

Search



Historical Search Tools

Yahoo Search Index

Human edited

Early search engines

Excite, Alta Vista, Lycos, etc.



Modern Search Engines

Google

- My sites - 90%+ google

Bing - less than 10%

Yahoo - Same as bing?

Duck Duck Go - Privacy concerns



Modern Search Engines

Pages visited by crawler (spider, bot)

Crawler

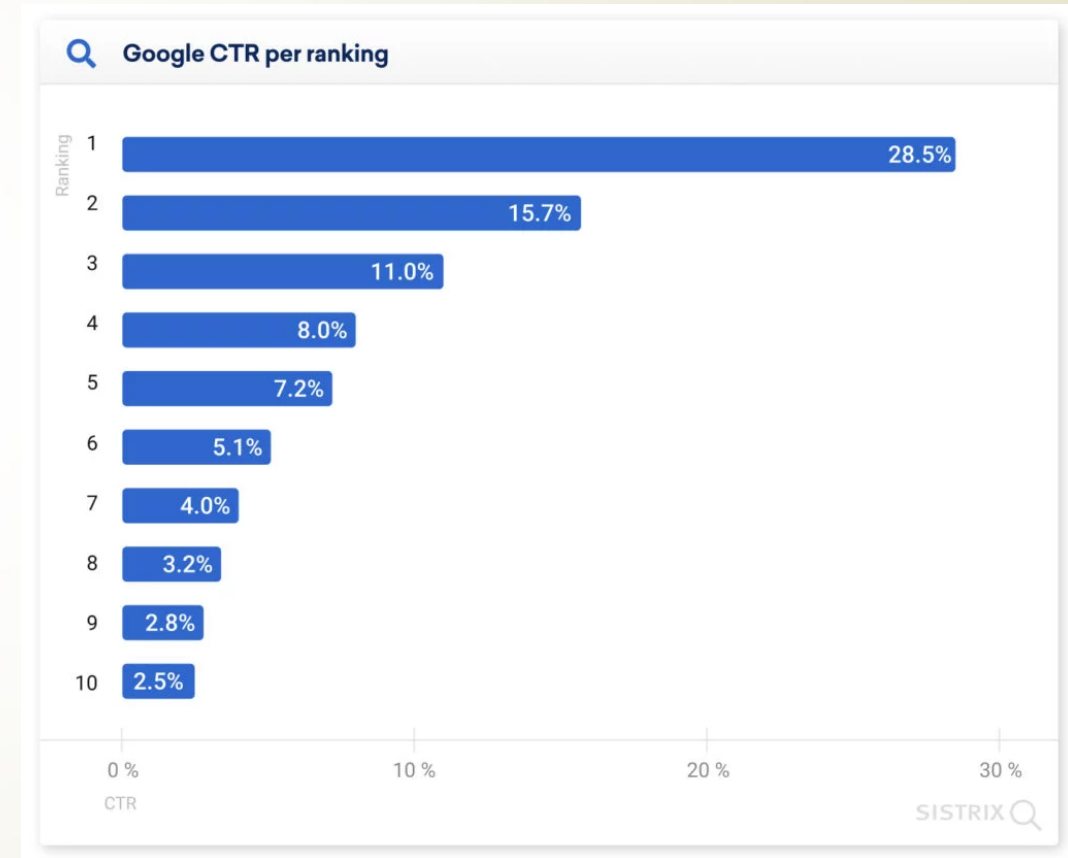
- Browses the web
- Indexes content for analysis

Search algorithm applied to data that the crawler collects in response to search queries



Why is Search Important?

- Click through by rank position
- More than half of all clicks occur on top three search results



How Google Works

- Proprietary
- Changes all the time in response to gaming
- **Page Rank**
- Links to your site from other sites (Backlinks)
- Backlinks from pages with high page rank help your page rank more.



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Other Ranking Factors

- Quality of content
 - Original
 - Unique
 - Updated
 - Evaluated by AI – Rankbrain
- Keywords in <title> tags
- Mobile friendliness (mobile searches only)
- <https://search.google.com/test/mobile-friendly>



<https://backlinko.com/google-ranking-factors>



Still More Factors...

