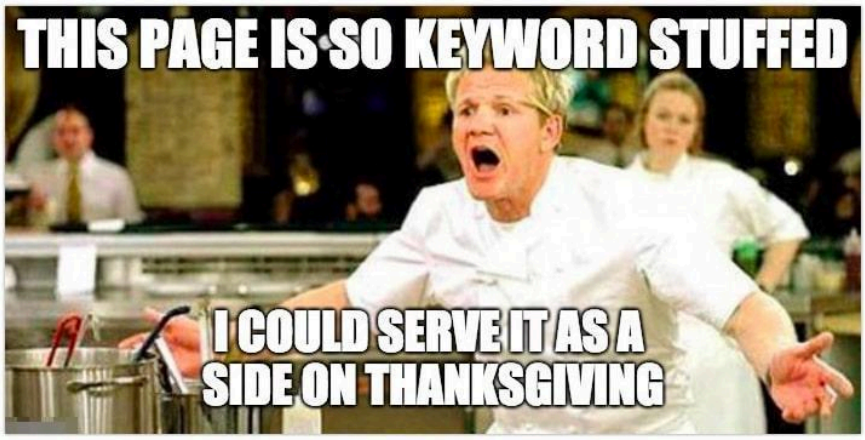
Perform on-page optimization on a WordPress post with Rankmath

Updated: *June 20th, 2021*
Execution Time: *10-20 minutes / page or blog post*



Goal: Optimizing each page and blog post on your website to be easily found on search engines.

Ideal Outcome: Every page and blog post on your website will be properly optimized - ergo, users will find them when searching for businesses similar to yours.

Prerequisites or Requirements: The **exact** steps described in this SOP will only work on self-hosted WordPress websites. Other Content Management Systems (CMSs) do not have the Rankmath plugin. Although it might use the same principles, the steps and methods needed to perform on-page optimization may differ.

Why this is important: On-page optimization is one of the three pillars of SEO (along with off-page optimization and technical optimization). Together, they help businesses make themselves noticed on search engines (thus, they help increase the number of organic site visits and, consequently, the number of conversions).

Where this is done: In your self-hosted WordPress Admin panel, on each of the pages and blog posts that will go live.

When this is done: Ideally, before the pages and blog posts go live. Realistically, it can be done afterward, too (e.g., if your website is already live and you haven't optimized it yet).

Who does this: You, your SEO specialist, your VA, your content manager or content writer (if they also upload the page content and/or blog posts), or an agency you have hired for your digital marketing needs.

- ## Environment Setup
    1. Set up your WordPress.org site and install the Rankmath plugin (see how to do this here).
    2. Make sure you have performed your keyword research and mapping.
- ## Before starting: pre-optimization steps
    1. Based on your keyword research and mapping spreadsheet, select the keyword and searcher intent you want to use for the page or blog post you want to optimize. **Remember: in general; you want to make sure each page targets only one searcher intent (or a "bucket" in the keyword mapping spreadsheet you have worked on).**
        - For the purpose of this SOP, we will be going through an example blog post that's being optimized for "audio field recording."

    2. Write the content of the page or blog post without optimizing it for the target keyword. It's better to write the content without worrying about the optimization process or the keywords you need to use. This way, you will be able to produce content that's more natural, focused on the users, rather than the search engines.
- ## Optimize the meta data

