

# 7 Ways

*To Master Keyword  
Research for SEO*



Search





# 7 Ways to Master Keyword Research for SEO

Organic keyword research is an ongoing process, but it doesn't have to be an uphill battle the entire time.

Keyword research is critical for ranking content well both organically and for paid services like Google or Bing Ads. When leads and conversions are on the line, it's important to take the time to figure out which keywords have the highest likelihood of attracting the right visitors to your site at the right time.

## Why Is Keyword Research Important for SEO?

Before we dig into the tools and methodologies of keyword research, let's take a step back to examine why exactly keyword research is important from an SEO perspective.

It's important to understand which keywords you'll be targeting well before ever beginning to write a piece of content. Your targeted keywords help to give your content focus, and will serve as a guide for your writing. Content that's clearly and concisely written, and that has a clear focus, tends to rank better on Google and other search engines than content that jumps all over the place.

Since the main objective of an SEO campaign is to increase both the quantity **and** quality of the traffic and leads that you're generating, it's important that the keywords that you're targeting are highly relevant to your business and what your potential customers are actually searching.





# Commonly Used Keyword Research Tools & Methods

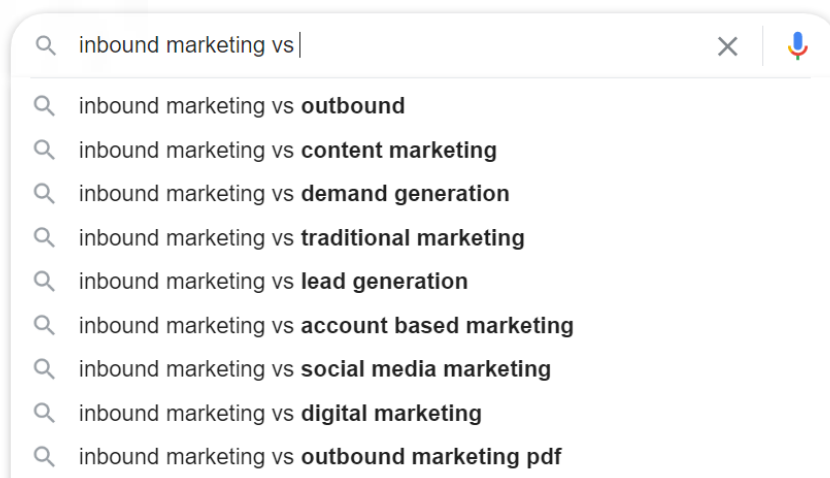
There are so many tools that can help with keyword research that at times it may seem overwhelming.

We've aggregated a list of what we feel are some of the top free (& paid) keyword research tools that you should be aware of in 2020 and beyond.

## 1. Google AutoComplete

What better place to start looking for keyword ideas than with the #1 search engine in the world?

After you've determined the topics that you want to rank for, head to Google to determine what users are searching for relating to the topic. The autofill option on Google will provide you with insight into what others are searching for, and can help to determine additional topics.



### How to use it:

This is by far one of the most simple keyword research methods thanks to Google's simplistic nature.

All you need to do is navigate to [Google.com](https://www.google.com) and begin typing a topic or phrase that you'd like additional keyword information on - Google will handle the rest by auto-populating a list of related queries.

Additionally, Google provides related search queries at the bottom of the search results page:

## Searches related to inbound marketing

[inbound marketing strategy](#)

[inbound marketing plan](#)

[inbound marketing examples](#)

[inbound marketing certification](#)

[inbound marketing conference](#)

[inbound marketing book](#)

[inbound marketing hubspot](#)

[inbound marketing tools](#)