- Page Speed (separate lecture)
- Site security (SSL)
- Keywords in URL
- Keywords in heading tags
- Possibly Social Media signals
- Domain factors (age, keyword in domain, history)
- Full list of 200 – see link



<https://backlinko.com/google-ranking-factors>



Google Search Personalization

- Apparently enabled by default
- Search history (based on signed in account, Web History on)
- Search history (not signed in, based on cookie in browser)
- Geographical location (based on IP address)



Display of Results


- Query > Search Engine Results page (SERP)
- Examples
- "gold"
- "gold hill"
- "gold hill inn"
- "gold hill music"
- "gold hill inn music"

The screenshot displays a Google search result for "Gold Hill Inn". The top section features a Yelp listing with a 4.7-star rating from 379 reviews, a "Closed" status, and a "Fine dining restaurant" category. It includes three images: an outdoor patio, a plate of food, and an interior bar. To the right of the images is a map snippet showing the location at 401 Main St, Boulder, CO 80302, with a 4.7-star rating and a "Nightly price" section. Below the map are buttons for "Website", "Directions", "Save", "Call", and "Menu". The bottom section shows the Google search results for "gold hill inn", including a description, service options, location, address, phone, hours, and a "Compare prices" section. It also lists "Menu highlights" with images of wine, chocolate torte, smoked gouda, and watermelon soup.



Expanded Listings (Sitelinks)

- Automated
- Again Gold Hill
- Where do subheaders come from?
- Possible factors
 - High ranking for keywords
 - High traffic
 - High click through rates
 - Unique titles/meta description

 Gold Hill Inn - Restaurant
<https://www.goldhillinn.com>

Gold Hill Inn | Historic Colorado Restaurant & Music Venue

Nestled beneath the Continental Divide, The Gold Hill Inn is remote from the city lights and city noise of the 21st Century.

Live Music Venue >
Seeing them is quite an experience as they blend ...

Fine Dining >
Entrees · Tournedos with Hunter sauce · Roast Pork loin with ...

Contact >
401 Main Street Gold Hill Boulder, CO 80302 303.443.6461 www ...

History >
A gourmet restaurant now well known in the region as the Gold ...

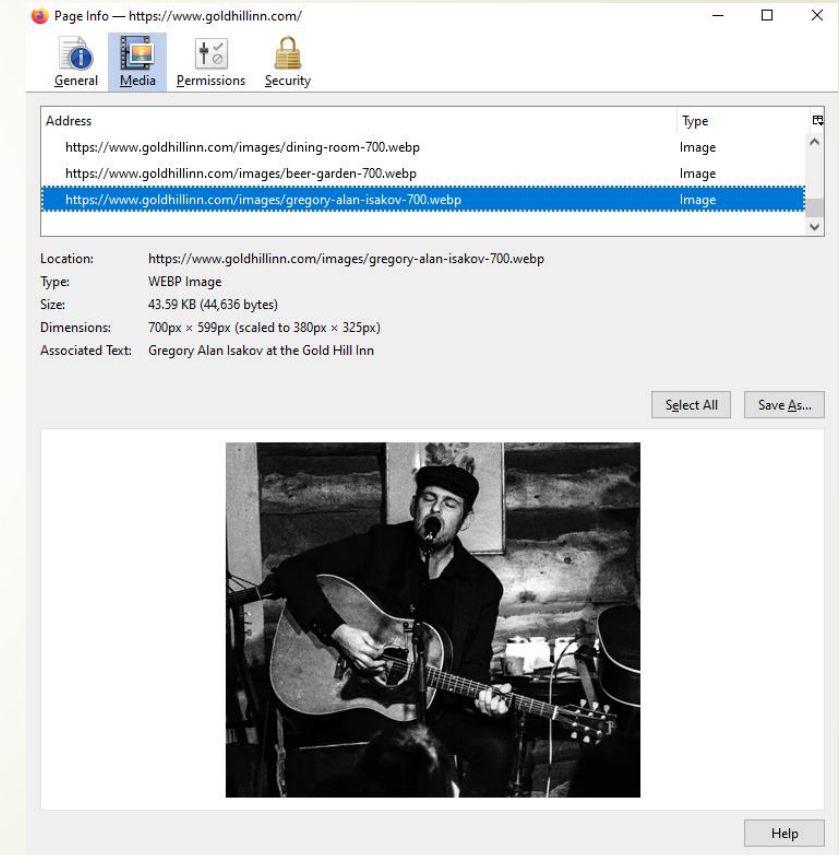
Bluebird Lodge >
Bluebird Lodge. The Bluebird Lodge is currently closed for the ...