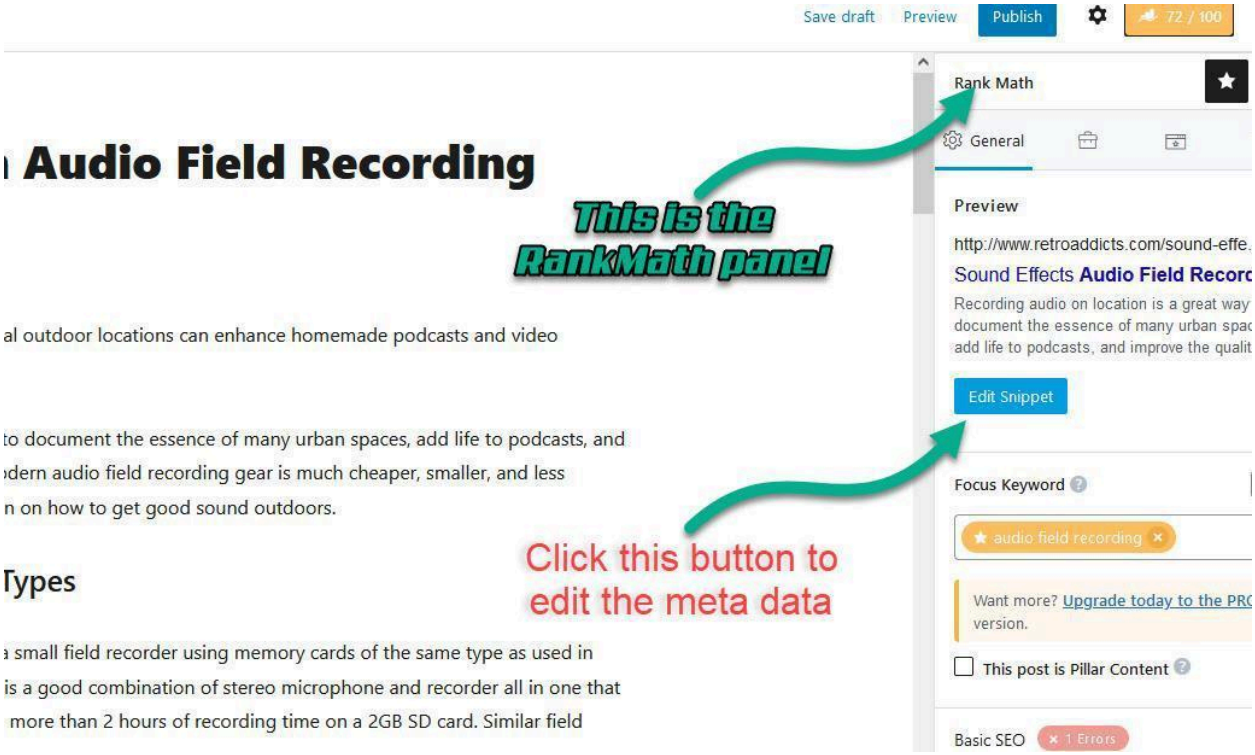
  The keywords on each of your blog posts will help search engines recognize what your page or blog post is all about - so you should first make sure to optimize it before moving on to optimizing the content.

    1. Start by optimizing the page title with your chosen keyword.

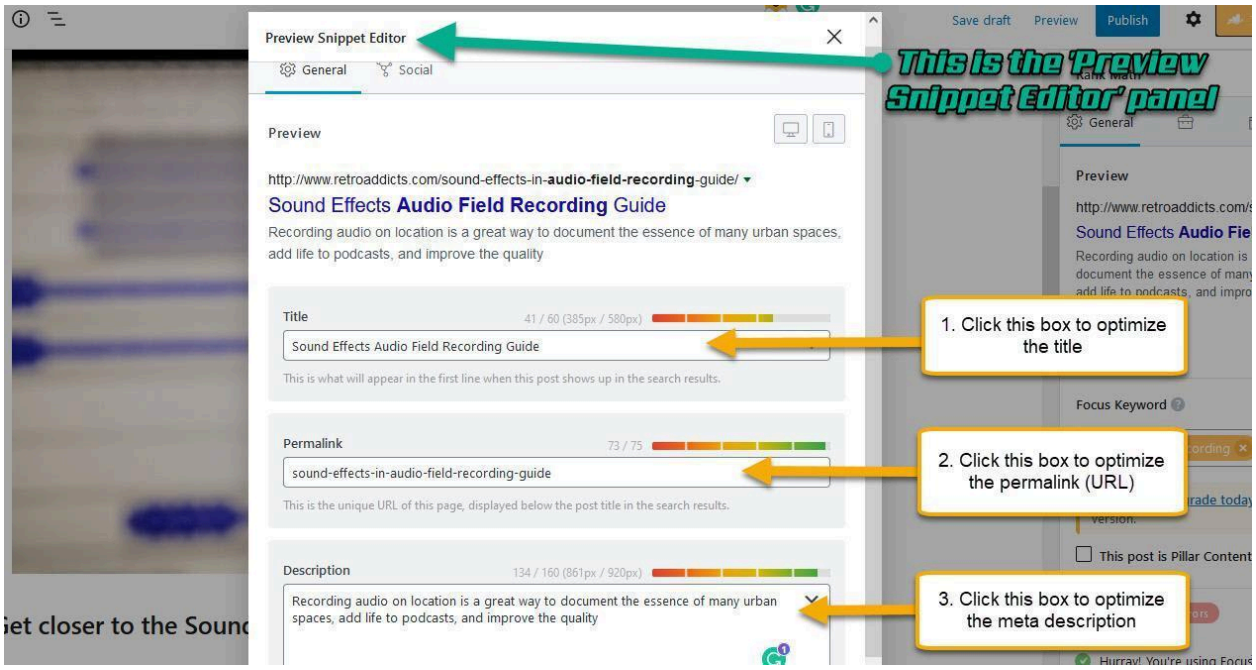
- When you're in the "Edit Post" section of your WordPress site, you can start by clicking to the Rankmath icon in the right topmost portion of your screen:



- Below is the screenshot of the Rankmath panel, click Edit Snippet button to edit the meta data:

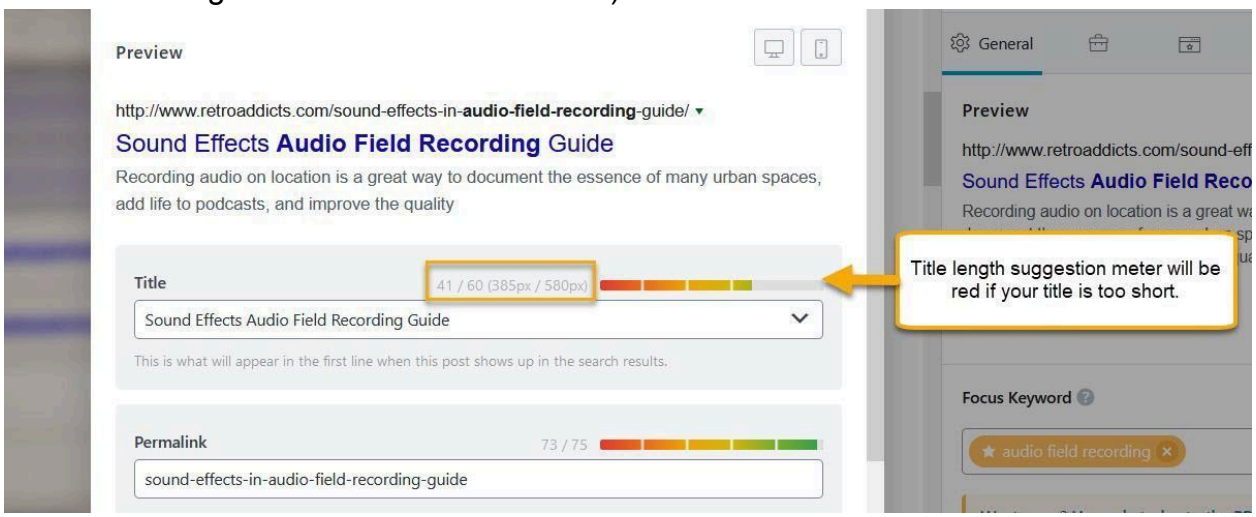


- When in 'Preview Snippet Editor' panel, you can now edit the meta data:



- Remember that the title should both:
  - Be under 60 characters or 580 pixels.
  - Include your main target keyword.