## 2. Google Search Console

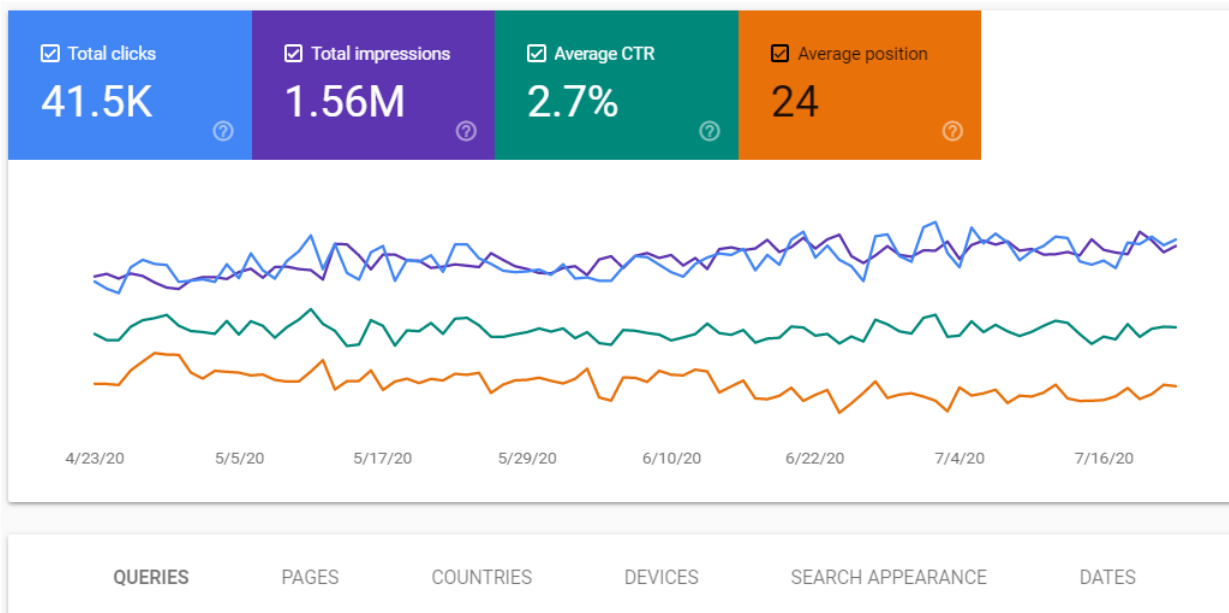


While it may not be a traditional keyword research tool, Google's Search Console sheds light on potentially hundreds of opportunity keywords.

Once you get it set up with your website, you'll be able to see every public page on your website, and the exact keywords each is ranking for via the [performance report section](#).

With the performance report, you'll be able to see which pages on your site are generating the most clicks, what search queries those pages are ranking for, and exactly what users are typing into Google to reach your page through organic search.

You'll also be able to see the average position that your content is ranking for any available search term, so you'll know which pages you might need to revise in order to rank higher for a chosen keyword.



### How to use it:

After you've [set up Google Search Console](#), you'll have access to a wide array of tools.

To begin with the performance report section:

1. Select your desired property on the left-hand side of the page
2. In the navigation panel to the left of the page, select "Search Results" under the "Performance" section

Once the search results data loads, you'll be able to select which metrics you'd like to see, a time frame for the data, and whether you'd like to see:

- Data related to the keywords that you're ranking for
- The pages on your domain
- The countries that you're showing results in
- The devices that people are using
- How your content shows in organic search results.

