

The Inside Stylists

GUIDE TO KEYWORDS



hello

Keywords are a bit of a bugger if you don't know how to use them to your advantage - and we are pretty much all using them right now - even if we don't realise it.

Are you writing features for magazine websites, or maybe for your own blog? Maybe you've been adding portfolio shots to your Inside Stylists profile - or website. I'm sure most of us are using Instagram as a branding and marketing tool by now. Every one of these element uses keywords and we can make them work much harder for us - to get better results.

When I say keywords you know I'm going to start banging on about SEO again don't you?

Search Engine Optimisation is what gets you found in a Google search. It's what makes your blog post reach more people and how complete strangers will find your Instagram posts, love what you do and hire you. We all want SEO to work for us and if you ever talk to a brand about a feature they're likely going to want you to use their choice of keywords in the piece.

In this masterclass, I share with you my research into how keywords work and how you can incorporate them into your business world in everything from the words, titles and phrases you use to how you label images.

Once you have the key to keywords there really is no stopping you.

EmmaMT

Keywords : What are they and how to use them

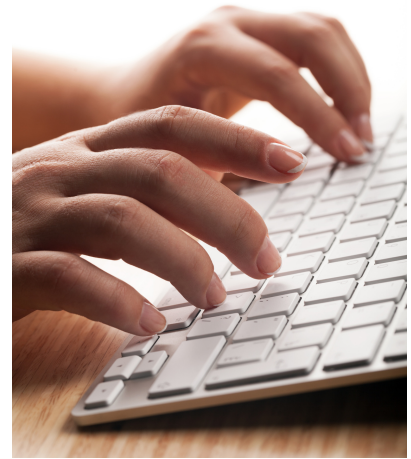
No matter what you do for a living - whether you're a stylist, writer, assistant, plumber or dog walker the chances are you want to be found to be hired and the way you use keywords will determine how high up the page you are whether that's on Google or Instagram.

In a nutshell keywords are how Google ranks the words used in your online feature. It uses them to rank your posts and images and determines how high up a search term you'll appear.

This is SEO (search engine optimization).

The best way to rank well for keywords is by creating content around a chosen keyword. But which keyword to use?

Most of the time it will be obvious what your keyword should be. If you are doing a top 10 sofas feature you'll want the word "sofa" in your keywords. But using just one word is limiting your ability to be found. More on that in a minute.



When I say keywords you know I'm going to start banging on about SEO again don't you?

How to find the best keywords to use

When you search for something on Google what are you looking for? Nine times out of ten it will be an answer to a question. "Where can I find a great sofa" or "Who sells the best sofas?" People are searching for answers so the keywords you choose should be answering the question they'll be asking about the feature you're writing.

Evaluating Keywords

Keywords tend to be broken into two camps. Short and long tail keywords. Here's what you need to know about them.

SHORT TAIL KEYWORDS

Sofa, shoes, cars, home, these are general words without a specific intent. Typically short tail keywords are 1-2 words, the cost to advertise using them is high and results on the search page are low as they are so widely searched for.

LONG TAIL KEYWORDS

are detailed and specific descriptive phrases. There's less competition for them and they're low cost to advertise with them. They also tend to be higher conversion rates

You can use both long and short tail terms so you are found for more than one phrase. The long tail phrases will get you found more easily and as you gain traction you'll be pushed up the searches till you show up in the shorttail ones. It's a double pronged attack.

A few things to keep in mind

Plurals

When searching for something we don't know the answer to we tend to use plurals "holidays" rather than "beach holiday in Cornwall"

Google is very clever at guessing what we're searching for.

We don't have to worry about using the right keywords in the right order as Google gathers up all the information and gives us it's best guess of what we want judging from our search term and what is included on the page it's suggesting to you.