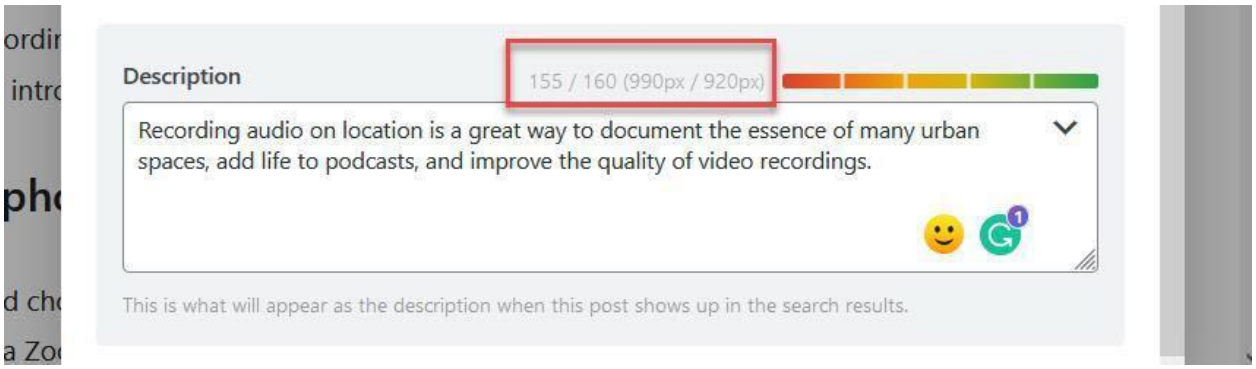
  Otherwise, Google will truncate it when displaying it in SERPs. This will consequently lower your CTR.
- Rankmath will only help you determine if the SEO title is too short. Above the Title Box you will read: 385/**568 pixels** - 41/**60** (character) (bolded figures as recommended limit).



- Run your title through [CoSchedule's Headline Analyzer] to check its attractiveness.

- Rankings are not just influenced by keywords. The CTR on your search result is an important ranking factor, so this step will help you write engaging and compelling titles.
- Aim for a score above 60 on CoSchedule's Headline Analyzer, but **don't stress or obsess over it**—it's an automated tool and you should only use it as a guide.
- As you can see in the example above, our initial title was "Sound Effects Audio in Field Recording Guide." After adding the keyword and checking it with CoSchedule's Headline Analyzer (described below), we changed it to "Sound Effect Impact: A Guide to Audio Field Recording."

2. Optimize the meta description.
   - Include the target keyword in this description.
   - Remember, the meta description **should be under 920 pixels and 160 characters** - anything longer might be truncated by Google in the SERPs.
   - Same as with the page titles, keywords are not everything. Your meta description should be compelling and tell readers *exactly* what information will be provided on the page. While meta descriptions don't directly impact rankings, they will increase the CTR - and that *is* a ranking factor. The Rankmath meter will only be 'red' if it is too short. You must adjust it according to the recommended 160 characters and 920-pixel recommended length.



3. Optimize the permalink or URL slug.
   - Keep it as short as possible (up to 75 characters at the most - making it easier to remember).
   - Also, try to include the keyword in the URL as well - it will definitely help with the on-page optimization.

- To minimize URL characters, you can remove stop words (e.g., a, the, for, an, and) --- here is a list of the most common stop words you can remove from a permalink.
- If your page has already been published for a while, do not change the URL, especially if it's already ranking in the SERPs or if other pages already link to it. Changing the slug or permalink after publishing means it has 'migrated to a new location' - and it's best to avoid it in most cases.

