

WordPress Core Web Vitals Optimization Checklist

Actionable steps to improve your site's performance and user experience.

Based on [Google Core Web Vitals Optimization Guide For Wordpress Sites](#) by Casey's SEO

1. Understand Core Web Vitals Metrics

Familiarize yourself with the key metrics Google uses to measure user experience.

- Verify Largest Contentful Paint (LCP) is under 2.5 seconds.
- Ensure Interaction to Next Paint (INP) is under 200 milliseconds.
- Confirm Cumulative Layout Shift (CLS) is under 0.1.
- Understand that INP has replaced FID as a core metric.
- Recognize that these metrics reflect real visitor experience.
- Acknowledge the importance of mobile performance for these metrics.

2. Image Optimization: Quick Wins

Optimize your images for faster loading times and improved LCP.

- Convert all images to WebP format.
- Implement automatic lazy loading for images.
- Ensure images are sized correctly for different devices.
- Compress images before uploading using tools like TinyPNG or Squoosh.
- Utilize WordPress's native WebP support or a dedicated plugin.
- Check if your current lazy loading implementation is basic or advanced.
- Review image file sizes to ensure they are not unnecessarily large.

3. Tackle JavaScript and CSS Bloat

Reduce the amount of unnecessary code that slows down your site.

- Use an optimization plugin like Autoptimize or WP Rocket.
- Combine CSS and JavaScript files.
- Remove unnecessary whitespace from CSS and JS.
- Defer non-critical JavaScript execution.
- Audit your plugins to identify performance bottlenecks.
- Consider using a performance-focused theme (e.g., GeneratePress, Astra, Kadence).
- Remove plugins that are not essential or are poorly optimized.
- Analyze which plugins are contributing most to slow load times.

4. Implement Caching Strategies

Serve pre-built versions of your pages to speed up delivery.

- Set up page-level caching using plugins like WP Fastest Cache or WP Super Cache.
- Enable object caching if your hosting provider supports Redis or Memcached.
- Integrate a Content Delivery Network (CDN) like Cloudflare.
- Configure your CDN for optimal performance.
- Ensure static versions of pages are being generated.
- Verify that caching is correctly configured to avoid serving stale content.

5. Optimize for Mobile-First

Ensure a seamless experience for users on mobile devices.

- Test your site's performance on actual mobile devices.
- Prioritize the loading of above-the-fold content on mobile.
- Simplify mobile interactions and navigation.
- Ensure responsive design elements function correctly on smaller screens.
- Check if complex desktop interactions negatively impact mobile INP.
- Monitor bounce rates specifically for mobile users.
- Verify that critical content is visible immediately on mobile load.

6. Address Common Performance Problems

Identify and resolve specific issues impacting your Core Web Vitals.

- Monitor your Time to First Byte (TTFB) and aim for under 600ms.
- Upgrade hosting if TTFB is consistently high.
- Reserve space for ads and embeds to prevent layout shifts.
- Lazy load ads and embeds after the initial page render.
- Audit third-party scripts (Analytics, Pixels, Chat widgets).
- Load non-essential third-party scripts asynchronously.
- Use Google Tag Manager to control script loading.
- Ensure ads and embeds are not causing CLS issues.

7. Utilize Performance Monitoring Tools

Leverage tools to diagnose and track your Core Web Vitals.

- Use Google PageSpeed Insights for baseline scores and recommendations.
- Analyze detailed waterfall charts with GTmetrix.
- Review Real User Monitoring data in Google Search Console.
- Identify real-world performance issues affecting actual visitors.
- Consider WordPress plugins that integrate with monitoring services.
- Regularly check scores after making optimization changes.
- Use tools to identify specific bottlenecks like slow server response or render-blocking resources.

8. Ongoing Optimization and Compliance

Maintain performance and adhere to regulations.

- Implement progressive loading strategies for content.
- Explore AI-powered optimization tools for automation.
- Optimize content at the block level using the WordPress editor.
- Ensure optimization does not compromise accessibility (ADA compliance).
- Plan for performance impacts of privacy scripts (GDPR, CCPA).
- Continuously monitor Core Web Vitals scores.
- Re-evaluate optimization strategy as content and plugins are added/updated.
- Treat Core Web Vitals optimization as an ongoing process, not a one-time fix.

Resources & Further Reading

Use these pages while working through the checklist:

■ Colorado Springs SEO Blog

<https://caseysseo.com/seo-blog>

■ Colorado Springs Local SEO Company

<https://caseysseo.com/colorado-springs-local-seo/>

■ AI SEO Tools Comparison: 2025 Software Rankings – Casey's SEO

<https://caseysseo.com/ai-seo-tools-comparison-2025-software-rankings/>

■ Find Your Local Results

<https://caseysseo.com/>

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