

ECOM CRO AUDIT CHECKLIST

Conversion Rate Optimisation for Ecom Founders

How to use this checklist

Work through each of the 10 sections in order. Tick off items as you complete them. Always start with  Critical fixes - these are the changes most likely to be costing you sales right now.

Small changes compound fast. Example: 1,000 visitors/day at 1% CVR and £50 AOV = £500/day. Increase CVR to 2% with the same traffic = £1,000/day. That is £182,500 extra per year from the same ad spend.

Priority Key:  Critical  High  Medium

Sections covered:

1. Before You Start
2. Navigation & Site Structure
3. Homepage
4. Collection & Category Pages
5. Product Pages
6. Cart & Average Order Value (AOV)
7. Checkout
8. Trust & Social Proof
9. Speed & Technical Health
10. Ongoing Optimisation

1. Before You Start

BEFORE YOU START		
✓	Check	Priority
☐	Run your site through Google PageSpeed Insights — mobile score should be 60+ (aim for 70+). Test at pagespeed.web.dev	● Critical
☐	Test the entire site on a real mobile device — around 80% of your traffic will come from mobile	● Critical
☐	Install a heatmap tool before changing anything — Lucky Orange (free tier available), Clarity or Hotjar — so you can see exactly where users drop off	● High
☐	Identify your top 3 revenue-driving products. These anchor your whole optimisation strategy and should lead your homepage and ads	● High
☐	Note your current conversion rate in Shopify Analytics or Google Analytics as a baseline — you can't improve what you don't measure	● High
☐	Work out your unit economics: selling price minus COGS, fulfilment, platform fees = net profit per sale. Know your break-even ROAS before scaling ads	● High
☐	Duplicate your live theme before making any changes — never edit directly on the live site	● Critical

2. Navigation & Site Structure

NAVIGATION & SITE STRUCTURE		
✓	Check	Priority
☐	Sticky header enabled so the nav bar stays visible as customers scroll — especially important on mobile	● High
☐	Menu labels are clear and specific — avoid vague labels like 'Collections' or 'Explore'. Use 'Hoodies', 'Best Sellers', 'New In'	● High
☐	Best sellers, new arrivals, and top categories are reachable in one click from the nav	● High
☐	If you have a diverse catalogue, use a clear category hierarchy — e.g. Clothing > T-Shirts. Give people the fastest route to what they want	● High
☐	Search bar is visible and functional on both desktop and mobile	● Medium
☐	No broken links — test every nav item and dropdown before driving paid traffic	● Critical
☐	Contact link or support email is accessible from the header or nav — visible trust signal for first-time visitors	● Medium

3. Homepage

HOMEPAGE		
✓	Check	Priority
☐	Hero banner communicates WHAT you sell and WHO it's for within 3 seconds — if a stranger can't tell immediately, rewrite it	● Critical
☐	Hero image is high quality and shows your product or brand world clearly — this is the first visual impression	● Critical