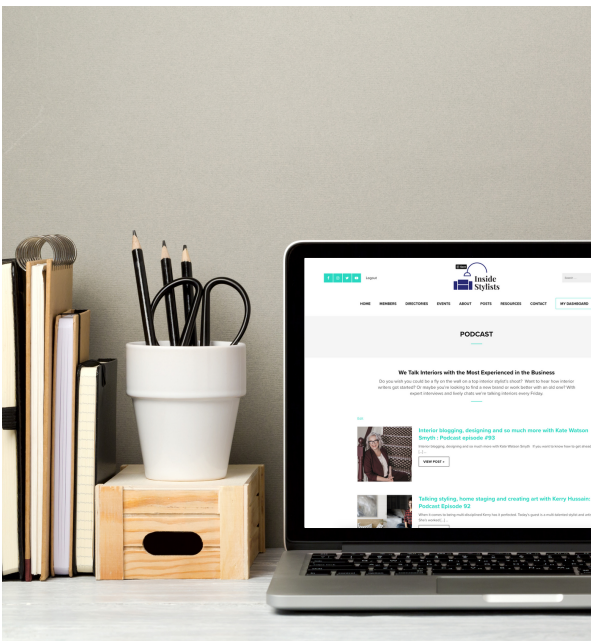
So, if your readers know what they're looking for use singular terms and if they don't use plurals. So rather than 'Sofa' try Sofas.



Voice

Voice is becoming king and has been for a while. Podcasts are becoming more and more popular, Clubhouse doesn't have any images or copy - just talking and we can turn our lights on and switch channels just by asking Alexa.

With that in mind people are now using their voice to search for answers. When someone asks a question by voice - to Alexa or Siri for example, they are very specific in how they ask. If they have to type a question they use a lot less words. So typing you might ask "Best modern sofa" but if you're asking Siri you might say "Where can I find the best modern Sofas in Brighton?" We're not limited to words or time when we speak our question. It's worth keeping that in mind when choosing our keywords.





KEYWORD RESEARCH

When researching

which keywords to use you may be tempted to use just one. After all your feature is on sofas. If you were to put “Sofa” into Google, it wouldn’t know where to start. Are you looking for small sofas, a red sofa and corner sofa? The term is too broad. Millions of people will be using this one word which makes it a bit of a needle in a haystack when it comes to your feature being found.

If you were to search “yellow leather modern Sofa” Google knows exactly what you’re after. Any keywords you use need to have intent. Specific intent so the search result can answer the viewers question.

Seeds search

As gardening starts with a seed so too does your keyword research. Seed searches are when you look at all the areas that are linked to your topic on Google. You can do this for your whole website or a stand along blog post as well as for a feature you’re commissioned to write.

It’s estimated that the number one website on any search result will get 35% of the clicks. That’s why we want to be as high on the search page results as possible. How many search page results do you scroll through?

One? Maybe two?

Google will show a lot of content on the first search page and that may prevent a reader from clicking on your post so researching your keywords is essential.

Your seed search

Choose your words

Come up with a list of 5-10 keywords that relate to your feature then look at anything that is connected with it. Maybe there's a "how to style a modern sofa" or a "20 summer sofa trends" that pops up. Note down all the words that are linked to your main keywords and see how you can use them in your feature and image labelling.

A word about ads on the first search page

If a company or person is paying for advertising using your chosen keyword they're going to show up at the top of the page. This shows you your competition and how popular your search term is but it also might take up a lot of the screen - pushing your post lower down. That's fine if the reader scrolls down but if they're on a mobile device they may not get to you.

If there are tons of ads it might be a good idea to change your keyword to something with less competition to get you higher up the page.