[More results from goldhillinn.com »](#)



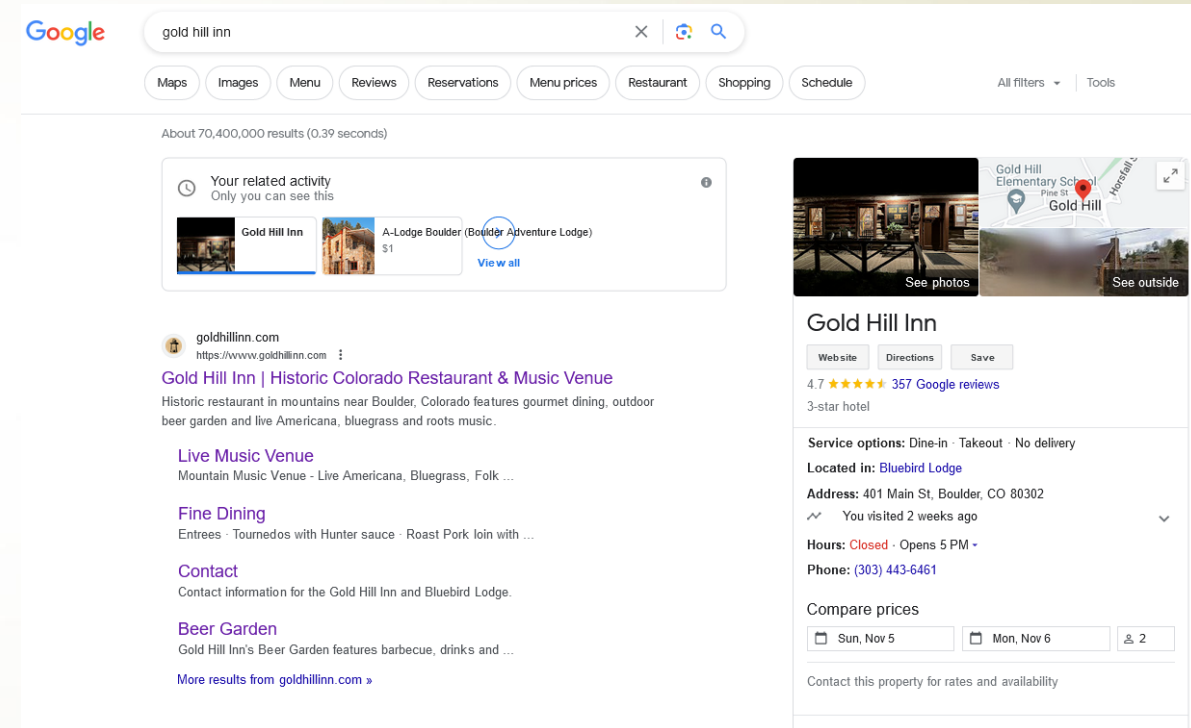
Image Alt Text Guidelines

- Ctrl-I > Media: Properties bar for images (Firefox only)
- English words!
- Sentence case!
- Repeat text in images
- Short, relevant, meaningful
- Use keywords
- No alt text for purely decorative images



