SkillNewton

SEO Content Brief Template

A fill-in content brief covering keyword, intent, SERP analysis, outline, entities, internal links, sources and on-page specs.

A content brief tells a writer exactly what a page must achieve before a single word is written. This template covers the target keyword and intent, what already ranks, the outline, questions to answer, internal links, sources and on-page details such as the title and meta description. Use it for your own articles or to brief freelance writers, then check the finished draft against the review section at the end.

How to use it

1. **Research the keyword.** Fill in the overview after checking intent and the current top results for your target keyword.
2. **Analyse the results page.** Record what the ranking pages cover, which SERP features appear and where you can do better.
3. **Build the outline.** Write the H1, opening answer and H2 sections, then add the entities, questions and internal links to include.
4. **Set sources and specs.** Name the author, sources to cite and on-page details such as title, meta description, URL and schema.
5. **Review the draft.** When the draft is ready, work through the review checklist before publishing.

Overview

Target keyword **The main phrase the page should rank for, plus two to five close variants from the same cluster.**	
Search intent **What the searcher wants: to learn, compare, buy or find a specific site. Confirm it by looking at the current top results.**	
Audience **Who is reading and what they already know, for example "home bakers who have never made bread".**	
Page goal **The one action you want after reading, such as joining a class, downloading a guide or reading the next article.**	

Content type and rough length

Guide, list, comparison, service page or product page. Base length on what the topic needs, not a fixed word count.

SERP analysis

Top-ranking pages

List the top five or so URLs and their format (guide, list, video, product page).

SERP features

Note any featured snippet, People also ask box, videos, images, local pack or AI-generated overview.

What the top pages cover well

Topics and sections that appear on most ranking pages; readers will expect these.

What they miss

Gaps, outdated details or weak explanations you can improve with first-hand experience or clearer examples.

Outline

H1

A clear heading that matches the intent. It can differ slightly from the title tag.

Opening answer

Two to four sentences that answer the main question directly before going into detail.

H2 sections

The main sections in reading order, each with a line on what it must cover.

H3 sub-sections

Optional detail under each H2. Keep heading levels in logical order.

Call to action
Where the CTA appears and what it says.

Must-cover entities and questions

Key entities and terms
People, products, tools, places or concepts the topic cannot be explained without. Define any jargon.

Questions to answer
Real questions from People also ask, Search Console queries, sales calls or customer messages.

Examples and visuals
Screenshots, photos, tables or worked examples the writer must include.

Internal links

Links out from this page
Two to five relevant pages to link to, each with suggested anchor text.

Links in to this page
Existing pages that should link to the new page once it is published, with suggested anchors.

Pillar page
The main topic page this article supports, if it belongs to a cluster.

E-E-A-T and sources

Author
Who writes or reviews the page and why they are qualified. Link to an author bio where you have one.

First-hand experience
Personal tests, photos, results or lessons the writer must add, rather than repeating other articles.

Sources to cite
Official documentation, original research or primary sources. Avoid citing pages that only repeat others.

Facts to verify
Figures, dates, prices or claims that need checking before publishing.

On-page specs

Title tag
Unique, descriptive and concise, with the main topic near the start. Google may rewrite titles that do not describe the page well.

Meta description
A short, accurate summary that encourages the click. Google sometimes shows other text from the page instead.

URL slug
Short, readable words separated by hyphens, for example /blog/bread-at-home/.

Structured data
Schema types that match visible content, such as Article and BreadcrumbList for a blog post. Do not mark up content readers cannot see.

Images
File names and descriptive alt text for each image.

Review checklist

The opening answers the main question
A reader should get the core answer without scrolling.

Every outline section and question is covered
Compare the draft against the outline and question list above.

Facts and sources are checked **Every figure and claim has been verified against a reliable source.**	
Internal links are added and working **Both the outgoing links and the links from other pages to this one.**	
Title, meta description, URL and schema match the specs **Check the published page, not only the draft.**	
The page reads well on mobile **Short paragraphs, clear headings and readable tables.**	

Online version, with the matching free guide: skillnewton.com/resources/templates/content-brief-template/

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