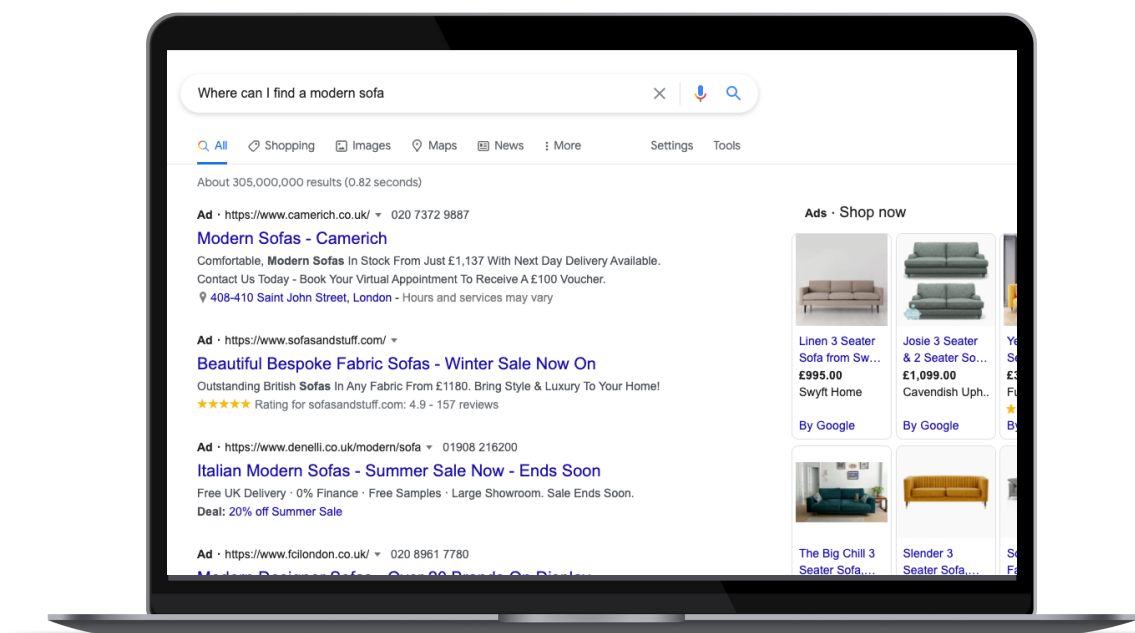
How to search for the best keywords

01

Start by searching on Google for your most obvious question that your topic is covering. Sticking with the sofa analogy and using the kind of language your reader is likely to use

“Where can I find a modern sofa?”

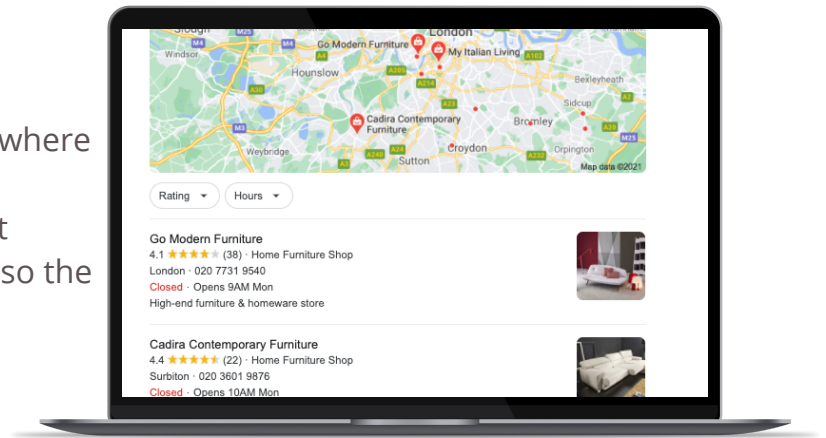
Below is the Google result. This will help us to understand what Google will rank highest. First are always the ads. They take up practically half the top of the screen.



