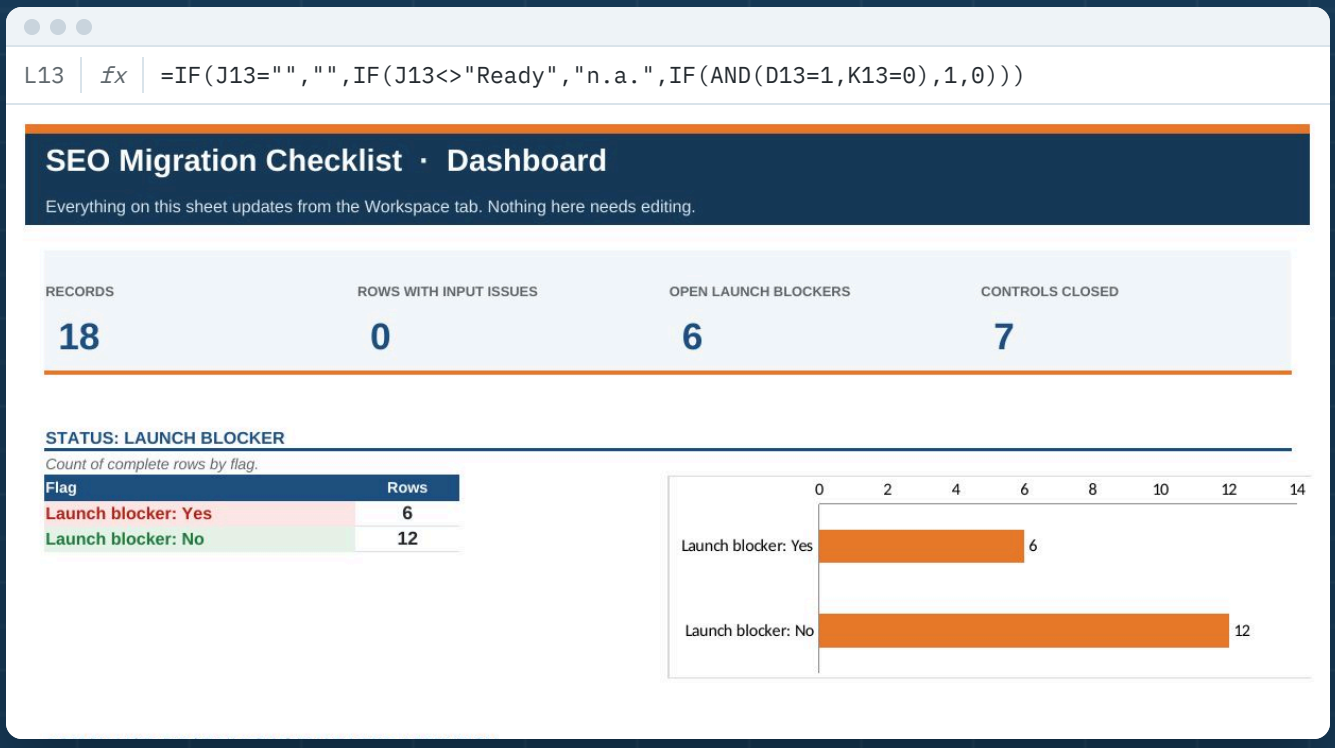
OptimizationTheory.com

SEO Migration Toolkit, resource 09

SEO Migration Checklist

Every pre-launch, launch-day and post-launch control with an owner, evidence and automatic launch-blocker flags.

Built for the DataForSEO API: On-Page API



Field guide, v3.0, November 2026

Jourdan Rombough, optimizationtheory.com

What this template decides

Whether the migration is safe to launch: which critical controls are still open, who owns them, and what evidence closes them.

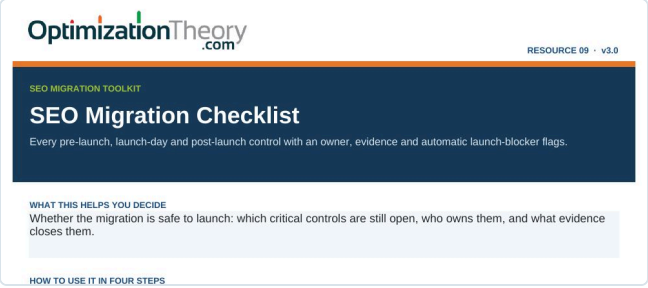
Migration checklists usually fail in one of two ways: they're too generic to act on, or every line is ticked without proof. A launch decision deserves better than a column of checkmarks.