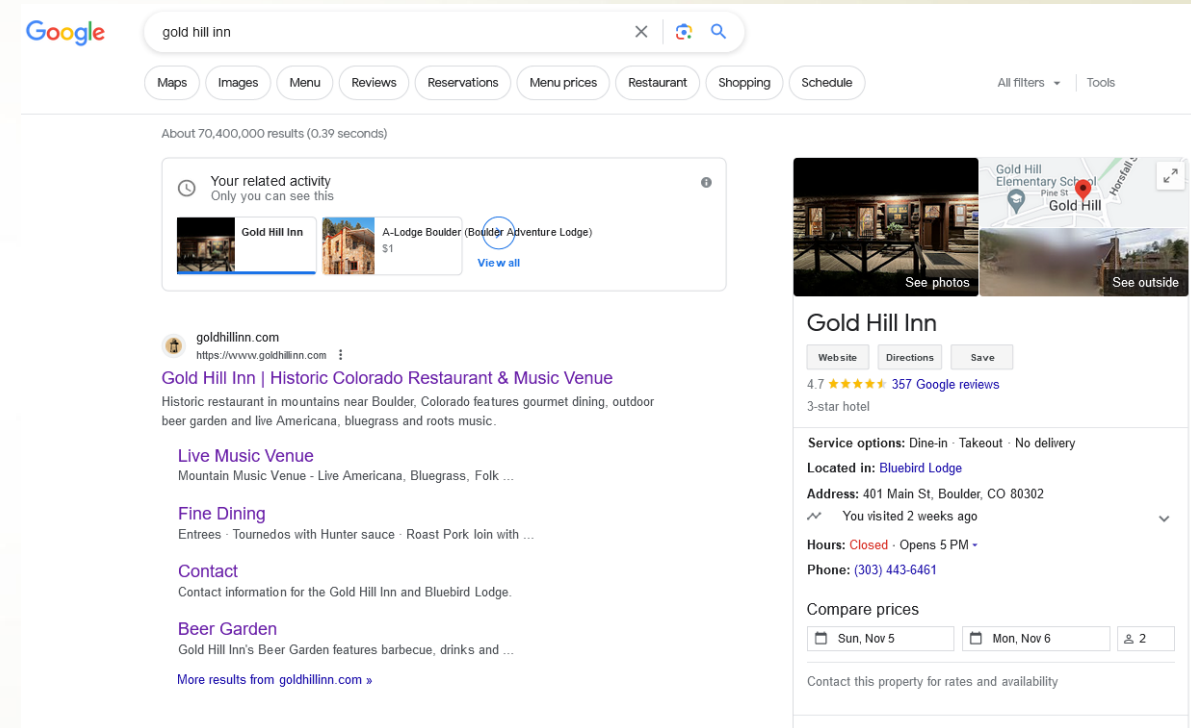
Document Title Guidelines

- Short, Unique and relevant page titles
- Page description | Section name | Site or company name
- Or Site or company name | Section name | Page description
- Google limit 64 characters (physical limit)
- Omit articles in favor of separators. Make all words count
- Does google sometimes edit this? Example: Music page