02

Next is the map

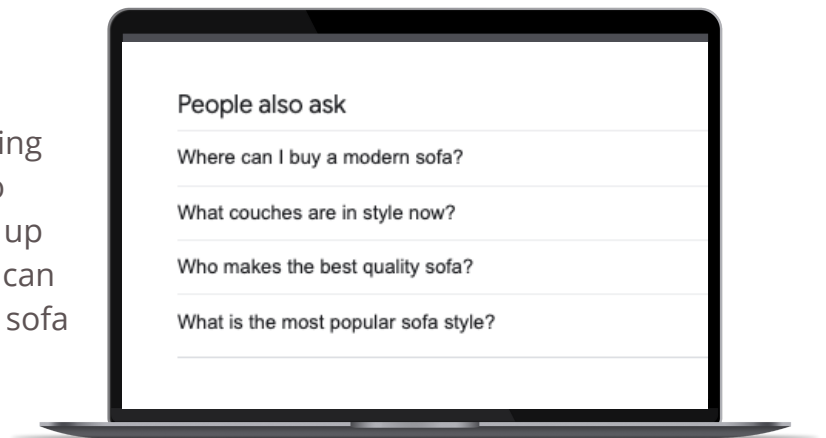
which shows places local to the viewer where their answer can be found. This will be different for everyone. I'm in South East London but you might be in The Wirral so the results will alter to suit.



03

The "People also ask" area.

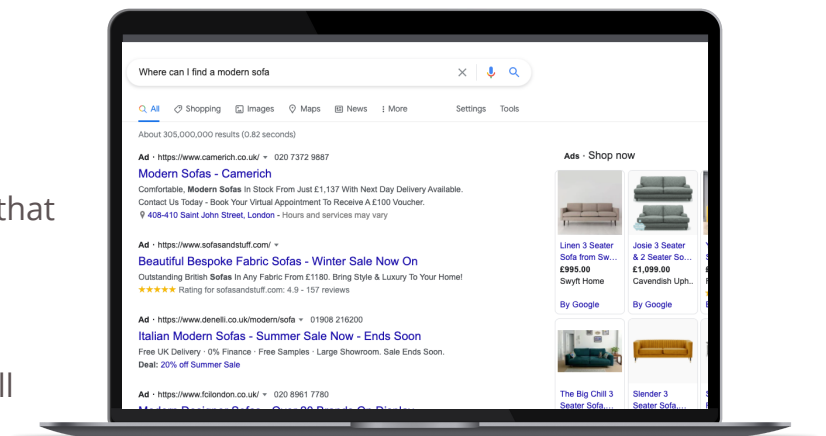
This is keyword gold. People who are using the same or similar search term are also using these phrases. Words we can pick up here are **couches**, **quality** and **buy**. We can use these within our feature to help our sofa page rank higher on the Google search.



04

The Juicy bit

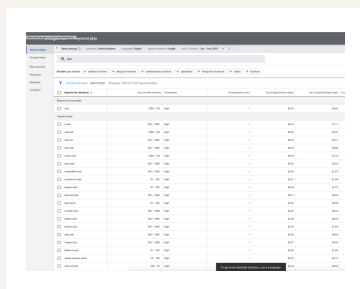
The last area on the search page is the listings. The shops, blog posts, articles that include our keywords. Here we see **contemporary** is used a lot as well as **50 best**. "Best" in a mix of keywords is always going to come up because we all want the best - right?



Keyword tools

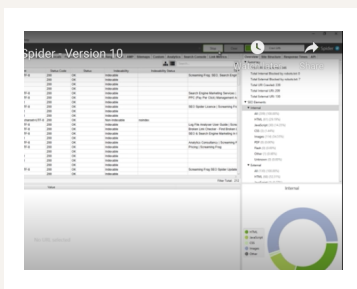
WANT TO SEE INSTANTLY HOW A KEYWORD PERFORMS?

