

HTTPS Migration Checklist: How to Switch Without Losing SEO Rankings

A step-by-step guide to migrating your website to HTTPS securely and efficiently.

Based on [Https Migration Checklist Without Losing Seo Rankings](#) by Casey's SEO

Step 1: Perform a Pre-Migration Audit

Before making any changes, document your current site's performance, traffic, rankings, and all external links. Identify and fix any existing technical issues with robots.txt, XML sitemaps, and canonical tags. Crawl your entire site to understand its current state.

- Use tools like Screaming Frog or Sitebulb for comprehensive crawling.
- Gather data from Google Analytics and Search Console.
- Document top-performing pages, external links, and embedded resources.



Step 2: Set Up a Staging Environment

Create a private copy of your website in a staging environment that mirrors your production setup. Ensure it's blocked from search engines (using no-index tags) and has the SSL certificate installed and working. Test all functionalities thoroughly.

- Mirror your production environment as closely as possible.
- Test every link, form submission, and tracking code.
- Ensure all plugins and themes are properly configured.



Step 3: Configure Your SSL Certificate

Obtain and install an SSL certificate that covers all your domain variations (www and non-www) and any necessary subdomains. Verify that no browser security warnings appear and that the certificate is not nearing expiration.

- A standard SSL certificate from your hosting provider is often sufficient.
- Use SSL Labs' free SSL test tool to check for configuration issues.



Step 4: Create Your Redirect Strategy

Map out every old HTTP URL to its new HTTPS equivalent using 301 redirects. Document this in a spreadsheet, ensuring direct redirects to the final destination and avoiding redirect chains. Prioritize server-level redirects for better performance and reliability.

- List every important page and its corresponding HTTPS URL.
- Fix any URL structure issues during this mapping process.
- Consider using .htaccess for server-level redirects on Apache servers.



Step 5: Execute the Migration

Perform the migration during a low-traffic period. Ensure redirects are in place and tested. Update canonical tags to HTTPS, then update all internal links to use HTTPS URLs. Generate and submit new XML sitemaps referencing HTTPS URLs.

- Early morning on weekdays is often a good time.
- Test a few URLs manually before proceeding with other changes.
- Update tracking codes and external integrations as well.



Step 6: Monitor Post-Migration Performance

For the first 48 hours and ongoing, closely monitor server logs for errors (especially 404s), organic traffic fluctuations, and Core Web Vitals. Use crawling software to identify broken links or redirect issues.

- Set up Google Search Console for your new HTTPS property.
- Watch for significant drops in organic traffic.
- Monitor site speed metrics to ensure no performance degradation.



Step 7: Address Mixed Content and External Issues

Identify and fix any mixed content issues where HTTPS pages load HTTP resources. Update all tracking codes, social media profiles, and external links to point to HTTPS versions to prevent unnecessary redirects and ensure proper functionality.

- Use browser developer tools to flag mixed content.
- Manually update links on social media and other external sites.
- Ensure all third-party scripts and embedded content load over HTTPS.



Step 8: Continue Monitoring and Compliance

Keep monitoring your site for at least a month, as rankings can fluctuate. For businesses handling sensitive data, ensure compliance with privacy regulations. Document the entire migration process for audit purposes.

- Be patient; Google needs time to process changes.
- Consider a phased migration for very large sites.
- Seek professional help if the migration is complex or critical to revenue.

Resources & Further Reading

Related guides for this process:

■ HTTPS Migration Action Sheet

<https://storage.googleapis.com/casey-s-seo-checklists-20260710-0cba72/casey-s-seo/Action%20Sheet/https-migration-checklist-without-losing-seo-rankings-action-sheet.pdf>

■ HTTPS Migration Checklist

<https://storage.googleapis.com/casey-s-seo-checklists-20260710-0cba72/casey-s-seo/Checklist/https-migration-checklist.pdf>

■ Colorado Springs SEO Blog

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

■ Colorado Springs Competitor Benchmarking: How to Analyze Your Local SEO Competition – Casey's SEO

<https://caseysseo.com/colorado-springs-competitor-benchmarking/>

■ Colorado Springs Local SEO Company

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

■ 2025 Local SEO ROI Measurement and Analytics – Casey's SEO

<https://caseysseo.com/2025-local-seo-roi-measurement-and-analytics/>

■ Setting Up Bing Webmaster Tools: Your Complete Guide for Multi-Platform SEO Success – Casey's SEO

<https://caseysseo.com/bing-webmaster-tools-setup-guide-for-multi-platform-seo-success/>

■ Find Your Local Results

<https://caseysseo.com/>

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Casey's SEO | 8110 Portsmouth Ct, Colorado Springs, CO 80920
719-639-8238 | caseysseo.com

Meticulous planning and execution are key to a successful HTTPS migration without SEO impact.