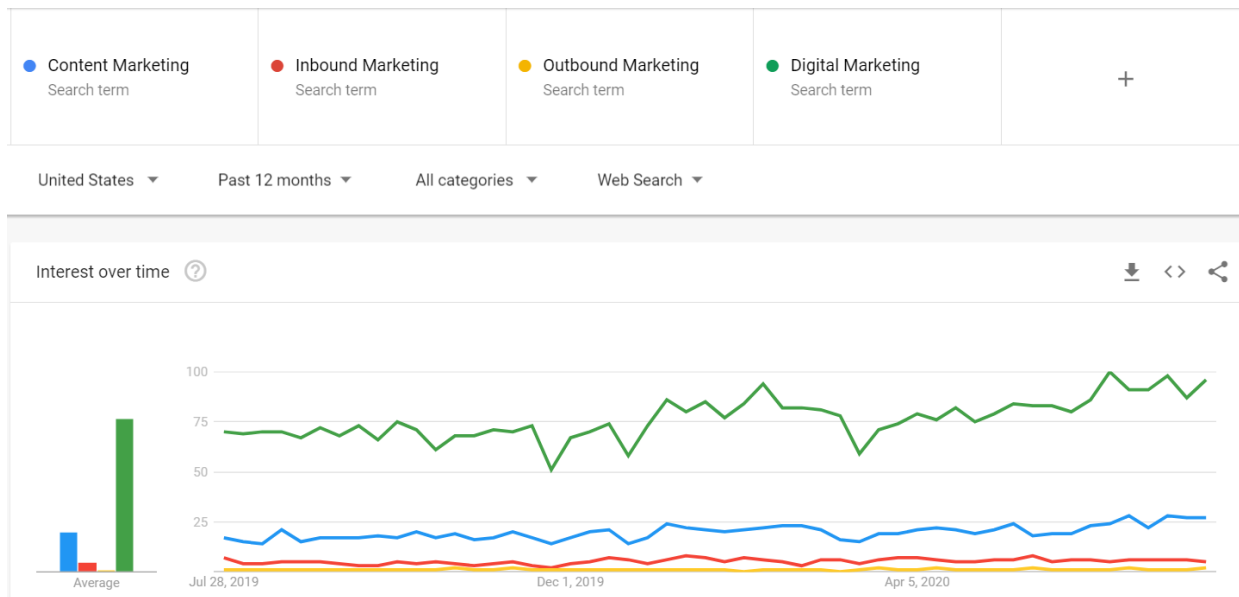
### 3. Google Trends



Google Trends is a great way to find new keywords and see which keywords are trending. It also provides valuable insight into the geographic performance of keywords, which can be helpful when it comes to local SEO or geotargeting campaigns.

This Google tool is extremely valuable not only for the additional keywords that it provides, but also for the trend data that it shows.

Knowing which keywords have been trending upward and which have been losing monthly search volume **helps you plan for future content and** determine what existing content may need to be revised or rewritten to fit new search trends.



#### How to use it:

There are two main ways to use Google Trends.

1. The first way is to search for a term, and then take a look at the “related queries” section. This section should contain keywords or phrases that relate closely to the initial search query.

It is worth noting, though, that not every search term will generate a list of related queries. You might have to try a few variations of your target keyword to come up with a comprehensive list. For example, at the time of writing, the query “SEO & PPC” generates no related queries, while the phrase “SEO **and** PPC” does.

2. The second way to make use of this tool is by analyzing the search trends for different keywords to determine which to target.

In the example above, you can see that the keyword “Digital Marketing” has been trending upwards in recent months, as has “Content Marketing”.

This isn’t to suggest that the other keywords aren’t worth targeting, but the frequency of search should be taken into consideration when determining target keywords.

## 4. Answer the Public



Answer the Public is an extremely powerful keyword research tool that shows questions, prepositions, and comparisons that relate to the targeted keyword.

It visualizes search queries and suggested autocomplete searches for users in an easy-to-understand image called a search cloud. These search clouds are typically made up of the 5 Ws, as well as “how”, “can”, “which”, and “will.” They’re often followed by an alphabetically sorted list of related keywords.



### How to use it:

To get started with Answer the Public, search for a topic or phrase relevant to your business.

The tool will provide you with a fairly comprehensive analysis of related keywords and questions related to the topic that you searched for. As a bonus, the information is presented in a unique, easy-to-parse way that makes keyword research more interesting!

## 5. KeywordTools.io

KeywordTools.io aggregates autocomplete keywords from major sources like Google, Bing, and YouTube, and puts them in one easy-to-access place.

A single search with this tool can yield hundreds of keyword ideas. With the option to further filter results or add negative keywords to the search results, this tool becomes even more powerful, combining autocomplete keywords from major sources in one place.



Find Great Keywords Using Google Autocomplete

Google YouTube Bing Amazon eBay Play Store Instagram Twitter

All ▼ type a keyword and press enter United States / English ▼ 🔍

### How to use it:

Using KeywordTool.io is straightforward and easy.

Simply select the search engine or platform that you'd like to see results from, enter your target keyword, and hit Enter! From there, you'll be greeted with potentially hundreds of results that relate to the phrase that you searched.

You can add negative keywords or additional phrases to further refine the results, sort by ascending or descending alphabetical order, or sort by related questions or prepositions.

## 6. SEMrush



SEMrush is an extremely diverse and useful tool for anyone working in inbound or content marketing.

While the entire suite offers valuable insight into how to rank your website higher in organic search, there are a few tool sets definitely worth noting in regards to keyword research.

### Keyword Magic Tool

The Keyword Magic Tool provides you with hundreds (or thousands) of keywords. Simply type in a keyword, and you'll see every related keyword people are actually typing into Google.

The tool provides information on keywords pertaining to:

- The average monthly search volume
- The keyword search trend (similar to Google Trends)
- The expected difficulty to rank for that keyword
- The average competition for the keyword
- Any known SERP features (featured snippet, image pack, knowledge panel, etc.)
- The average total results for the keyword

#### Keyword Magic Tool: Inbound Marketing

[View search history](#)

Database: United States | Currency: USD

All Questions | **Broad Match** | Phrase Match | Exact Match | Related | Advanced Filters

By number | By volume

All keywords: 6,560 | Total volume: 52,260 | Average KD: 56.79%

[To Keyword Manager](#) | [Export](#)

Keyword	Volume	Trend	KD %	CPC \$	Com.	SF	Results
inbound marketing	9,900		75.92	3.39	0.13	6	61.5M
what is inbound marketing	1,600		73.18	3.42	0.07	5	69.7M
inbound vs outbound marketing	1,300		60.70	2.40	0.01	3	15.1M
hubspot inbound marketing	720		86.19	7.97	0.09	6	5.7M
hubspot inbound marketing certification	720		71.32	6.75	0.07	4	408K

### Content Planner Tool

The content planner tool will aggregate existing content surrounding a topic in one place.