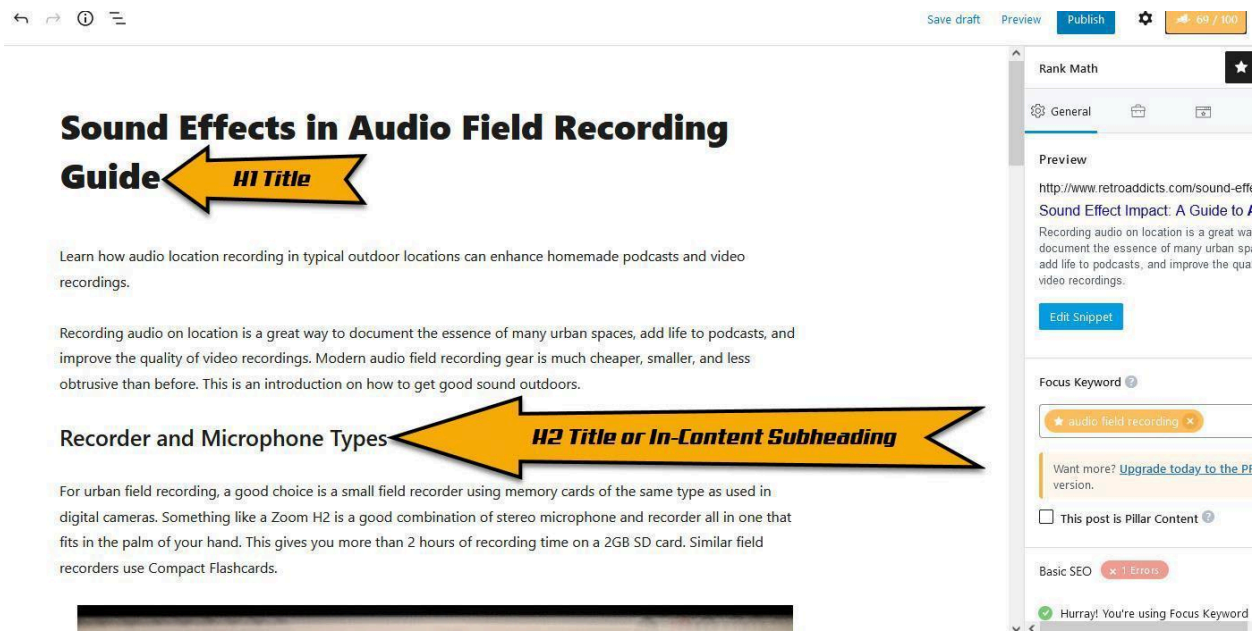


- **Optimize the content in the body of the page.**

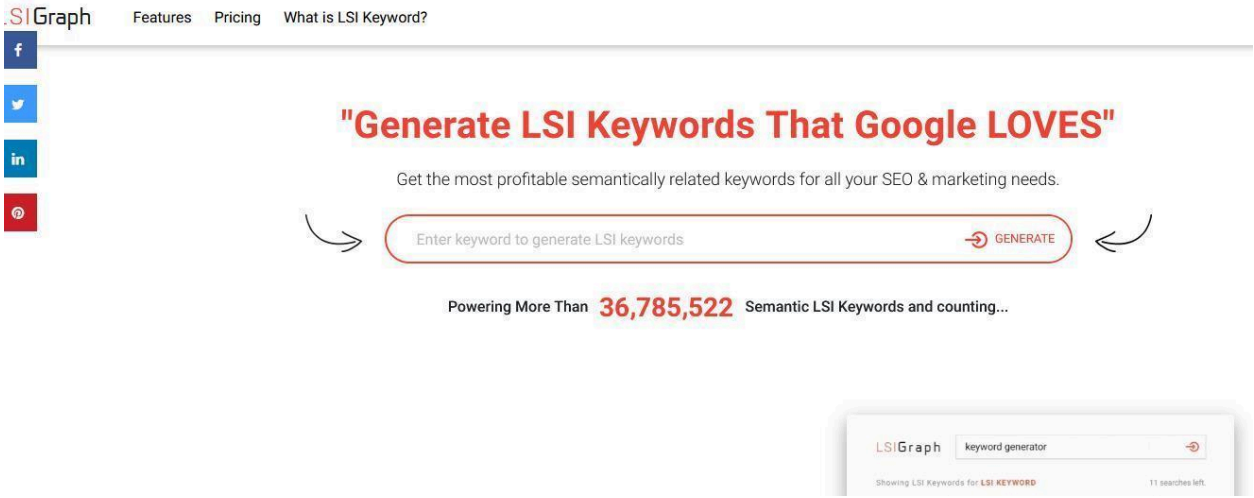
Now that you have optimized the meta data and target keywords supporting your page or blog post, it is now time to optimize the actual content. Here are the steps you need to follow:

1. Try to include your keyword in the h1 heading, but do not force this. Again, it is *far* better to publish natural, rather than keyword-stuffed content.
    - Make sure your page or blog post has an h1, but remember that there should be only *one* h1, and it should be above the fold. Typically, your h1 will be the actual title of the blog post or page.
    - Same as with the metadata optimization, focus on creating an attractive, compelling h1, rather than something that feels built exclusively for

Google's crawlers. You can use the [CoSchedule's Headline Analyzer] to analyze your headline.