This SEO migration checklist tracks each control by phase (pre-launch, launch day, post-launch), marks which ones are critical, and only counts a control as closed when it's Verified with evidence, or an approved Exception with evidence and a named approver. Any critical control that isn't closed is flagged as a launch blocker, and the Dashboard shows the blocker count front and center.

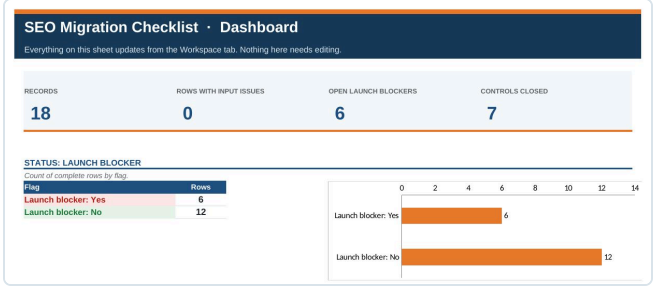
Who it's for

- SEO leads running a migration go/no-go
- Project managers who need SEO risks in the launch plan
- Developers who want clear acceptance criteria
- Agencies documenting what they verified and when

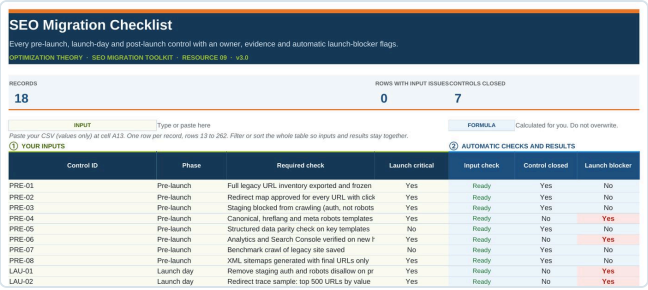
What's in the workbook



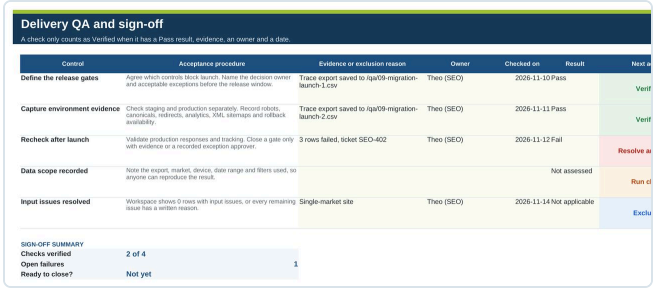
Start Here. Purpose, four-step setup and colour key.



Dashboard. KPIs, charts, Top 10 and an automatic action list.



Workspace. The working table, room for 250 rows.



Delivery QA. Evidence, owner and date for each validation step.

How the calculation works

Control closed = 1 when status is Verified and evidence exists, or status is Exception with evidence and an exception approver. Launch blocker = 1 when the control is critical and not closed.

The key formula, as written in the workbook

```
=IF(J13="","",IF(J13<>"Ready","n.a.",IF(AND(D13=1,K13=0),1,0)))
```

Result column	Plain-English formula	What it tells you
Control closed	IF(AND(Status="Verified",Evidence URL ≠ ""),1,IF(AND(Status="Exception",Evidence URL ≠ "",Exception approver ≠ ""),1,0))	Verified needs evidence. An exception needs both evidence and an approver.
Launch blocker	IF(AND(Launch critical=1,Control closed=0),1,0)	Critical controls remain blocking until verified or formally excepted.

How to use it, step by step

1

Review the controls

The workbook ships with 18 proven controls. Remove what doesn't apply, add your own and mark which are critical.

2

Assign owners

Every control needs a named person. 'Dev team' is a team, not an owner; name the lead if you can.