Here are a few tools you can use to enter your keyword and see who's using it, how many people search for it and what you can change it to to get a better result. Most of these tools have free access but with limited searches per day so don't waste your searches. *Click the image or link to see in detail*



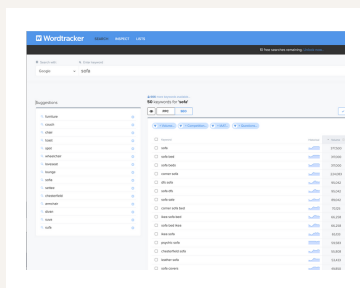
GOOGLE ADS - KEYWORD PLANNER

You can see how many people are searching for the term you're using. If there are too many you can change it and see how that will affect your results



SCREAMING FROG

This tool crawls your website to see where your SEO needs improving. It will crawl 500 pages for free. It's great for improving areas of your site's SEO. It's a bit of a minefield but worth sticking with

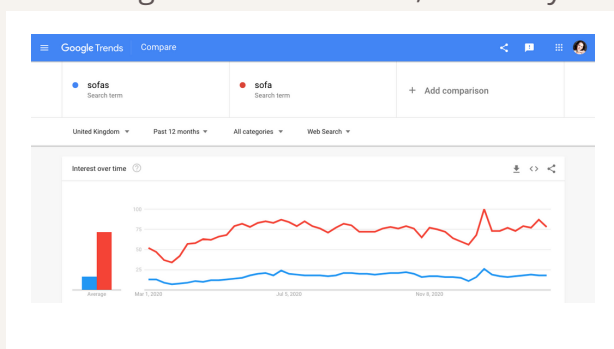


WORD TRACKER

This Wordpress subscription site will do twelve searches for free each day. It shows how many people are searching for your term and similar searches. It breaks it down into volume and competition

GOOGLE TRENDS

This is addictive. Use Google Trends to compare two or more keywords? Pop them into Google Trends website, choose your timeline and see which words are most



effective and when. Don't forget to select United Kingdom as it's default is USA. Here's what the last 12 months search comparison for Sofa (red) and sofas (blue) is. We can see that sofa is used a lot more than the plural.



SEO FOR YOUR ONLINE FEATURE OR BLOG POST

Right,

I'm going to keep this really simple because SEO can get really complex and we don't have time for that!

The way a piece of online writing is evaluated is all about the ease of reading and the specific intent of the piece. If everything links to the same intent - ie for you to find a new sofa, then you will rank higher.

The way Google searches for this is dependant on how you set out your online copy using your keywords and content on the page. These are broken down into headlines and subheads - with different importance, the links you use, files you attach, images and buttons

A quick word about URLs

In a minute we're going to talk about filenames for blogs. The first filename to be added to any online content is often the URL - the web address of your post. Most platforms will automatically generate the URL of your blog post with either a number or if you've set it up to do so - the title of the blog post.

You can edit the URL when you write the post. The URL for the blog post will typically have hyphens in-between each word. Aim for no more than five hyphens. Ensure your keyword is in the URL and title of every post. The ideal situation is to ensure the filename of the page URL matches the content to make it relevant.

How to write good SEO copy

When writing online Google likes short and sweet paragraphs which are headed up with a number of elements. They are...

- **HEADLINE (H1)** This should only ever be used once and at the top of the page and should include your keyword or phrase. It needs to describe the content of your page.
- **Subheadings (H2)** and H2, H3, H4 etc. You can use multiples of these and they get smaller as the number gets higher.

Think of headings in terms of a reader speed scanning. What is going to grab their attention? Break it up.

Other elements that help speed up the reading of a post and that Google like are ...

- Bullet points
- Bold Text
- Hyperlinks
- Images
- Buttons

All of these elements can be optimised for Google ranking.

GOOGLE PANDA... A WARNING!

Back in 2011 Google cottoned on to marketers using keywords all over their websites and put Google Panda in place. It stopped people from being able to use repetitive keywords in ALL their links, titles and metadata without them making sense. It made low-quality content show up in searches and the good quality stuff was getting left behind.

Enter the panda!

Google's Panda update means that still to this day if you have good quality content, the right amount of words with plenty of headings, spaces, and you don't overuse keywords you'll be rewarded with a much higher ranking.

Google now looks for contextual words within an article that relate to the keyword so if your keyword is 'sofa' and your post included relevant words like sofa fabric, armchair, upholstery fabrics, choice of legs etc you're more likely to be found than a post that just adds sofa in every sentence and title.