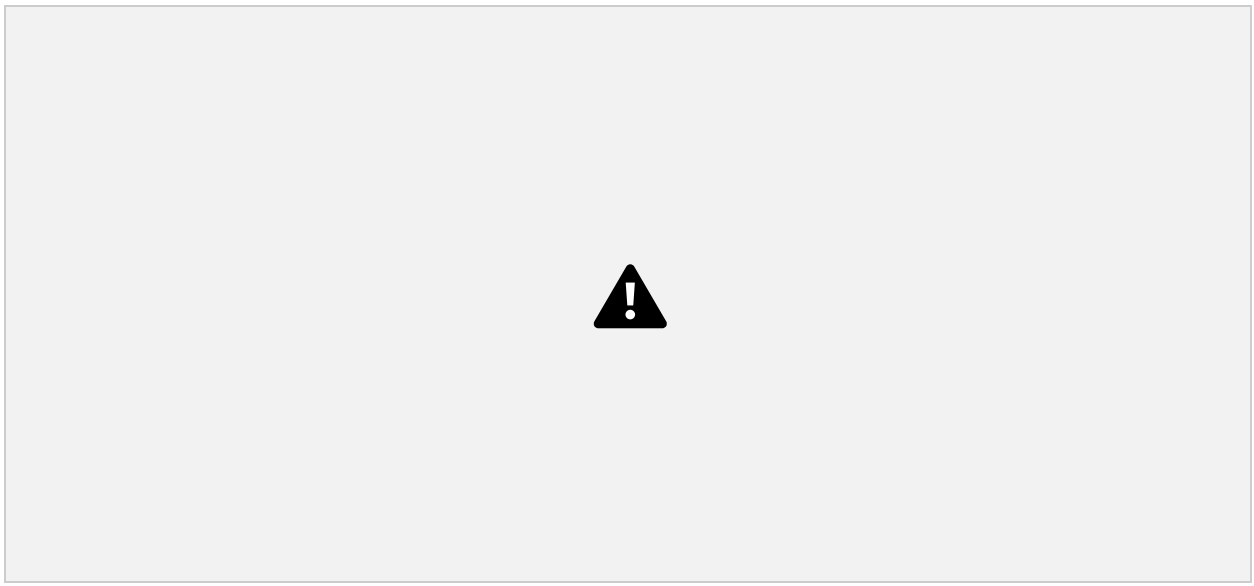


2. Optimize the content in the body of the page.
    - Try to include some of your target keywords in the first 100 words of the page or blog post.
    - It will also be beneficial to have H2 and/or H3 subheadings in your page or blog posts for easier reading.
    - In general, avoid including the exact target keyword more than 3-4 times/page.
    - Add other keywords from the same keyword bucket in the body of your content. This will help Google contextualize your page or blog article, so that it shows your target keywords to users searching for the information you provide.
    - Try to add synonyms to your target keyword as well. Varying keywords to synonyms can be an excellent move, not only because it will help Google contextualize your content, but also because it will help you avoid using the exact target keyword too many times. Include LSI (Latent Semantic Indexing) keywords tool. These keywords are semantically related to your target keyword, and they will help improve your SEO. To find more LSI keywords, go to https://lsigraph.com, enter your target keyword, and pick the most relevant suggestions to include in the body of your page content.