3

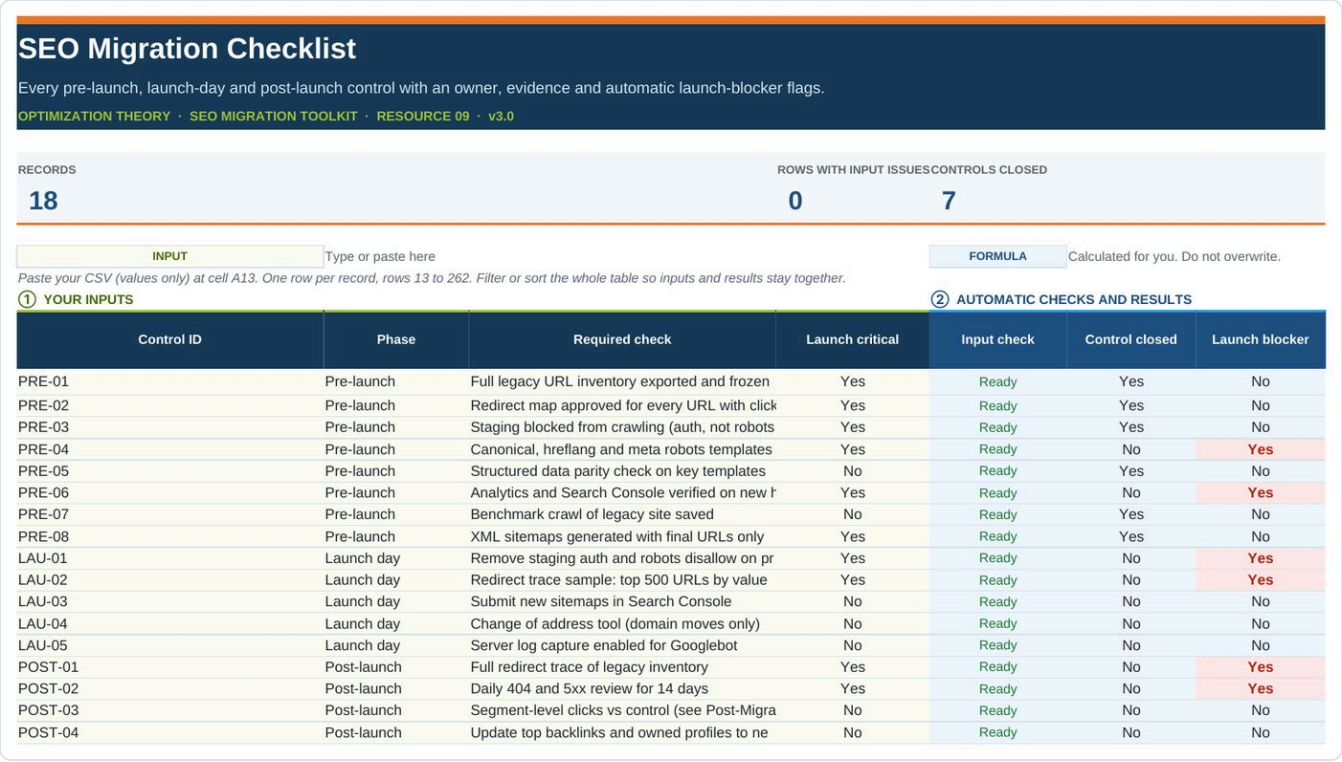
Close with evidence

Set status to Verified only with a link, file or screenshot in Evidence. Exceptions need an approver.

4

Hold the go/no-go on blockers

Launch when the Dashboard shows zero open launch blockers, or every remaining one has an approved exception.



SEO Migration Checklist

Every pre-launch, launch-day and post-launch control with an owner, evidence and automatic launch-blocker flags.

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RECORDS	ROWS WITH INPUT ISSUES	CONTROLS CLOSED
18	0	7

INPUT Type or paste here — FORMULA Calculated for you. Do not overwrite.

Paste your CSV (values only) at cell A13. One row per record, rows 13 to 262. Filter or sort the whole table so inputs and results stay together.

① YOUR INPUTS — ② AUTOMATIC CHECKS AND RESULTS

Control ID	Phase	Required check	Launch critical	Input check	Control closed	Launch blocker
PRE-01	Pre-launch	Full legacy URL inventory exported and frozen	Yes	Ready	Yes	No
PRE-02	Pre-launch	Redirect map approved for every URL with click	Yes	Ready	Yes	No
PRE-03	Pre-launch	Staging blocked from crawling (auth, not robots	Yes	Ready	Yes	No
PRE-04	Pre-launch	Canonical, hreflang and meta robots templates	Yes	Ready	No	Yes
PRE-05	Pre-launch	Structured data parity check on key templates	No	Ready	Yes	No
PRE-06	Pre-launch	Analytics and Search Console verified on new h	Yes	Ready	No	Yes
PRE-07	Pre-launch	Benchmark crawl of legacy site saved	No	Ready	Yes	No
PRE-08	Pre-launch	XML sitemaps generated with final URLs only	Yes	Ready	Yes	No
LAU-01	Launch day	Remove staging auth and robots disallow on pr	Yes	Ready	No	Yes
LAU-02	Launch day	Redirect trace sample: top 500 URLs by value	Yes	Ready	No	Yes
LAU-03	Launch day	Submit new sitemaps in Search Console	No	Ready	No	No
LAU-04	Launch day	Change of address tool (domain moves only)	No	Ready	No	No
LAU-05	Launch day	Server log capture enabled for Googlebot	No	Ready	No	No
POST-01	Post-launch	Full redirect trace of legacy inventory	Yes	Ready	No	Yes
POST-02	Post-launch	Daily 404 and 5xx review for 14 days	Yes	Ready	No	Yes
POST-03	Post-launch	Segment-level clicks vs control (see Post-Migra	No	Ready	No	No
POST-04	Post-launch	Update top backlinks and owned profiles to ne	No	Ready	No	No

The Workspace tab with the worked example. Lime cells are inputs; blue cells are formulas.

