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SEO for beginners

What you'll learn in this guide

- How Google and AI answers find pages
- Your first 20 keywords, free
- Fix one page in 15 minutes
- Set up Search Console and Bing

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What SEO is, and isn't

Free results you earn, not ads you pay for

- SEO: free results, slower to start, lasts
- Ads: paid per click, stop when you stop paying
- Four parts: on-page, technical, off-page, local

The four parts of SEO

Every task in SEO falls into one of these.



On-page

Your words, titles, headings and links

Chapter 7 · Guide 2



Technical

Can search engines crawl and store it?

Chapter 8 · Guide 3



Off-page

Links and mentions on other sites

Guide 2



Local

Showing up on the map near you

Chapter 9 · Guide 2

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How Google works

Crawl, index, serve

- Googlebot follows links and sitemaps
- The index: pages Google has stored
- Serving: the best few for each search



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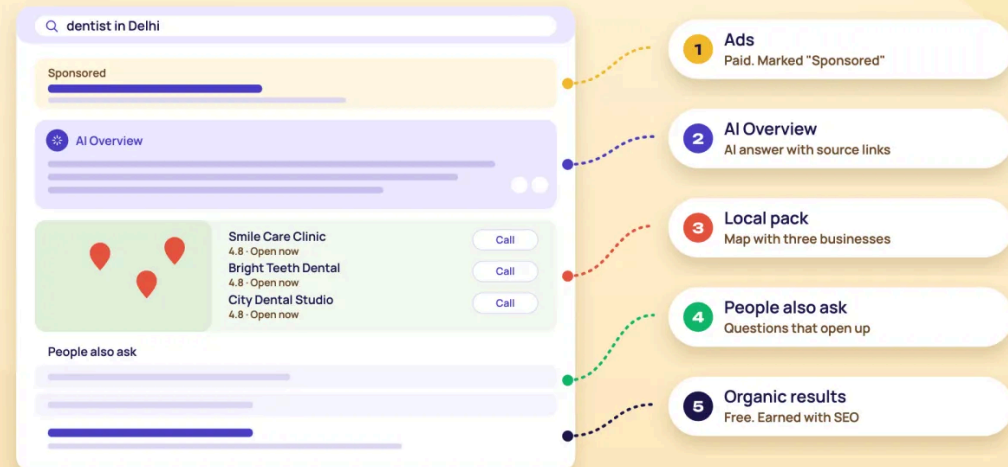
The results page in 2026

Ads, local pack, AI Overview, organic

- Clicks fall fast below the top three
- Even more when an AI answer shows
- Many searches end with no click

What you see on a results page

A search for "dentist in Delhi", with each part labelled. Clinic names are made up.



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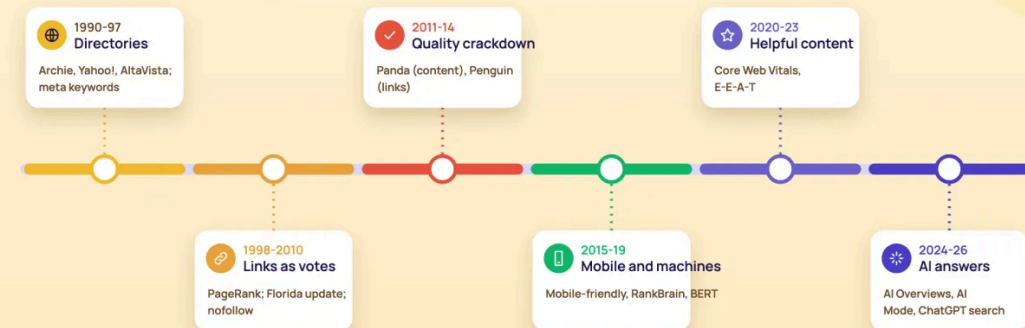
Six eras of SEO

Each era closed a shortcut

- Meta keywords, then links, then quality
- Mobile and machine learning
- Now: AI answers

Thirty-six years of search, in six eras

Each era closed a shortcut that used to work.