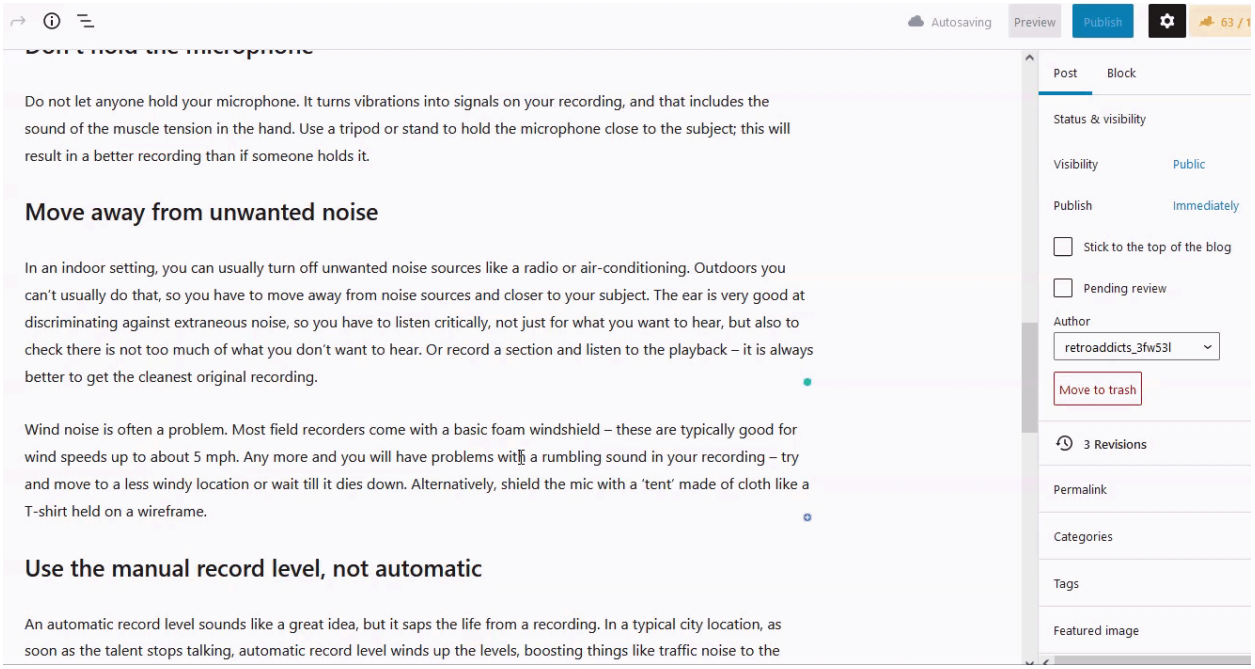


3. Optimize the images in your post or page.
   a. Rename the image you want to upload into your page or blog title with a descriptive name. For example, "*img17348.png"* is not a descriptive name, but "*microphone-used-in-sound-recording,jpg"* is a descriptive name.
      - Always use the "-" symbol to split the words in the image names.
      - To rename a file, right-click it, choose "Rename" from the drop-down menu, write the new name, then press "Enter".
      - DON'T include keywords in the file name unless they are actually relevant to your content.

   b. Include descriptive ALT text for each of the images you upload into your page or blog post.
      - Within the media selection view in WordPress, select the image you want to edit, you will see a series of fields on the right side of the window. Scroll to the "Alt text" field and enter it.
      - Make sure your ALT text is relevant and descriptive. For instance, *"image 17348"* is not a descriptive ALT text, but *"microphone used in sound recording session"* is.
      - Again, do not try to include keywords in the ALT text if they are not relevant.
      - Adding ALT text to your images not only optimizes for Google Images but will also improve accessibility. For instance, this feature can be used by screen-reading software applications for the blind or visually impaired.

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4. Include internal links to other pages within your domain.
    - Try to include at least 2 or 3 links to relevant related content that's already published on your site.
    - To do this, select the words you want to create a link on, click on the "Insert/Edit link button," and paste the URL you want to link to.



5. Include external links to other domains.
    - Our advice is to always link to authoritative sources of information or pages already ranking very well on the search results for your target keyword.
    - For our example, we chose to link to a page from https://fairuse.stanford.edu/ (one of the top 10 results on Google when searching for “digital audio recording”).
    - To add an external link, follow the same steps as described above for internal links.

6. Try to include rich content.
    - Rich content does not only mean different media formats (sound, video, and images) used in web pages or posts. If applicable, you can add data tables, pie charts, and other graphical elements to increase readers' engagement.

That’s it! If you have completed all of the abovementioned steps, the content of your page or blog post will be fully optimized.

Doing on-page optimization consistently for all your posts and pages might require more effort than usual. However, completing each step and following the recommended suggestions will reap better keyword rankings for your site that would convert to more organic traffic in the long term.