The key thing to remember here is to write for the people who are doing the reading not the search engine spiders.

SEO
tips
for
a

Keywords for images

Labelling your images so they provide context to a feature or page is an easy way to be found in both an image and feature search. But what do you write and in which box? Here's a brief explanation.



TITLE OR FILENAME

It's pretty obvious that the title of an image is stating what it is but you may have been tempted to leave an image named what your camera calls it - ie 453453242342! It's not advisable to leave the title like this. If you add a searchable title it will go towards that image being found more easily.

Change it to be relevant to what's in the feature it's associated with and keep it short 3-4 words only.



ALT TAGS

When it comes to labelling images you often hear about alt tags or alt text, alt descriptions or alt attributes.

They're all the same thing. These are what are seen when an image can't be loaded or seen - say when the wifi is slow. When you hover over an image it will pop up in a little window. But the main thing about an ALT tag is that it is a searchable part of the image and so using a few words - including keywords is best.

Google knows when someone is spamming their Alt tag with keywords (think Google Panda!) so use just a few words to describe exactly what is in the image and how it relates to the post and you'll rank much higher

A word about Alt tags

Title Attribute with images - an example

This image of my dog Alan Taylor
looks like this to google
<IMG_4225.heic>

The Google crawlers don't know
that it's a photo of a dog so
if we give the image a file name of

It's more likely to be found but if we add an
ALT tag of something like

ALT<"Jackapoo dog Alan Taylor on a dog walk">





The crawlers will pick up on the fact that it's a
dog, Jackapoo breed and on a dog walk. It has context and is much more
searchable. Anyone searching for any of these terms is more likely to be seeing
Alan. Aren't they lucky?

The code tag will look something like this

```
<img 'DOG' alt= 'Dog, Jackapoo, Alan Taylor, on a dog walk' />
```

By the way, I'm no coder! - This is just an example. You don't have to be able to code either. This image via Google shows a really good example of best practices and shows what's good & what's not.



-  **Bad (missing alt text):** ``
-  **Bad (keyword stuffing):** ``
-  **Better:** ``
-  **Best:** ``

EXAMPLE OF IMAGE LABELLING

You can see how you can easily add the title, Alt text and a description as well as edit the URL for images for maximum exposure.

3. ATTACHMENT DETAILS



Feb-Moodboard-feATURED-IMAGE--scaled.jpeg

February 22, 2021

363 KB

2560 by 1781 pixels

Original image: [Feb-Moodboard-feATURED-IMAGE-.jpeg](#)

[Edit Image](#)

[Delete permanently](#)

Alt Text

[Describe the purpose of the image.](#) Leave empty if the image is purely decorative.

Title

Caption

Description

File URL:

[Copy URL to clipboard](#)

Required fields are marked *

Replace media

To replace the current file, click the link and upload a replacement.

ATTACHMENT DISPLAY SETTINGS

Alignment

Link To

URL

Size

Three ways to optimise your Alt text

1. Keep it simple. Just explain what's in the shot. Be descriptive so Google knows how the image relates to your webpage or blogpost

2. Don't spam your ALT tag with keywords. Google knows this game. Keep the wording relevant

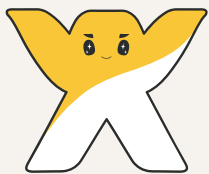
3. Always use unique wording for each image. Don't be tempted to use the same alt tag for every image on your blog post. You'll reach far more searches if you use different wording - and every image probably has something different in it anyway so help Google find you.

NB I've been guilty of no.3 before but it really only takes a few seconds longer to create different wording.



How to add ALT text on Wordpress

1. Open up your media library and click on the image you wish to insert into a blog post.
2. There are boxes for you to fill out including Alternative text. It's as simple as that.
3. Alternatively you can add the image in the post and then double click on it to add it in situ - the same way.



How to add ALT text on Wix

1. Open up the Edit window on the image you wish to label
2. Open the setting option
3. Where it says "What's in the image?" is where you will add your ALT text.