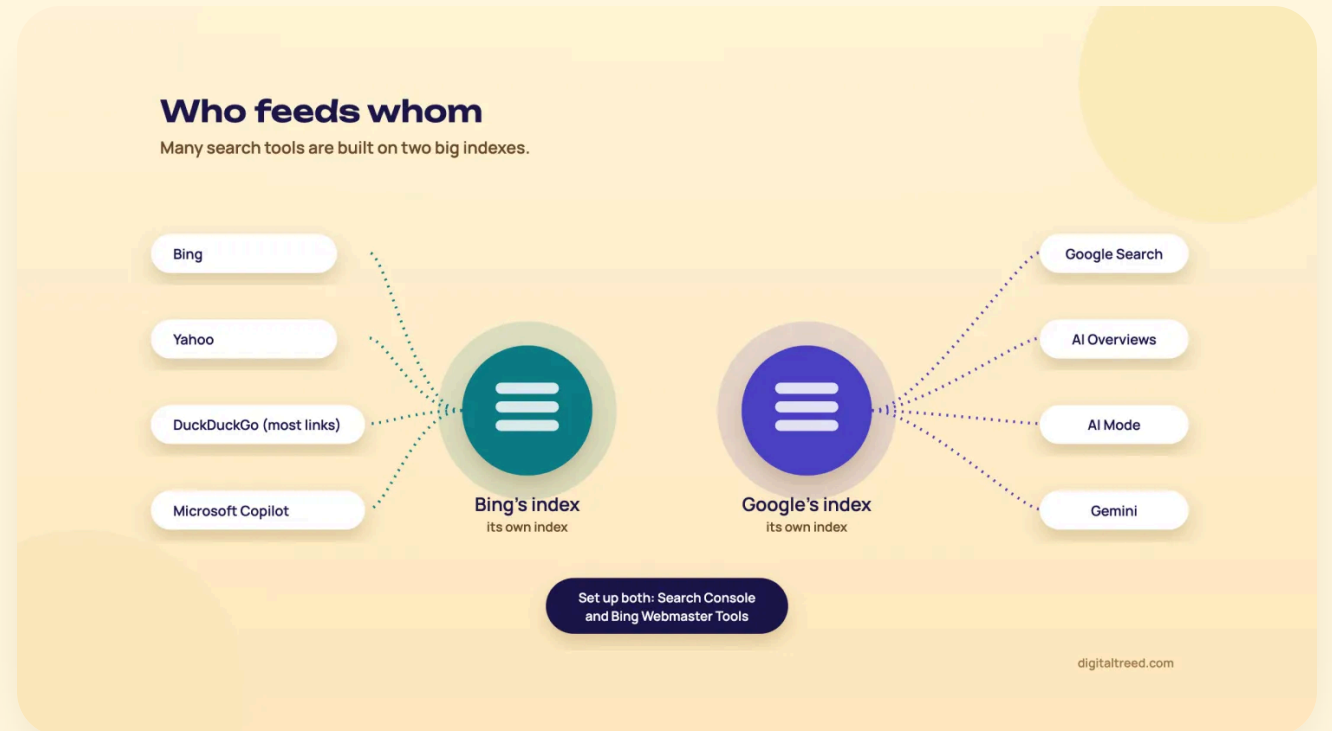
Dates: Google Search Central, Wikipedia timeline · digitaltreed.com

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Search and AI engines

Who feeds whom

- Google: about 97% of search traffic in India
- Bing feeds Yahoo, DuckDuckGo, Copilot
- AI answers search an index first