This tool shows the article's title, how well the article is ranking, and the domain it belongs to. This is extremely useful because you can determine which domains are ranking for specific queries and see all of the content that they have created for the query.

#### Topic Research: inbound marketing

[Order content writing](#)

[Export topic to XLSX](#)

Content Ideas | Favorite Ideas

inbound marketing | United States | Search content on domain | [Get content ideas](#)

Favorite Ideas

Cards | Explorer | Overview | Mind Map | Trending subtopics first | Prioritize topics by: Volume

There are no trending subtopics at the moment. You can search for another topic, there should be some hot ones!

<b>Google Search</b> Volume: 1.2m 17 Google Marketing Tools You Should Be U... News Flash: PPC Is Inbound Marketing 4 Ways Paid Search Can Support Inbound M...	<b>Digital Marketing</b> Volume: 49.5k The Who, What, Why, & How of Digital Mark... What Is Inbound Marketing? Inbound Marketing Agency	<b>Social Media Marketing</b> Volume: 40.5k Social Media Marketing: The Ultimate Guide What Is Inbound Marketing? Overview & Tools Denver Inbound Marketing Services	<b>Pay Attention</b> Volume: 22.2k Inbound Marketing Inbound Marketing vs Outbound Marketing Why Paid Advertising is an Important Part o...	<b>Call To Action</b> Volume: 18.1k Call to action (marketing) 39 Call-to-action Examples You Can't Help B... Call to action: The how and where of CTAs
<b>Landing Page</b> Volume: 18.1k Why Landing Pages Are an Indispensable Pa... The Perfect Landing Page: Landing page ex... The 6-Step Inbound Marketing Process (Info...	<b>Email Marketing</b> Volume: 18.1k The Ultimate Guide to Email Marketing 21 B2B Email Marketing Examples (Incl. Uni... How to Use the Inbound Technique for Emal...	<b>Long Term</b> Volume: 14.8k What is Inbound Marketing? Content Marketing Made Simple: A Step-by-... What is Inbound Marketing and Why Is It Im...	<b>Content Marketing</b> Volume: 14.8k What is Inbound Marketing? Content Marketing Made Simple: A Step-by-... Inbound Marketing Isn't Enough: 7 Content ...	<b>Lead Generation</b> Volume: 12.1k Lead Generation: A Complete Guide 5 Inbound Lead Generation Strategies 7 must-have inbound marketing tactics to g...





## Keyword Gap Tool

The Keyword Gap Tool shows you what keyword opportunities you have compared against a competitor of your choosing.

Similar to Keyword Magic, this tool shows every keyword that a competitor is ranking for -- and that you **aren't** ranking for (yet). It also provides information on the keyword, such as:

- Monthly search volume
- The difficulty to rank for the keyword
- The keyword's search trend

## Keyword Gap

Database: United States | Device: Desktop | Date: Jul 23, 2020 | Currency: USD

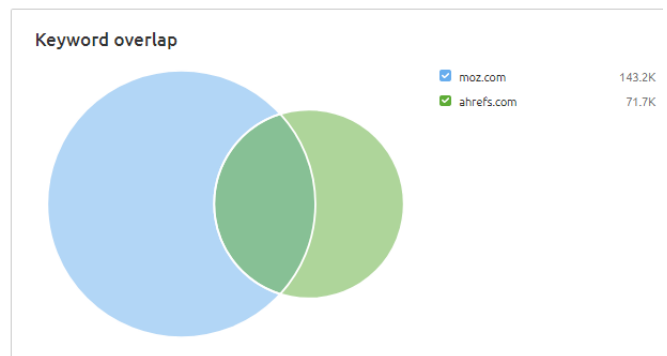
Root Domain  Root Domain

[Select keyword type for each domain](#)

Position

### Top Opportunities for You

Keyword	Volume
interest	9,140,000
bing	7,480,000
google sheets	2,240,000
wix	673,000
google trends	450,000



