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So you want to create a pillar page? Let’s recap what you need to know ***before*** you get started.

**A pillar page** (AKA cornerstone content, skyscraper content, or pillar content) **is a comprehensive, standalone page that covers a topic in-depth all on one page.** Your goal should be to create *the* authoritative resource on a given topic for your target audience.

* **Primary user objective:** Keep the user on the page
* **Primary SERP objective:** Improve the rank on this page to boost the ranks of internal pages linked from it as well + increase the likelihood of securing quality backlinks from external sites

This page is going to provide in-depth, exhaustingly detailed information. It should be the most in-depth writing you have ever done on this topic. It will require a lot of research, writing, and editing, so make time for all three.

**Here are the core components that need to be included on any pillar page:**

* Hyperlinked table of contents
  + \*If your site or CMS doesn’t provide this functionality automatically, you can add it to the top of your article before your intro.
* Primary keyword, keyword variations, and commonly asked questions
* Internal and external links to reputable sources that provide value to readers
* At least one visual
  + Pillar pages are long. Improve readability by including at least one visual element, like an embedded video, screenshot example, checklist, etc., to break up the content.

While there’s no magic length that determines a pillar page, anticipate a minimum of 2,000 words. **Important note:** **The length of pillar content isn’t as important as ensuring you cover the topic comprehensively** and provide all of the information users need. Some pillar pages include 5,000+ words, so use your best judgment based on when you feel the topic has been covered.

**Here are a few successful examples of pillar page types:**

* **Guide Examples:** 
  + [Conductor’s Shopify Tips Guide](https://www.conductor.com/academy/shopify-seo/)
  + [Conductor’s Ultimate Guide to Core Web Vitals](https://www.conductor.com/academy/core-web-vitals/)
  + [MattressFirm’s The New Mattress Buying Guide for 2023](https://www.mattressfirm.com/blog/mattress-obsessed/the-new-mattress-buying-guide)
* **What-is Examples:**
  + [SAP’s What is machine learning?](https://www.sap.com/products/artificial-intelligence/what-is-machine-learning.html)
  + [Okta’s What is Cached Data?](https://www.okta.com/identity-101/cached-data/)
  + [ADP’s What is a payroll service provider?](https://www.adp.com/resources/articles-and-insights/articles/w/what-is-a-payroll-service-provider.aspx)
* **How-to Examples:**
  + [Prudential’s How to Invest in Mutual Funds](https://www.prudential.com/financial-education/how-to-invest-in-mutual-funds)
  + [Ticketmaster’s How to Protect Yourself Against Ticketing Scams](https://blog.ticketmaster.com/ticketing-scams-tips-best-practices/)
  + [American Express’ How to Pay Off Credit Card Debt](https://www.americanexpress.com/en-us/credit-cards/credit-intel/how-to-pay-off-credit-card-debt/)

## Outline

Once you have completed your keyword research and identified a topic, you are ready to start outlining! Fill in the following fields.

\*For tips on the keyword research phase and how to select a topic for your pillar page, [check out our Pillar Page Guide](https://www.conductor.com/academy/topic-clusters/).

**Keyword**: [*Enter Primary Keyword*]

**Keyword MSV**: [*Enter Primary Keyword’s Monthly Search Volume*]

**Keyword Variations**: [*Enter 2-5 primary keyword variations and synonym*s]

**Author**: [*Enter Author(s) Name(s)*]

**Due Date**: [*Enter Due Date*]

**Review Date**: [*Enter date content should be reviewed by*]

**Publish Date**: [*Enter tentative publish date*]

**Audience Persona**: [*Enter the targeted audience or buyer persona*]

## [Pillar Page Title]

For SEO purposes, make sure the page title includes your primary keyword and is 60 characters or less.

## Introduction

Lead into the post with a short 100-300 word introduction. Be sure to highlight:

* The reason why what you’re talking about is important
* Who and what industry/sector of the industry this applies to
* What you’ll be covering (i.e., “in this post, we’ll provide a comprehensive rundown of [topic], including an explanation of why [topic] is important, how to [topic], and 8 suggestions if you’re new to [topic].”)

## Content Sections

Choose the sections from the options below that fit best with your topic and selected pillar page type (guide, what-is, or how-to).

**Remember: these are only our suggested sections.** If your pillar page needs a section not listed below, you should definitely include it.

You’ll also see a prompt at the end of each section to add a relevant internal and/or external resource link. While these are optional, you should aim to naturally hyperlink at least a few internal and external links to authoritative and helpful sources that add value for readers throughout the pillar page.

### What is [topic] and why does it matter?

Even if what you’re writing about is well-known, you should still provide your definition of the term and then delve into why it matters.

Explaining why the term or concept matters is important for the reader to understand how to do or use what it is you’re writing about. Talk about the personal and/or business implications of understanding, employing, or using the topic you’re writing about.

\*Optional:

* **Supporting Internal Link to Include:** [Insert Hyperlink for Reference]
* **Supporting External Link to Include:** [Insert Hyperlink for Reference]

### How does [topic] work?

This is a beneficial section to include when the initial “what is” section may not provide the level of detail the topic needs. For example, if your topic is machine learning, this would be a great section to include to move beyond the core definition and delve into how it does what it does.