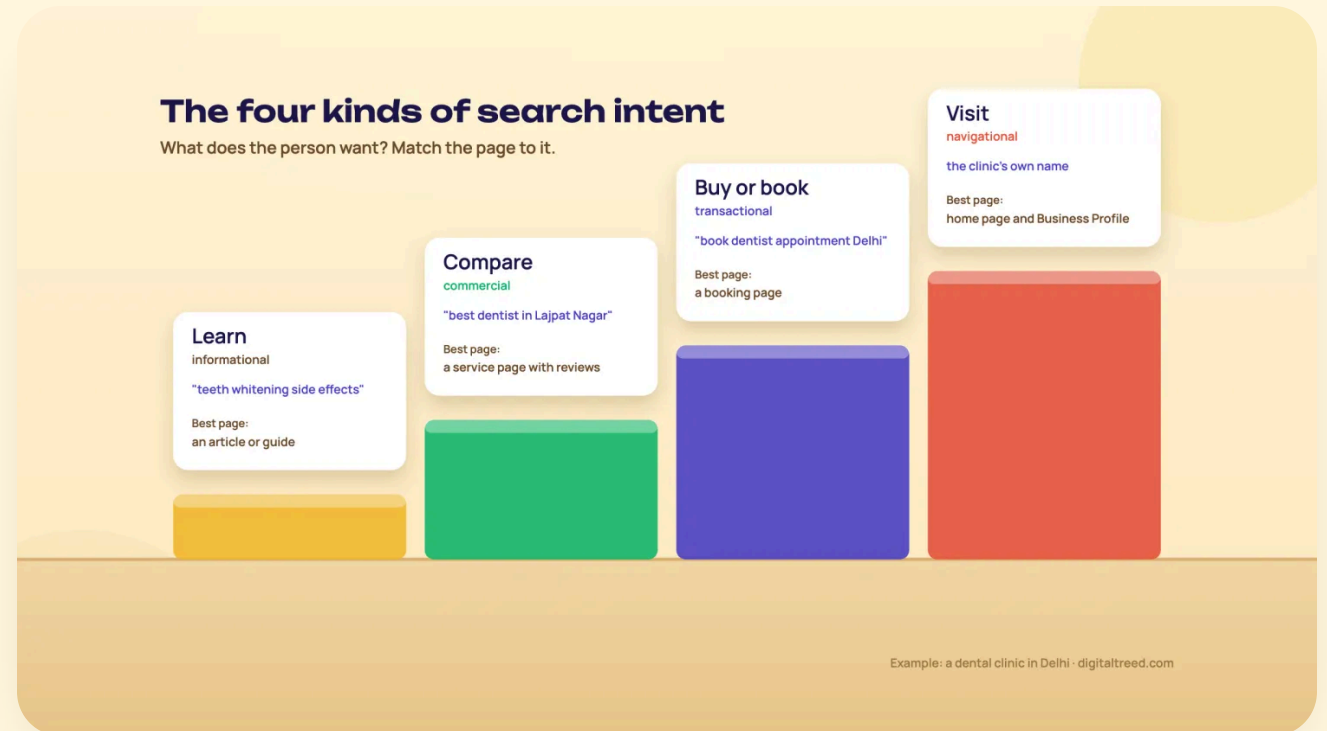


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Keywords and intent

Your customers' words, not yours

- Learn, compare, buy or book, visit
- Long-tail phrases win for small sites
- One page, one main topic



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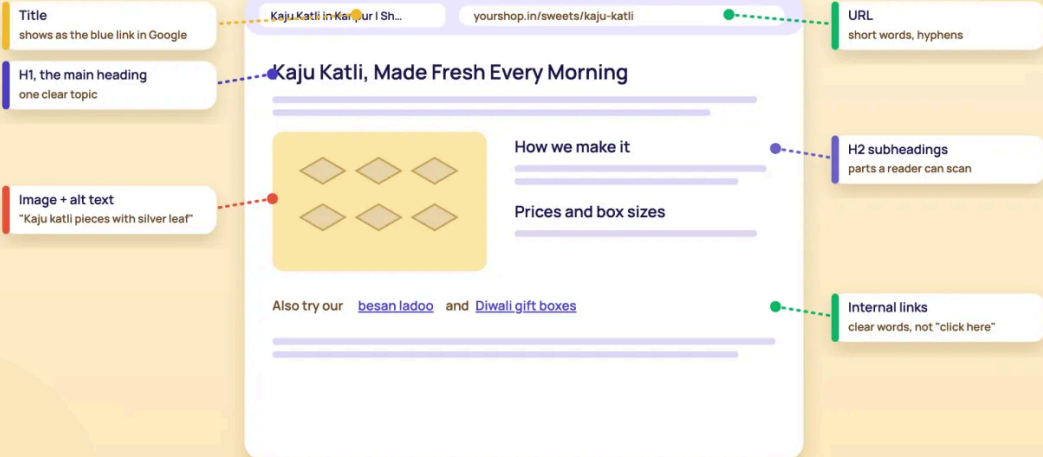
On-page basics

Anatomy of a page

- Main phrase early in the title
- A description that earns the click
- Headings, short URL, alt text, links

Anatomy of a page

The on-page parts Google reads, on one sweet shop page.