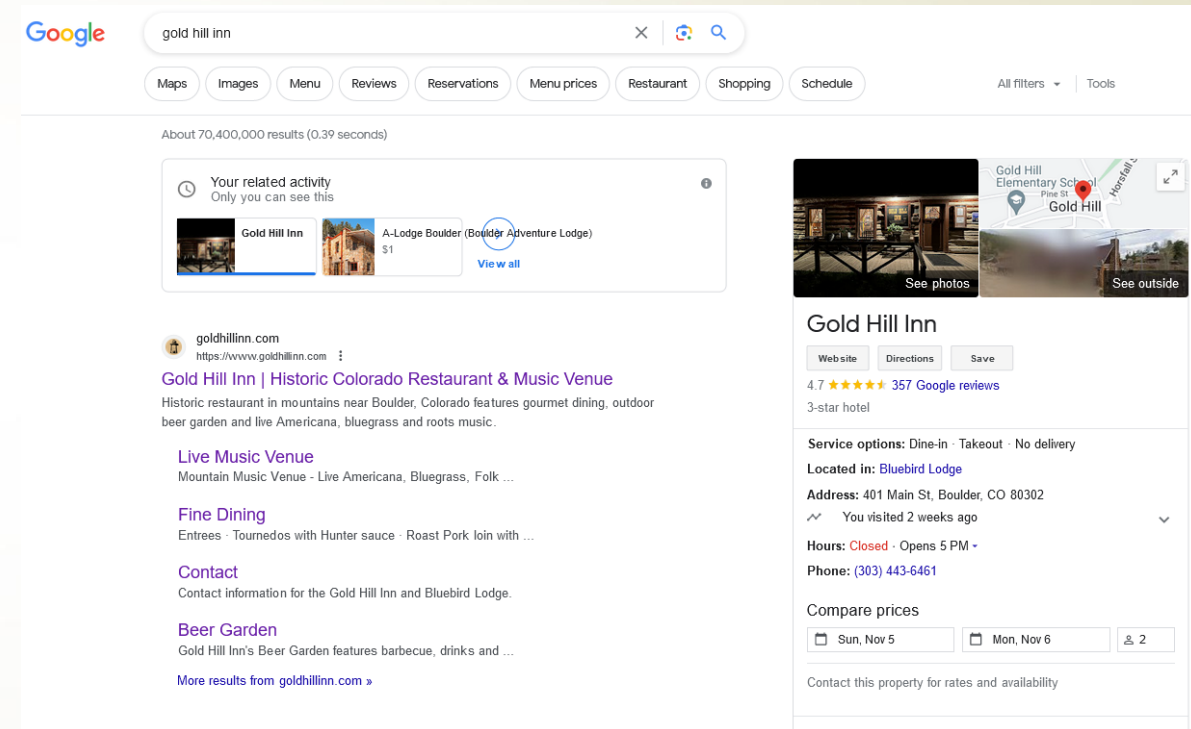
Strategies

- Write good content, keep it fresh
- Need incoming links
- Good content brings incoming links
- Social media brings incoming links, may be a ranking signal (not clear)
- May take a long time
- Use headings appropriately (text in headings)
- Text where possible (Avoid text in images)



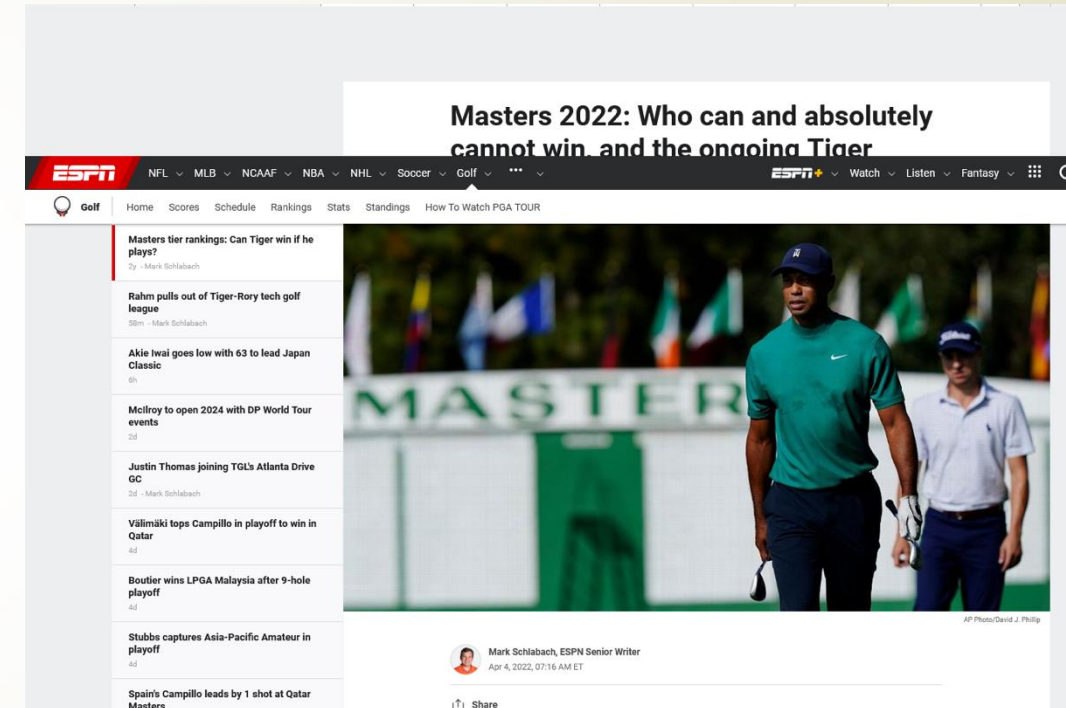
More Strategies

- Alt text on all images (per guidelines)
- Good document titles
- Keywords (and variations) text somewhere (e.g., running shorts, attire)
- Keywords in titles, headings (especially h1) and alt text may get extra emphasis
- Make your pages lean and fast
- Optimize for mobile



