

SEO vs AEO vs GEO — 2026 Action Checklist

A practical, print-ready checklist from RankMyMarketing to help you win in Google, AI assistants, and generative answer engines.

	SEO	AEO	GEO
Optimizes for	Ranked links	Assistant answers	AI citations
Primary surface	Google/Bing SERPs	ChatGPT, Claude, Perplexity	AI Overviews, Copilot
Key format	Long-form pages	Short standalone answers	Definitional + structured data

SEO — the foundation (do first)

- Unique title (50–60 chars) and meta description (140–160 chars) per page
- One H1 per page and a logical H2/H3 hierarchy
- Canonical URL, current XML sitemap, clean robots.txt
- Core Web Vitals pass on mobile (LCP < 2.5s, INP < 200ms, CLS < 0.1)
- HTTPS site-wide, no mixed content, no broken links
- Internal linking from pillar pages to supporting pages
- Descriptive image alt text and compressed images
- Backlinks from relevant, authoritative sources

AEO — answer engine optimization (do second)

- Publish an **llms.txt** at the site root describing your business
- Allowlist AI crawlers in robots.txt: GPTBot, Google-Extended, ClaudeBot, PerplexityBot, Applebot-Extended
- Write short, standalone 40–60 word answers directly under each H2/H3
- Add FAQPage schema on service and pillar pages
- Publish visible author bios, credentials, and updated dates (E-E-A-T)
- Use clear entity naming — brand, people, locations, products
- Prompt-test your target queries in ChatGPT, Claude, Perplexity monthly

GEO — generative engine optimization (do third)

- Schema.org on every template: Organization, WebSite, Article / Product / LocalBusiness
- Definitional opening paragraphs generative models can quote verbatim
- Data tables, stats, and expert quotes with clear attribution
- Consistent brand + entity naming across your site and third-party profiles
- Digital PR — earn mentions on sites the models already cite
- Track AI citation share and brand mention frequency over time

Shared foundation (covers all three)

- Crawlable, fast, mobile-friendly site
- Clear headings and semantic HTML

- Structured data on every template
- Authoritative, original content updated regularly
- Consistent NAP and brand entity signals

Get your free SEO, AEO, and GEO score at rankmymarketing.com