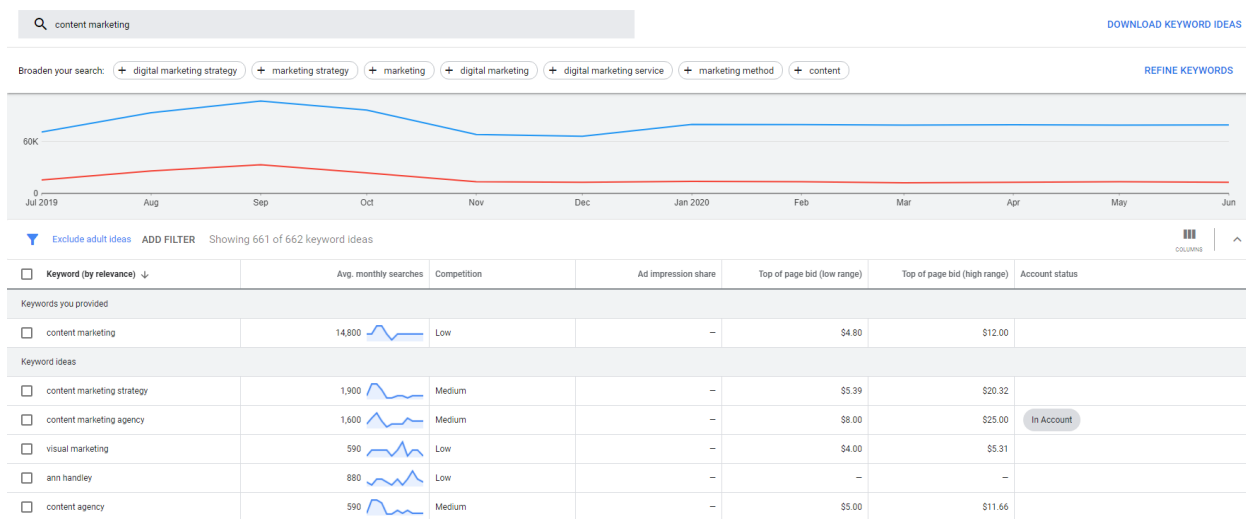


## 7. Google Keyword Planner (Google Ads)

Although this tool is technically designed for use with Google Ads, Google's Keyword Planner tool offers great insight into keywords that you can target organically.

By entering a single query (or domain) into the Keyword Planner tool, Google will show you (potentially) hundreds of related keywords that other people and organizations are actively bidding on.

By searching the list, you can determine new keywords to target. You'll also be shown the average monthly search volumes for each keyword as well as the average competition level.



### How to use it:

You don't have to actively run ads on Google to make use of Keyword Planner. All you need to do is [create a free Google Ads account](#).

Once the account has been created:

1. Click "Tools & Settings" in the top-right corner
2. From the drop-down menu, select "Keyword Planner" on the left-most column
3. Select the option to "Discover new keywords"

From there, you'll be able to enter different topics or domains to receive keyword recommendations from.

## 8. Review Competitor Content & Rankings



One of the best ways to find new keywords and topics is to see what your competitors are already ranking for.

Once you've determined new topics and keywords based on your competitor's content, create your own unique -- and superior -- version. While it's OK to get inspiration from your competitors' content, never copy it verbatim. If Google determines that you're guilty of this, your search rankings may be penalized.

A screenshot of a Google search for 'site:protocol80.com'. The search bar shows the query and a search button. Below the search bar, there are navigation links for 'All', 'Images', 'News', 'Shopping', 'Maps', and 'More'. The search results show 'About 1,100 results (0.21 seconds)'. The first result is a 'Google promotion' for 'Try Google Search Console' with the URL 'www.google.com/webmasters/'. The second result is from 'www.protocol80.com' with the title 'Inbound Marketing Agency and B2B Lead Generation ...' and a description: 'Generate more leads through your website with affordable inbound marketing services. Improve your ROI and grow your business. Free consultations.' The third result is also from 'www.protocol80.com' with the title 'About Us - Protocol 80' and a description: 'We help businesses with complex sales cycles turn their online presence into a consistent source of new leads and new customers.'

### How to do this:

If you have a concise list of competitors, this task is relatively straightforward, though it can be pretty time consuming depending on how granular you get with your analysis.

Start off by going to google.com and searching "**site:YourCompetitor'sDomain.com**". This will show you Google's index of the competitor's website. *Note: Replace "YourCompetitor'sDomain.com" with the actual URL for your competitor.*

From there, you can add topics or keywords to the end of the domain query to see which of the competitor's pages rank for that topic.

For example, you could append "SEO" to the end of an indexed domain search to see which pages on that domain are ranking for the term "SEO."