2026 Edition · Printable · Scorecard + Templates

E-E-A-T Checklist (2026): Trust Signals That Improve Rankings

A practical, printable checklist + scorecard for startup, affiliate, and service websites.

Who it's for

- ☐ Startup websites
- ☐ Affiliate and review sites
- ☐ Service businesses and agencies
- ☐ Niche publishers and blogs
- ☐ Local businesses

What you'll get

- ☐ 1-page quick checklist (fast audit)
- ☐ Full checklist (3–5 pages)
- ☐ E-E-A-T scorecard table
- ☐ Copy-paste templates
- ☐ Next steps plan + soft CTA

Note (general guidance): This checklist shares general SEO and website trust practices. It's not legal, medical, or financial advice.

Created by: {{brand_name}} • {{website}}

Tip: Start with your homepage + top "money pages", then refresh monthly.

Page basics (per important page)

- ☐ Clear page purpose (helpful, specific)
- ☐ Author shown + link to bio page
- ☐ Last updated date visible (when appropriate)
- ☐ Sources cited for key claims (where needed)
- ☐ Contact info is easy to find
- ☐ About page: who you are + why qualified
- ☐ Policies exist: editorial, affiliate, privacy

Trust signals (site-level)

- ☐ Brand name + logo consistent across site
- ☐ Real person/team details (not anonymous)
- ☐ Social proof (reviews, case studies, testimonials)
- ☐ Business details (address/service area if relevant)
- ☐ Clear navigation + no "thin" pages

Content quality

- ☐ Covers the topic completely (not just keywords)
- ☐ First-hand insights (examples, screenshots, steps)
- ☐ Avoids fluff + repetitive sections
- ☐ Matches search intent (info vs comparison vs service)
- ☐ Helpful visuals (optional) with captions/credit

Technical trust

- ☐ HTTPS + no security warnings
- ☐ No broken links (especially source links)
- ☐ Fast enough on mobile (no heavy popups)
- ☐ Schema basics (Organization, Author, Article/Service)

Decision point

- [ ] Scorecard filled
- [ ] Top 5 fixes listed with deadlines

1) Experience (first-hand signals)

☐ Shows real-world experience (steps, process, or outcomes)

☐ Adds "common mistakes" or "what to do if…" section

☐ Original examples: screenshots, photos, mini demos, or case notes

☐ Comparison criteria included (if review/comparison)

☐ Uses "what we did / what we found" (no exaggeration)

☐ Discloses evaluation method ("How we evaluated")

☐ Mentions constraints (who it's for / not for)

☐ Updates reflect reality (no fake dates)

Best quick upgrades (pick 2–3)

☐ Add a "How we tested / our process" box

☐ Add 1 real screenshot + caption

☐ Add a "When this won't work" section

2) Expertise (author + content competence)

- [ ] Real author or named editorial team
- [ ] Bio includes relevant experience/credentials (specific)
- [ ] Bio links to proof (LinkedIn, portfolio, publications)
- [ ] Author has related articles (linked from bio page)

- [ ] Correct niche terminology (without jargon overload)
- [ ] Reviewed when needed (technical topics)
- [ ] Claims are accurate and consistent
- [ ] Optional: "Last reviewed by" for sensitive topics

For service pages

- [ ] Clear process + deliverables + timelines
- [ ] Proof: case studies, before/after, screenshots, references
- [ ] Tools/stack listed + why you use them

3) Authoritativeness (reputation + recognition)

☐ About page explains mission, team, and credibility

☐ Contact page shows real ways to reach you

☐ External mentions exist (partnerships, citations, directories)

☐ Internal linking shows topical depth (clusters/hubs)

☐ Key pages link out to credible references (as needed)

☐ Testimonials/case studies are specific and believable

☐ Ownership is clear (no mystery brand)

Optional authority boosters (only if true)

☐ "As featured in" (real mentions only)

☐ Speaking/writing page (if you have it)

☐ Press page with real links

4) Trust (the biggest lever)

Transparency & policies

- [ ] Privacy policy (easy to find)
- [ ] Affiliate disclosure (easy to find)
- [ ] Editorial policy (how content is made/updated)
- [ ] Sponsored content policy (if relevant)
- [ ] Corrections policy (simple is fine)
- [ ] Ads don't block reading or mislead clicks
- [ ] No fake buttons / deceptive downloads

Content trust

- [ ] Key claims have sources (stats, "best", "proven")
- [ ] Sources are high quality (primary when possible)
- [ ] No over-promises ("guaranteed rankings")
- [ ] Limitations and assumptions stated
- [ ] Comparisons show criteria + trade-offs
- [ ] Pricing claims include date/context ("as of 2026")

Site trust

- [ ] HTTPS + updated plugins/themes
- [ ] Clear navigation + footer key pages
- [ ] Low errors (404s fixed, broken links cleaned)
- [ ] Contact form tested and works
- [ ] Business details consistent across web (if relevant)

E-E-A-T Scorecard (0–2 each)

0 = missing • 1 = partial • 2 = strong. Re-score after fixes.