More Strategies File/Directory Names

- Keywords in filenames, separated by dashes—URL is displayed in Google results
- Example: ESPN Tiger Woods
- https://www.espn.com/golf/story/_/id/33629573/masters-2022-absolutely-cannot-win-ongoing-tiger-woods-question



Writing Copy

- Primary and secondary keywords
- Primary keywords (1 or 2) are in page title, h1, early in content (first 100 words)
- Make sure secondary keywords are in copy
- Use keywords in links where possible
- Grammar/spelling/appropriate language?
- Generally, what works for google is good for search results in other search engines



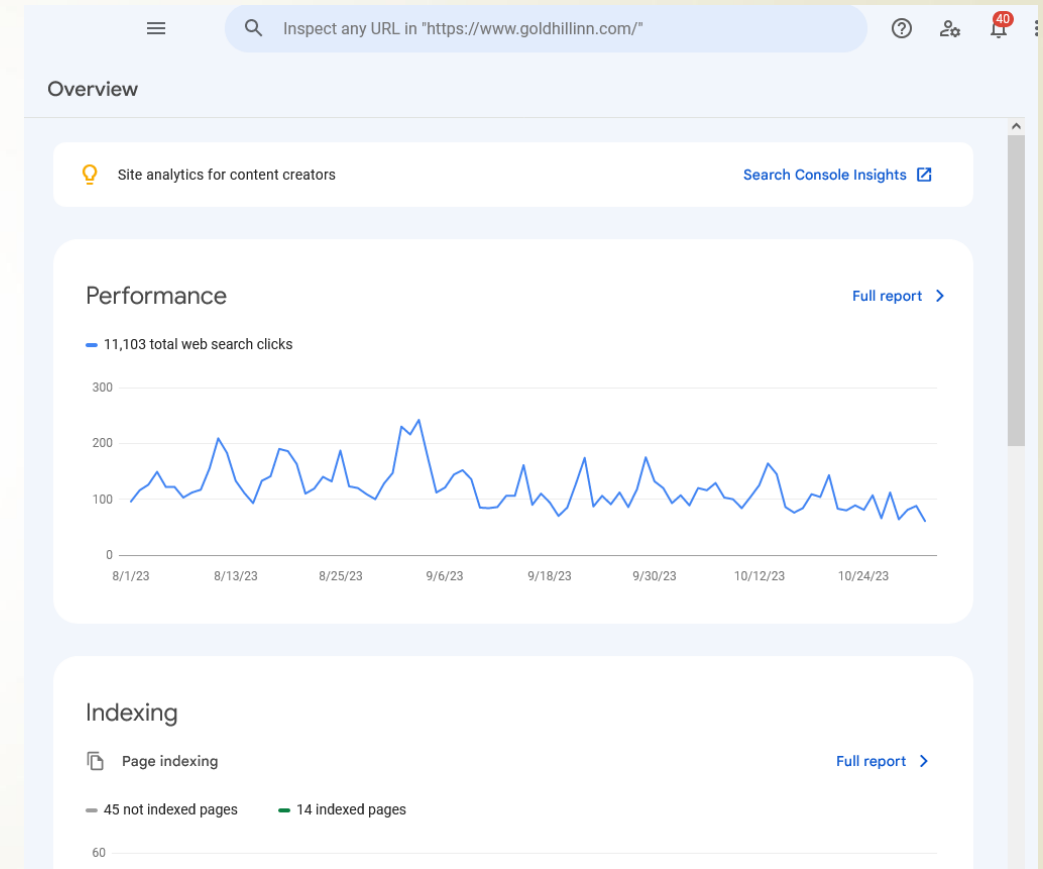
Meta Tags

- Meta keywords tag generally not considered any more
- Meta description tag may be displayed for google search results
- Affects clickthrough! High clickthrough may help ranking
- example goldhillinn.com



Metrics

- Google Search Console
- View Performance tab
 - Impressions, clicks, CTR, position
- Links
 - External, linking sites
- Search Console Insights



Effect of AI

- Conversational queries
 - "where is the Gold Hill Inn"
 - "is the Gold Hill Inn a good restaurant"
- Replacing articles with AI summary
 - "great things about New Mexico"
 - Intermediary
 - Pushes native results down