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☐	No sliders or autoplay videos on the hero — they kill page speed and distract from the primary CTA	● High
☐	Primary CTA button is above the fold, high contrast, and action-oriented — e.g. 'Shop Best Sellers', 'Get Yours Today'	● Critical
☐	USP strip appears directly below the hero — icons + short copy covering free shipping threshold, returns policy, quality guarantee etc.	● High
☐	Homepage leads with your top-selling range — secondary or niche products sit lower on the page	● High
☐	Product/collection categories are shown with images, not just text links — people respond to visuals far more than words	● High
☐	Best sellers section includes product labels like 'Best Seller', 'New In' or 'Low Stock' (Labelify or Flair apps)	● High
☐	Social proof section (star ratings, customer quotes, customer photos) appears prominently — ideally in the top half of the page	● Critical
☐	Brand story section covers: why you started, what problem you solve, what makes you different. Keep it real — avoid AI-sounding copy	● Medium
☐	Instagram/UGC feed embedded showing real customers using your products (Instafeed app)	● Medium
☐	'As seen in' press logos shown if applicable — request permission from publications before using their logos	● Medium
☐	Comparison table vs. competitors included where differentiation is a key buying factor for your category	● Medium
☐	Loyalty/rewards programme highlighted on the homepage if you have one — recommended apps: Smile.io, Yotpo Loyalty	● Medium
☐	Email newsletter signup section offers a clear incentive — e.g. '10% off your first order'	● High
☐	Email popup fires 6–8 seconds after page load — single email field only, NOT a full account creation form. Multi-step forms kill sign-up rates	● High
☐	Seasonal promos (Black Friday, sales) use a popup or banner — never a full-page takeover that blocks all homepage content	● Critical
☐	FAQ section covers shipping, returns, sizing, and the most common product questions. Use a collapsible accordion format	● High
☐	Live chat widget installed — Shopify Inbox is free and lets you answer pre-purchase questions in real time	● Medium
☐	Footer includes: Privacy Policy, T&Cs, Contact link, Social media icons, and GDPR/cookie consent popup (Consentmo)	● Critical

4. Collection & Category Pages

COLLECTION & CATEGORY PAGES		
✓	Check	Priority
☐	All product images are the same size and style across the collection grid — no inconsistent crops or mixed backgrounds	● High
☐	Product images swap to a lifestyle or on-model shot on hover (desktop) or swipe (mobile) — gives customers a feel for the product without clicking through	● Medium
☐	'Best Seller', 'New In', 'Low Stock', and sale badges applied using a product label app (Labelify or Flair)	● High

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☐	Sold-out products are hidden or pushed to the bottom of the collection — don't show them prominently	● High
☐	Category hero image and descriptive title displayed at the top of each collection page	● Medium
☐	Filters and sorting options work correctly on mobile without any layout breaking	● High
☐	Price, product name, and any sale callout are displayed consistently under every product tile	● Medium

5. Product Pages

PRODUCT PAGES		
✓	Check	Priority
☐	Minimum 6–8 high quality images per product: flat lay, lifestyle, close-up detail, front/back, on-model, label or material shot	● Critical
☐	Images show the product in real-life settings — customers need to visualise ownership before they'll commit to buying	● Critical
☐	Product title is clear and descriptive — includes key benefits, materials, or distinguishing features where relevant	● High
☐	First 2–3 lines of description state clearly: who it's for, what it does, and the key benefit — not a brand story	● Critical
☐	Full description uses collapsible accordions for: materials, sizing, care instructions, delivery info — keeps the page clean	● High
☐	Description does NOT read as AI-generated — no excessive hyphens, stiff phrasing, or robotic sentence structure. Read it out loud	● High
☐	Size guide is present and accurate — ideally a visual size chart with measurements, not just XS/S/M/L	● High
☐	Colour and size selectors are clearly styled and easy to tap on mobile — quantity selector should look distinct from the selectors	● Critical
☐	Add to Cart button is high contrast, visually dominant, and clearly the most prominent action on the page	● Critical
☐	Add to Cart button is sticky on mobile as the customer scrolls — they shouldn't have to scroll back up to buy	● High
☐	Alternative payment options shown near Add to Cart: Klarna, PayPal, ShopPay — reduces friction for different buyer preferences	● High
☐	Star rating and review count displayed near the product title — visible social proof before the customer even reads the description	● Critical
☐	Customer photos or UGC shown on the product page alongside written reviews — real images outperform stock imagery for trust	● High
💡 Note: For clothing brands: reviews matter less than for other categories — strong imagery, aesthetic, and brand feel carry more weight. Prioritise image quality and lifestyle shots over review volume.		
☐	Delivery timelines and returns policy are clearly visible before checkout — no surprise costs or policies at the end	● Critical
☐	Money-back guarantee or satisfaction guarantee highlighted near the Add to Cart button — most are never claimed but they remove risk for the buyer	● High
☐	Trust badges displayed: Secure Checkout, Free Returns, Ethically Made etc. — relevant badges for your category	● High
☐	Urgency or scarcity used tastefully — e.g. 'Only 3 left in stock' or estimated delivery date. Use Nudgify or Provesource apps	● Medium