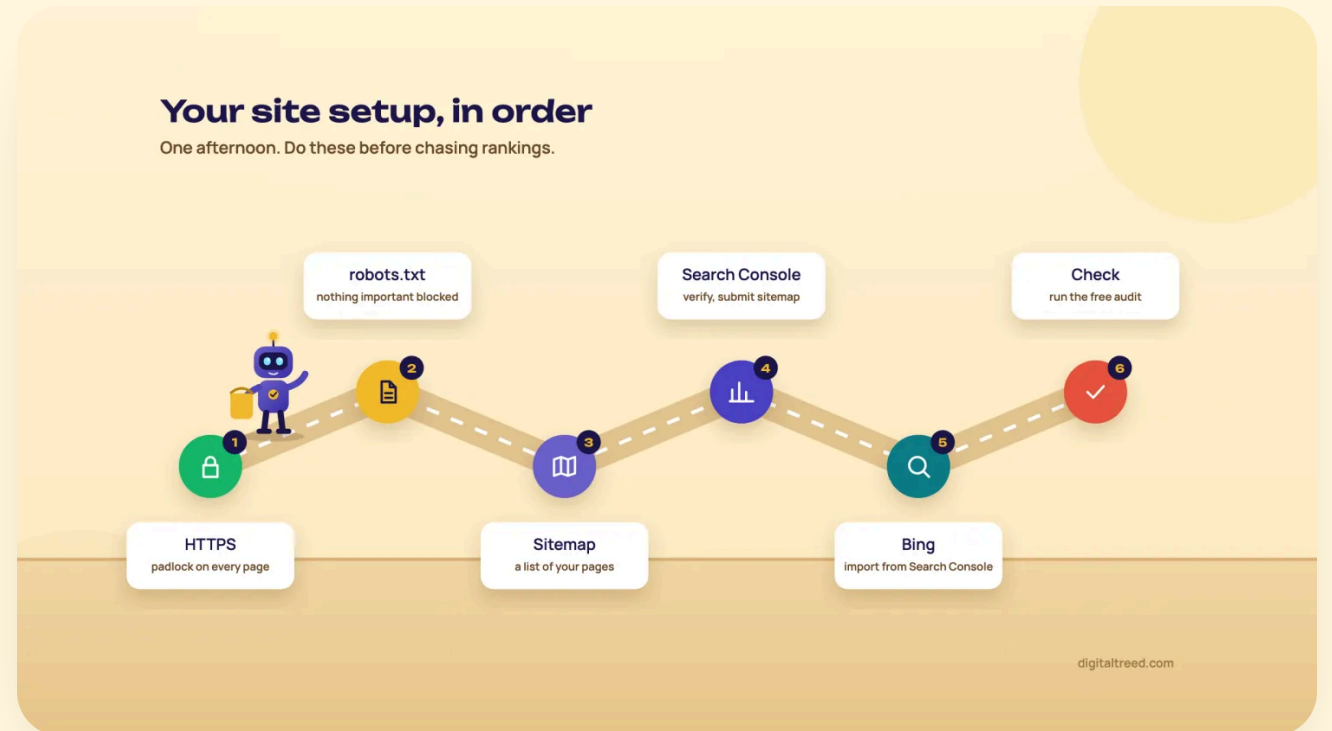
Example page; shop name made up - digitaltreed.com

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Setup in an afternoon

Before chasing rankings

- HTTPS, robots.txt, sitemap
- Search Console, then Bing
- Check with the free tools



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Myths vs facts

What Google actually says

- No keywords meta tag needed
- No preferred word count
- Duplicate content isn't spam
- No llms.txt needed for AI answers

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What to learn next

Five free guides

- Guide 2: Intermediate SEO
- Guide 3: Advanced SEO
- Guide 4: Career · Guide 5: GEO

