SkillNewton

Topical Map Template

Plan pillar, cluster and supporting pages for a topic, with keywords, intent, parent pages and internal links.

A topical map lays out every page you need to cover a subject properly and shows how those pages connect. This template records each page's pillar, sub-topic, page type, primary keyword, intent, parent page, URL, status and internal links. It is aimed at site owners and content strategists planning a blog or service site. Fill in one row per page, starting with your pillar topics.

How to use it

1. **List your pillar topics.** Write down the broad topics that match your products, services or expertise.
2. **Add sub-topics and pages.** Break each pillar into sub-topics and decide whether each page is a cluster or supporting page.
3. **Assign keywords and intent.** Give every page one primary keyword and label its search intent.
4. **Map parents and links.** Fill in the parent page and planned internal links so the structure is clear.
5. **Track progress.** Update the status column as pages are planned, written, published and refreshed.

Columns

Pillar/topic	The broad topic this page belongs to.
Sub-topic	The narrower subject the page covers.
Page type	Pillar (broad overview), Cluster (main sub-topic) or Supporting (narrow question or detail).
Primary keyword	The main keyword this page targets. Each keyword should belong to only one page.
Search intent	Informational, commercial, transactional or navigational.
Parent page	The page one level up that this page supports. Pillars have none.
URL	The live or planned URL.
Status	Planned, In progress, Published or Needs update.
Internal links to/from	Key pages this page links to and receives links from.

Sheet (example rows, then blank rows to fill in)

Pillar/topic	Sub-topic	Page type	Primary keyword	Search intent	Parent page	URL	Status	Internal links to/from
Home baking	Home baking overview	Pillar	home baking classes	Commercial	(none)	https://example.com/baking-classes/	Published	Example row. Links to: bread workshop, cake course. From: home page, all cluster pages.
Home baking	Bread baking	Cluster	bread making workshop	Transactional	https://example.com/baking-classes/	https://example.com/workshops/bread/	Published	Example row. Links to: pillar, bread guide. From: pillar, bread guide.
Home baking	Bread baking	Supporting	how to make bread at home	Informational	https://example.com/workshops/bread/	https://example.com/blog/bread-at-home/	In progress	Example row. Links to: bread workshop. From: bread workshop, baking tools post.
Home baking	Eggless cakes	Cluster	eggless cake baking course	Transactional	https://example.com/baking-classes/	https://example.com/courses/eggless-cakes/	Planned	Example row. Links to: pillar. From: pillar, cake problems guide.
Home baking	Eggless cakes	Supporting	egg substitutes for baking	Informational	https://example.com/courses/eggless-cakes/	https://example.com/blog/egg-substitutes/	Planned	Example row. Links to: eggless cake course.

Building the map

Choose pillars from what you sell or know best	A topical map works when it covers topics your business can speak about with real experience.
Break pillars into sub-topics	Use keyword research, People also ask and customer questions to list the sub-topics readers expect.
Assign one primary keyword per page	If two rows target the same intent, merge them into one page.
Plan links with the hierarchy	Supporting pages link to their cluster, clusters link to the pillar, and the pillar links back down.
Publish in a sensible order	Pillar and cluster pages first, then supporting pages, so new pages have somewhere to link.

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

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