☐	Cross-sell ('You May Also Like') or upsell bundle shown below or alongside the product — use Kite, Essential Upsell & Cross Sell, or Bundly	● High
☐	FAQ accordion below the product info covers the 4–6 most common questions specific to this product — reduces support load and hesitation	● High

6. Cart & Average Order Value (AOV)

CART & AVERAGE ORDER VALUE (AOV)		
✓	Check	Priority
☐	Cart opens as a slide-out drawer from the right — not a full page redirect. Anything that takes customers out of the funnel costs you conversions	● High
☐	Free shipping progress bar visible in the cart: 'You're £12 away from free shipping'. Recommended apps: Kite, UpCart, Essential Upsell & Cross Sell	● Critical
☐	Free shipping threshold set ~20–30% above your current AOV — just enough to nudge customers to add one more item without feeling like a stretch	● High
☐	Product suggestions appear in the cart to help customers hit the threshold — small, low-consideration items work best here (e.g. socks alongside trainers)	● High
☐	Bundle deals or 'Frequently Bought Together' shown in the cart or on the product page — use Bundly or Essential Upsell & Cross Sell	● High
☐	Tiered rewards visible in the cart — e.g. free shipping at £50, free gift at £80. Framing as 'get more' not 'save money' protects brand value	● Medium
☐	For higher-ticket products (£150+): absorb shipping cost into the price rather than using a progress bar — the bar is most effective for £15–£100 AOV ranges	● Medium
☐	Gift cards shown inside the cart, not the homepage — people in the cart are qualified buyers. Homepage visitors may not be ready to purchase yet	● Medium
☐	Subscriptions considered for consumable products — offer a 'Subscribe & Save' option with a small discount (e.g. 10–15% off). Apps: Recharge or Appstle (Skiio is best but expensive, suited to larger brands)	● Medium
☐	Cart items display thumbnail images, product names, sizes, and quantities clearly — no confusion or second-guessing at this stage	● High

7. Checkout

CHECKOUT		
✓	Check	Priority
☐	Checkout page is clean and minimal — no extra navigation, popups, or distractions that pull buyers away at the final hurdle	● Critical
☐	Trust signals visible at checkout: secure payment icons, SSL badge, money-back guarantee	● High
☐	Guest checkout enabled — never force account creation before completing a purchase. This is one of the most common checkout drop-off causes	● Critical
☐	Shipping cost shown clearly before the final step — no surprise fees appearing at checkout. Unexpected charges are a leading cause of abandonment	● Critical
☐	Checkout works flawlessly on mobile — tap targets are large, form fields easy to fill, no layout issues	● Critical

☐	Post-purchase upsell on the thank you page is set up — Honeycomb is recommended. Buyers are most receptive immediately after purchasing	● Medium
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8. Trust & Social Proof

TRUST & SOCIAL PROOF		
✓	Check	Priority
☐	Reviews app installed and collecting reviews automatically post-purchase — recommended: Judge.me, Okendo, or Loox	● Critical
☐	Trustpilot or Google Reviews badge displayed on the homepage and product pages	● High
☐	Video testimonials or UGC content featured — video converts significantly better than text reviews alone	● High
☐	Real customer photos included in product reviews — not just star ratings and text. Photo reviews massively increase trust	● High
💡 Note: For clothing brands: reviews matter less than imagery and brand aesthetic. Focus energy on visual quality, lifestyle shots, and UGC rather than chasing review volume.		
☐	About page tells a genuine founder story — why you started, your passion, what makes the brand real. Specific beats generic every time	● Medium
☐	About page does NOT read as AI-generated — add real names, places, specific moments. Customers can tell when it's been generated and it damages trust	● High
☐	Social media is active and linked from the website — a dead Instagram account undermines purchase confidence for new visitors	● High
☐	Community or customer stats shown if numbers are strong — e.g. 'Trusted by 12,000+ customers'	● Medium