How to add ALT text on Squarespace

1. Open the gallery page from pages panel
2. Hover over the image and select gear icon
3. Edit image in content tab and add Add Alt Text

CHECKING YOUR SEO

One of the easiest ways to ensure the SEO and keywords on your blog are working is to use a plugin. There are loads out there but the most popular ones are YOAST and RANKMATH. I have only ever used Yoast and the free version at that and it's easy to use.

How to use Yoast.

At the bottom of each blog post Yoast has a little form for you to fill out. It asks you what your keyword is and then ranks your post with a traffic light system. The aim is to have all green lights along each area of SEO. I'm yet to achieve this! You need to add in your keywords for Yoast to assess your whole post as well as the snippet.

The Snippet

This is the copy that shows up on a Google search page. You can edit the details to include the right keywords and length to enhance the results.

You need to consider

1. The domain link: aka your blog post link - It should always have a keyword in it.
2. Description aka META TAG : Make sure the description of your post is written in precise and understandable language that will clearly describe your blog post and what you're talking about in the post. You have 160 characters so keep to the point.

On the next page is an example of the Yoast snippet for the podcast blogpost with Margaret Haig about Copyright. You can see I have used the keyword 'Copyright' and filled in the rest of the details.

Focus keyphrase

copyright

Get related keyphrases

Key words go here

Google preview

Preview as:

Mobile result Desktop result

www.insidestylists.com › talking-all-things-copyright-wi...

Talking all things Copyright with Margaret Haig from the IPO

Nov 26, 2020 · Copyright can be a scary thing. People have been getting into a lot of trouble with their shoots so we got expert advice from the IPO

This is the Snippet. The copy that shows up on a google search page

SEO title

Insert variable

Talking all things Copyright with Margaret Haig from the IPO

Slug

talking-all-things-copyright-with-margaret-haig-from-the-intellectual-property-o

You edit the snippet here until the line turns green - it starts orange

Meta description

Insert variable

Copyright can be a scary thing. People have been getting into a lot of trouble with their shoots so we got expert advice from the IPO

SEO analysis copyright

We like this green smiling face! It means that the SEO is good

+ Add synonyms
+ Add related keyphrase

Did you know Yoast SEO Premium also analyzes the different word forms of your keyphrase, like plurals and past tenses?

Go Premium! ▶

Analysis results

Problems (2)

- Internal links: No internal links appear in this page, [make sure to add some!](#)
- Keyphrase in introduction: Your keyphrase or its synonyms do not appear in the first paragraph. [Make sure the topic is clear immediately.](#)

Improvements (1)

- Keyphrase in title: The exact match of the focus keyphrase appears in the SEO title, but not at the beginning. [Move it to the beginning for the best results.](#)

Good results (11)

- Outbound links: Good job!
- Keyphrase length: Good job!
- Keyphrase density: The focus keyphrase was found 9 times. This is great!
- Keyphrase in meta description: Keyphrase or synonym appear in the meta description. Well done!
- Meta description length: Well done!