\*Optional:

* **Supporting Internal Link to Include:** [Insert Hyperlink for Reference]
* **Supporting External Link to Include:** [Insert Hyperlink for Reference]

### The history of [topic]

Elaborate on the background of what you’re writing about, how it came about, and how it has evolved.

\*Optional:

* **Supporting Internal Link to Include:** [Insert Hyperlink for Reference]
* **Supporting External Link to Include:** [Insert Hyperlink for Reference]

### Terms to know

This is a great place to list and define a few key terms pertaining to your topic, especially if they’re mentioned in the post.

\*Optional:

* **Supporting Internal Link to Include:** [Insert Hyperlink for Reference]
* **Supporting External Link to Include:** [Insert Hyperlink for Reference]

### The pros and cons of [topic]

If your topic has pros and cons, outline those pluses and minuses here. Alternatively, you could replace this section with one centered solely around the benefits of the topic.

\*Optional:

* **Supporting Internal Link to Include:** [Insert Hyperlink for Reference]
* **Supporting External Link to Include:** [Insert Hyperlink for Reference]

### # Examples of [topic]

Proof points are immensely helpful for readers. Let’s say you’re covering the topic of video marketing. This section could include 5 to 10 successful video marketing campaign examples so readers can see the idea in action.

\*Optional:

* **Supporting Internal Link to Include:** [Insert Hyperlink for Reference]
* **Supporting External Link to Include:** [Insert Hyperlink for Reference]

### How to [topic/task]

If your pillar page is dedicated to a concept that requires or benefits from a step-by-step process, outline those steps here. This should be a significant portion of your content if you are writing a how-to pillar page. It’s common to have multiple how-to sections within one pillar page as you’re speaking to different components or processes of the topic.

It’s important to be clear, concise, and accurate in the steps you provide your reader. Any extra fluff included to hit an arbitrary word count may confuse some readers.

If you’re explaining how to solve an equation (i.e. “How to Calculate Marketing ROI), provide a step-by-step explanation and example of how to calculate the rate, point, or number you’re explaining how to reach. Show all of your work so the reader can follow along effortlessly.

\*Optional:

* **Supporting Internal Link to Include:** [Insert Hyperlink for Reference]
* **Supporting External Link to Include:** [Insert Hyperlink for Reference]

### # Tips and best practices for [topic]

When breaking down a complex concept or task, some readers may still feel overwhelmed and unsure of their ability to understand or implement it. Break down a few best practices, tips, or tricks on how to best approach the concept and/or a few reminders about it.

\*Optional:

* **Supporting Internal Link to Include:** [Insert Hyperlink for Reference]
* **Supporting External Link to Include:** [Insert Hyperlink for Reference]

### Checklist for [topic]

This can be a helpful section when breaking down a complex topic, like [Shopify SEO](https://www.conductor.com/academy/shopify-seo/#seo-checklist-for-a-stores-technical-foundation), for example. Providing a checklist of elements to look for or things to account for helps readers feel like they can take action confidently.

\*Optional:

* **Supporting Internal Link to Include:** [Insert Hyperlink for Reference]
* **Supporting External Link to Include:** [Insert Hyperlink for Reference]

### Commonly asked questions

The header title for this section should reflect whatever question you are targeting. Formatting section headers to align with searchers’ most commonly asked questions on a given topic is an effective on-page SEO strategy.

Consider including additional sections that each target a different question from your target audience related to the primary topic. This can help you secure rich result types on Google’s SERPs like People Also Ask.

\*Optional:

* **Supporting Internal Link to Include:** [Insert Hyperlink for Reference]
* **Supporting External Link to Include:** [Insert Hyperlink for Reference]

### [Topic] challenges

This is a chance to speak to the challenges often associated with your topic so you can provide solutions and increase the value of your pillar page. Including this section means readers won’t need to leave your resource to find out what they should avoid or may need to overcome.

You could also format the header of this section as “Common [Topic] Mistakes to Avoid” or whatever best matches the intent behind your topic.

\*Optional:

* **Supporting Internal Link to Include:** [Insert Hyperlink for Reference]
* **Supporting External Link to Include:** [Insert Hyperlink for Reference]

### Conclusion

Wrap up your amazing new content pillar with a great conclusion. Remind your readers of the key takeaways you want them to walk away with.

### Call-to-action

Lastly, include a call-to-action at the bottom of your pillar page. This should be to a lead-generating piece of content or a sales-focused landing page for a demo or consultation of your product or service.

## Checklist Before Publishing

Use this as your go-to checklist to ensure you have covered all your bases and your pillar page is optimized to secure the best ranking on SERPs.

* Did you provide a thorough, all-encompassing rundown of the topic you’re writing about?
* Did you provide relevant examples and accurate facts, stats, and external links to prove your understanding of the concept?
* Did you properly cite and backlink your sources?
* Did you link to internal related content (blog posts, etc.) that adds value for the reader?
* Did you go back to those posts and link to this pillar page?
* Did you reference your primary keyword and include synonyms and related phrases where possible?
* Did you answer commonly asked questions related to this topic?
* Are there at least 2-3 visual elements?
* Is the post 1,500 words at a minimum?
* Did you include a hyperlinked table of contents at the beginning of the article?
* Have you implemented the [fundamental on-page SEO best practices](https://www.conductor.com/academy/on-page-seo-checklist/) throughout the article?
* Did you spell-check and proofread?