9. Speed & Technical Health

SPEED & TECHNICAL HEALTH		
✓	Check	Priority
☐	Mobile PageSpeed score is 60+ — aim for 70+. Test at pagespeed.web.dev before running any paid campaigns	● Critical
☐	All product and hero images compressed before uploading — use Shopify's built-in optimisation or TinyPNG	● Critical
☐	Homepage video removed or heavily compressed on mobile — large videos are the single biggest page speed killer	● Critical
☐	Unnecessary apps removed — every installed app adds scripts to your storefront. Audit your app list and cut anything not actively contributing to revenue	● High
☐	No unfinished sections, placeholder text, or empty template blocks visible to visitors — if the site looks unfinished, customers assume the business is too	● Critical
☐	GDPR/cookie consent popup present and functional — Consentmo is widely used and easy to set up	● Critical
☐	Privacy Policy and T&Cs pages exist and are linked in the footer — legal requirement and a trust signal	● Critical
☐	No 404 errors on key pages — run a broken link check before launching any campaigns	● High

☐	Paid theme considered if on a free theme — free themes cap your customisation. Paid themes (£100–£400) unlock features that meaningfully improve conversion. Test the demo before buying	● Medium
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10. Ongoing Optimisation

ONGOING OPTIMISATION		
✓	Check	Priority
☐	Heatmap recordings reviewed monthly — look for where users stop scrolling, what they ignore, and where they drop off before adding to cart	● High
☐	A/B test one element at a time — headline, CTA copy, hero image, button colour. Never test multiple variables simultaneously or you won't know what moved the needle	● Medium
☐	Top site search queries reviewed monthly — update nav, homepage, and collection pages to surface what customers are actively looking for	● Medium
☐	Abandoned cart email flow live — sends at 1 hour, 24 hours, and 72 hours after abandonment. Use Klaviyo for reliable Shopify integration	● Critical
☐	Browse abandonment flow live — email sent to subscribers who viewed products but didn't add to cart	● High
☐	Post-purchase review request flow — triggers 10–14 days after estimated delivery, when the product has arrived and the customer has had time to use it	● High
☐	Welcome flow (3–5 emails) — introduces the brand story, top products, and a first-order incentive. This is your highest-ROI email sequence	● High
☐	Regular newsletters sent weekly — mix of new products, brand updates, education, and occasional promotions. Avoid sending only discount-led emails	● High
☐	Discounts offered via email to existing list are acceptable — you're not paying to acquire that customer again, so margin hit is justified	● Medium
☐	Conversion rate reviewed weekly alongside traffic source — track paid vs organic separately so you know what's actually driving performance	● Medium
☐	LTV tracked via Shopify's Customer Cohort Analysis — check 'Amount Spent per Customer' monthly to see how repeat purchase behaviour develops over time	● Medium
☐	All CRO improvements trialled on a duplicate theme first, reviewed on mobile, then pushed live — never test on the live site directly	● High

CRO Health Score

Once you have worked through the checklist, tally up your completed items per section to get a score. Use this to track progress over time and to decide where to focus next.

Section	Total Items	Completed	Notes / Next Action
1. Before You Start	7		
2. Navigation & Site Structure	7		
3. Homepage	21		
4. Collection & Category Pages	7		
5. Product Pages	19		
6. Cart & AOV	10		
7. Checkout	6		
8. Trust & Social Proof	8		
9. Speed & Technical Health	9		
10. Ongoing Optimisation	12		
TOTAL	106	/ 106	

Score guide:

90–106:  Excellent — strong foundations. Focus on testing and incremental improvements.

70–89:  Good — a few gaps to close. Prioritise any remaining Critical items.

50–69:  Work to do — meaningful revenue likely being left on the table.

Under 50:  Start here — fix Critical and High items before scaling any ad spend.