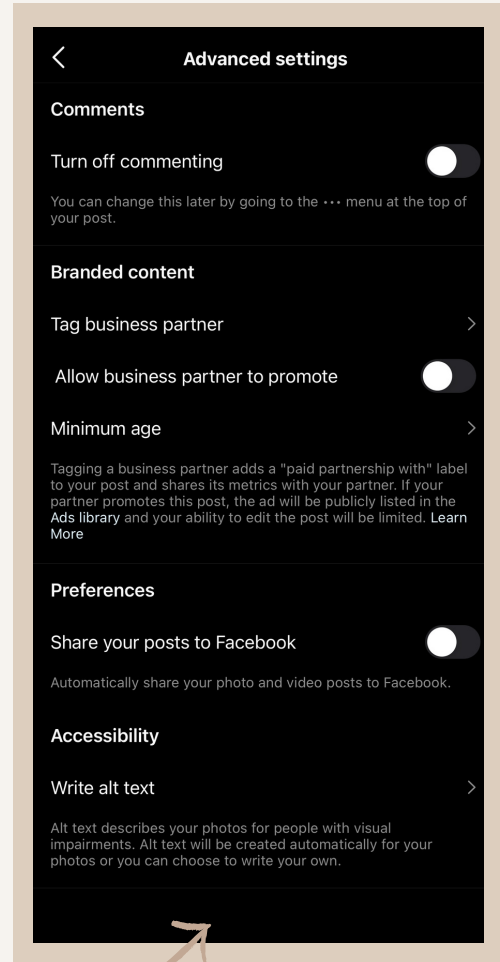
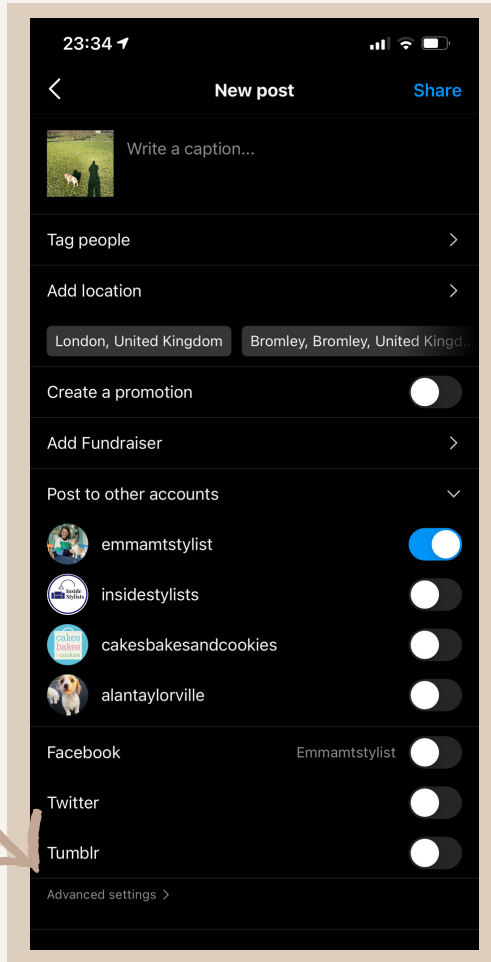
But we don't like these red and orange dots. See if you can make changes to improve them but don't stress too much. You can't always fix these issues. There were no internal links on this post so I can't avoid these ones.

Keywords and Social Media

I know- like we don't have enough to contend with already - there is a way to use keywords on social media. Don't panic! This isn't yet another thing to add to your to do list. It's just a bit of common sense - and a few extra clicks. Here's how to add ALT text to Instagram images ...

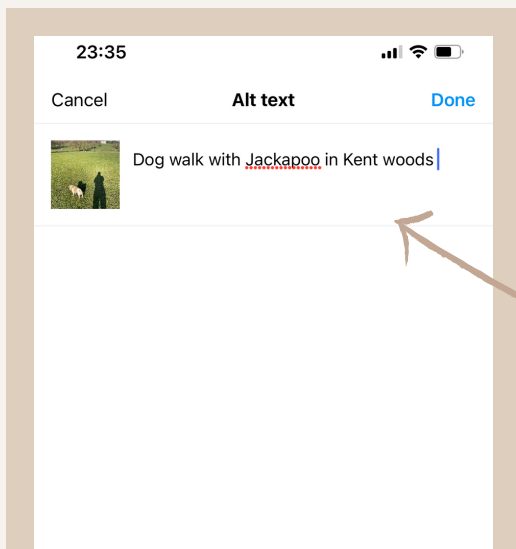
01

When posting on the grid click on the Advanced settings at the bottom



02

Open "Write Alt text"



03

Add keywords to be found

On Instagram your caption should not only be compelling it should also contain keywords as they'll help you show up in searches. It's not just about hashtags and location tags anymore

INSIDE STYLISTS

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