Category	Item	0	1	2	Notes / Fix
Experience	First-hand examples (screenshots/steps)	☐	☐	☐	
Experience	"How we tested / process" box	☐	☐	☐	
Expertise	Real author + bio	☐	☐	☐	
Expertise	Relevant credentials/experience shown	☐	☐	☐	
Authority	About page credibility	☐	☐	☐	
Authority	Social proof/case studies	☐	☐	☐	
Trust	Sources/citations for key claims	☐	☐	☐	
Trust	Policies (editorial + affiliate + privacy)	☐	☐	☐	
Trust	Contact info + transparency	☐	☐	☐	
Trust	Site quality (HTTPS, no broken links)	☐	☐	☐	

Experience: __ / 4   Expertise: __ / 4   Authority: __ / 4   Trust: __ / 8   **Overall: __ / 20**

Interpretation (simple)

☐ **0–9:** weak trust signals → fix transparency + author + sources first

☐ **10–15:** decent → add experience proof + update system

☐ **16–20:** strong → improve depth, refresh cadence, reputation

5) On-page E-E-A-T (per important page)

At the top

- ☐ Headline matches intent
- ☐ Intro: who it helps + what it covers
- ☐ Table of contents (for long pages)
- ☐ Author + publish/update dates visible

In the body / end

- ☐ Scannable subheadings + clear sections
- ☐ Proof: examples, steps, screenshots, references
- ☐ FAQ answers real objections
- ☐ Helpful internal links + necessary external citations
- ☐ Summary + next-step CTA
- ☐ Feedback option ("report an issue")

6) Review/Comparison pages (affiliate trust-first)

- ☐ Disclosure near the top (clear)
- ☐ Evaluation criteria listed (what matters)
- ☐ Pros/cons are specific (not generic)
- ☐ "Best for / Not for" per product
- ☐ Alternatives included + why different
- ☐ Pricing notes include date + official pricing links
- ☐ No fake claims ("#1 guaranteed")
- ☐ Your own usage notes (even small)

7) Service pages (local + agency + freelancer)

- [ ] Clear offer + who it's for
- [ ] Proof: case study/results/screenshots/quotes
- [ ] Process steps (1–5 steps)
- [ ] Deliverables list (clear)
- [ ] FAQ covers pricing/timeline/requirements
- [ ] One primary CTA (simple)
- [ ] Trust badges are real (certs/partners)

8) Update & maintenance (2026 reality)

- [ ] Refresh schedule for important pages
- [ ] Outdated tools/pricing/features corrected
- [ ] Broken citations replaced
- [ ] Thin/duplicate content merged or removed
- [ ] Update log on cornerstone pages
- [ ] Redirects set for removed URLs

Mini templates (copy-paste)

1) Author box (blog/article)

Written by: [Author Name]
[Role / credential in plain words] — [1 sentence: what they do + years of experience]
About: [2–3 lines: niche expertise + what they've done]
Profiles: [LinkedIn] • [Website/Portfolio] • [Other proof link]
Editorial note: This page is updated when key details change. See update log below.

2) Editorial policy (short)

We publish content to help readers make better decisions.
– We research topics using reliable sources and practical experience where possible.
– We update pages when tools, pricing, or best practices change.
– We don't accept payment to change our opinions. Sponsored content is labeled clearly.
– If you spot an error, contact us at **[email]** and we'll review it.

3) Sources box

We link to primary sources when available (official docs, original studies, direct announcements).
Key references used on this page:
– [Source 1]
– [Source 2]
– [Source 3]
(If a link breaks or becomes outdated, we replace it during updates.)

4) Update log

– **[YYYY-MM-DD]** — Updated pricing/features section
– **[YYYY-MM-DD]** — Added new screenshots + testing notes
– **[YYYY-MM-DD]** — Replaced outdated references
(We review this page every **[30/60/90]** days.)

5) Affiliate disclosure

Some links on this page may be affiliate links. If you click and purchase, we may earn a commission at no extra cost to you.
We only recommend products we believe are a good fit for the use case described.

Next steps (soft CTA)

Step 1 (10 minutes): pick your top 5 pages

- ☐ Homepage
- ☐ About page
- ☐ Contact page
- ☐ Top 2 traffic pages (or money pages)

Step 2 (20 minutes): apply the Big 6 trust fixes

- ☐ Add author + bio
- ☐ Add/update dates (when appropriate)
- ☐ Add sources for key claims
- ☐ Add policies (editorial/affiliate/privacy)
- ☐ Add proof (screenshots/examples/case notes)
- ☐ Add update log for cornerstone pages

Step 3 (30 minutes): score your site

Use the scorecard. Aim for **16+ / 20** over time. Review, update, repeat.

Want a faster result? (optional)

If you want a practical audit and prioritized fix list, I can review your top pages (E-E-A-T + intent + conversion) and your site-wide trust signals.
Request an audit: {{cta_url}}
Or reply to the email you got this PDF from.

Closing note: Small trust upgrades compound—especially on pages that already get impressions.