Fill it with DataForSEO

This template is built to run on **DataForSEO On-Page API**: a crawl of your site: URLs, status codes, canonicals, inlinks and sitemap membership.

This is a sign-off workflow. DataForSEO responses are the evidence you attach; the human checks stay manual by design.

1. Request the data

```
POST https://api.dataforseo.com/v3/on_page/task_post
[
  {
    "target": "yourdomain.com",
    "max_crawl_pages": 1000
  }
]
```

Post the crawl task, wait for it to finish, then request on_page/pages with {"id": "<task id>", "limit": 1000} and save that response.

2. Save the full JSON response

Save the complete response, not just the task ID, next to the template folder.

3. Convert it to the input CSV

The script in the Automation folder runs offline: no API call, no credentials.

```
python3 Automation/dataforseo_import.py import --template 09 --csv --input my-filled.csv --output my
-inputs.csv
```

Fills automatically	You add
Source reference (audit trail)	Control ID, Phase, Required check, Launch critical, Status, Owner, Evidence URL, Exception approver

Source reference fills automatically with the task ID, endpoint, location, language, device and snapshot time, so every row is traceable. Paste the finished CSV at Workspace cell A13. Estimate the cost first with the DataForSEO Cost Calculator (template 38).

Input dictionary

Keep the CSV columns in this order and paste values at Workspace cell A13. A missing observation stays blank; use 0 only for a measured zero or a verified No.

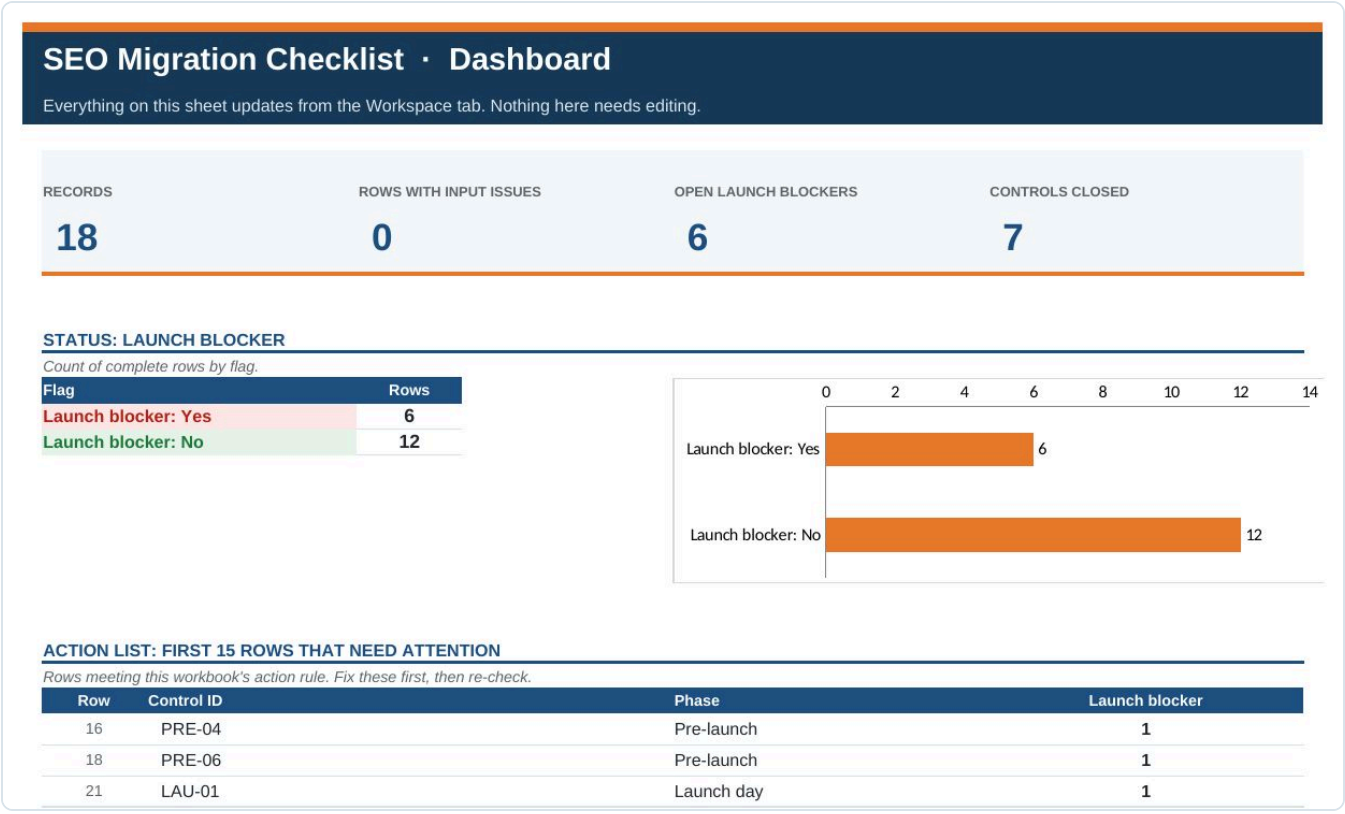
CSV field	Column	Meaning and rule	Typical source
`control_id`	Control ID	Stable identifier for a migration control.	Your records or manual review
`phase`	Phase	Discovery, Build, Prelaunch, Launch or Monitor.	Your records or manual review
`control`	Required check	The acceptance condition to verify.	Your records or manual review
`critical`	Launch critical	1 for a control that blocks launch unless an exception is explicitly approved. 1 = Yes, 0 = No.	Your records or manual review
`status`	Status	Not started, In progress, Verified or Exception.	Your records or manual review
`owner`	Owner	Person accountable for the next action.	Your records or manual review
`evidence`	Evidence URL	Dated proof of verification or an approved exception. Optional.	Your records or manual review
`exception_approver`	Exception approver	Named person accepting a documented exception. Optional.	Your records or manual review
`source_ref`	Source reference	Task ID, export filename and observation scope. Retain the untouched source response separately. Optional.	DataForSEO: source_ref

