexing.

41

SUBMIT XML SITEMAPS
Submit your XML sitemaps in Google and Bing Webmaster Tools, and check that key pages are being indexed.

42

USE THE CHANGE OF ADDRESS TOOL (IF APPLICABLE)
Use the Change of Address tool only if you're migrating to a new domain—not for platform changes.

43

CRAWL ERROR MONITORING
Monitor Google Search Console's Coverage report for 404s, noindex pages, or crawl issues.

44

CHECK ANALYTICS
Check real-time and daily GA4 tracking, and watch for any traffic drops or surges.

45

RANKINGS WATCH
Track keyword rankings with your rank tracker and look into any major drops right away.

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SEO CHECKLIST FOR WEBSITE REDESIGNS AND MIGRATIONS

46 **POST-LAUNCH CRAWL**
Scan for broken links, redirect chains, missing metadata, incorrect canonicals, and broken schema. ☐

47 **FIX ERRORS FAST**
Fix issues quickly to avoid lasting damage to your SEO rankings. ☐

48 **UPDATE EXTERNAL LINKS (OPTIONAL)**
Contact websites linking to old URLs and ask them to update to your new ones. ☐

49 **UPDATE BUSINESS LISTINGS**
Update your Google Business Profile, Yelp, social media bios, and partner sites with your new URLs. ☐

50 **KEEP THE OLD DOMAIN ACTIVE**
Keep old URLs redirecting permanently to retain SEO value and avoid domain hijacking. ☐

51 **PREVENT DUPLICATE INDEXING**
Make sure test or staging sites are blocked from search engines. ☐

52 **ONGOING MONITORING**
Use GSC, GA4, and rank trackers to monitor site health, including Core Web Vitals and mobile usability. ☐

53 **MEASURE SUCCESS**
Compare post-launch performance to your benchmarks—check traffic, conversions, speed, and rankings. ☐

54 **PLAN YOUR NEXT SEO IMPROVEMENTS**
Fill content gaps, keep building links, and refine structured data for ongoing SEO gains. ☐

55 **QUARTERLY SEO AUDITS**
Run regular SEO audits to keep everything running smoothly. ☐

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