

44 Things I Wish I Knew Before I Started Blogging - The Cheat Sheet

This is a cheat sheet created to go alongside our post titled "44 Things I Wish I Knew Before I Started My First Blog"

[See it at https://www.codeinwp.com/blog/starting-a-blog/](https://www.codeinwp.com/blog/starting-a-blog/)

The numbers correspond **and link to** each individual section in the post.

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On traffic and SEO

- [1](#) Begin with SEO in mind; Use a tool like Ahrefs to do keyword research.
- [2](#) Use a tool like MailShake to automatically send outreach emails and followups and build links to your content.
- [4](#) Add lots of internal links to your most important pages that you want to rank in search.
- [5](#) Write guest posts for top blogs in your niche.
- [26](#) Use your competitors' rankings as easy sources for juicy keywords.
- [31](#) Limit how much time you spend looking at analytics so that you don't waste valuable time.
- [39](#) Do keyword research for each and every new post you publish.

On promotion

- [6](#) When you share posts on social media, tag anyone you linked to or involved. Even tag your followers.
- [9](#) Include content upgrades, such as a cheat sheet, checklist, or download (like this very sheet) to get 785% more subscribers.
- [11](#) Partner with influencers using a tool like influence.co to spread the word of your posts.
- [12](#) Focus on your network by joining relevant Facebook or Slack groups, then help them so they'll help you.
- [16](#) Share your content in forums, groups, and on Quora to help with promotion.
- [18](#) Don't be afraid to spend a little on PPC to promote your posts.
- [24](#) Reshare old content on social media to reach new and existing followers.
- [41](#) Give your best stuff away for free - just like famous artists do on the radio.

On building a community and keeping readers happy

- [13](#) Build an email list from the start; Use a tool like MailChimp, ConvertKit, or SendinBlue.
- [28](#) Add a FAQ or other instructions to cut down on repetitive emails via your contact form.
- [30](#) Don't be put off if you get negative comments on your content - it happens to literally everyone.
- [33](#) Do regular content audits to make sure that your website offers only on-point advice and no filler content at all.
- [34](#) Update your content regularly - this benefits not only your regular readers but also people coming from Google.

On publishing content

- [3](#) Go for quality over quantity - publish just great content.
- [7](#) Use a tool like Canva to create high-quality, relevant images for your blog posts.
- [10](#) Add call-to-actions to all of your posts, such as a share button, a link to another article, making a purchase, or leaving a comment.
- [17](#) Make your about page tell a strong story to increase trust with your readers.
- [19](#) Videos are taking over the internet; leverage them!
- [22](#) Create an editorial calendar and plan your content out in advance.

On writing and creating a voice

- [8](#) Use great formatting to look professional and trustworthy (See: <https://www.codeinwp.com/blog/format-wordpress-blog-posts/>)
- [14](#) Focus all your articles around the major theme you want to rank for/be known for. Don't deviate too much from that theme.
- [15](#) Ask your audience what they want to learn about, then write about their answers.
- [20](#) Focus more on creating an actual brand and voice than trying to please every person in the universe.
- [21](#) Write intros that connect with regular people, not high school English professors.
- [27](#) Your headline is what convinces readers to look at your post - make it count.
- [38](#) Use Quora to really find out what people want to read and learn about.
- [40](#) Get inspiration from seemingly unrelated niches - read fiction, keep a journal, explore the world.
- [42](#) Stop obsessing over grammar. Nobody cares.
- [43](#) Writing, editing, publishing – it's a 3-step process. Don't do them all at the same time.
- [44](#) Get a good keyboard → Try out blogging apps → Experiment with helper apps.

On website health and maintenance

- [23](#) Stay on top of regular WordPress maintenance to keep your site secure and running well.
- [25](#) Don't assume that more features means a better WordPress theme and always choose themes from reputable developers.
- [29](#) Manually test important pages on your site regularly to make sure forms and payment pages are functioning properly.
- [32](#) Make sure that your website is hosted with a trusted company to avoid trouble further down the road.
- [35](#) Go easy on the number of plugins you have - if possible, focus only on getting something for: SEO, backups, caching, social media, contact forms.
- [36](#) Keep your site safe with one of the popular security plugins; options: Wordfence, Sucuri, iThemes Security.
- [37](#) Don't sweat over your Google PageSpeed Insights score - if you really want to improve it, get a faster host.