The worked example

Every workbook ships filled with data from Northbeam Outdoor, a fictional outdoor-gear retailer. This one has 18 example rows.

18	0	6	7
Records	Rows with input issues	Open launch blockers	Controls closed

Six critical controls are still open in the example, including analytics verification on the new host and removing staging protection. That's a no-go until they're closed.



The Dashboard updates automatically from the Workspace tab.

Reading the result honestly

The launch decision still belongs to the accountable team. Open noncritical items remain visible even when critical blockers are closed.

Limits. This is an evidence workflow. DataForSEO provides crawl proof, while status, approvals, analytics, rollback and infrastructure checks need other systems.

Mistakes to avoid

Ticking without evidence. A checkmark isn't proof. The workbook won't count a control as closed without evidence.

Blocking crawlers on staging with robots.txt only. Robots.txt doesn't prevent indexing of linked URLs. Use authentication on staging.

Stopping at launch day. Post-launch controls catch most of the damage. Keep them in the checklist and assign them before launch.

Tips from the field

Run the go/no-go meeting from the Dashboard tab.

Link each control's evidence to the matching template: redirect QA, indexability review, sitemap audit.

Copy the workbook per environment if you launch in stages.

Questions people ask

What should an SEO migration checklist include?

URL inventory and redirect mapping, staging protection, template checks for canonicals, robots and hreflang, analytics and Search Console setup, sitemaps, launch-day redirect testing and post-launch monitoring.

What is a launch blocker?

A critical control that isn't closed. Launching with open blockers risks traffic loss that's hard to reverse.

Do I need the Change of Address tool?

Only for domain changes. For same-domain migrations, mark it as an exception with a reason.

How long should I monitor after a migration?

Watch daily for the first two weeks, weekly for three months, and keep redirects live for at least a year.

Templates that work well with this one

Site Migration URL Inventory Template

Inventory every legacy URL with its traffic, profit and links, assign a destination and catch risky retirements.

Redirect Mapping Template

Map every old URL to its new home and verify each redirect: one permanent hop, a 200 page, no noindex, matching canonical.

Post-Migration SEO Monitoring Template

Compare each migrated segment with an untouched control so you can tell real migration loss from seasonality.

Indexability Audit Template

Check status, robots, noindex and canonical on every page you want indexed, then see exactly what to fix first.

Hreflang Audit Template

Validate every hreflang relationship: alternate status, self-reference, return tags, canonical match and locale codes.

SEO Client Onboarding Checklist

Track every access, definition and baseline export a new SEO engagement needs, with owners and blockers.

Read the full tutorial online: **optimizationtheory.com/download-view/seo-migration-checklist/**
Get all six templates in the **SEO Migration Toolkit**, or all 40 in the **Complete SEO & GEO Toolkit**.