

YouTube SEO & Upload Checklist

A practical printable worksheet for preparing a clear title, useful description, accurate settings, and a final publishing review.

Remember: Helpful metadata makes the video easier to understand, but no checklist guarantees rankings or views. Keep all details accurate and useful.

1. VIDEO & AUDIENCE BASICS

- ☐ Topic and viewer are clear
A new viewer can tell what the video covers and who it helps.
- ☐ Main search phrase identified
Write the natural phrase a viewer might use; add synonyms only when relevant.
- ☐ Title, thumbnail and video match
Do not promise content, results or reveals that the video does not deliver.
- ☐ Audience setting is accurate
Choose Made for Kids / Not Made for Kids based on the actual content and intended audience.
- ☐ Rights and disclosures reviewed
Check music, footage and image rights; complete relevant paid-promotion or altered-content disclosures when required.

2. TITLE CHECK

- ☐ Put important words near the beginning
Keep it concise; viewers may see only part of the title.
- ☐ Be accurate and specific
Avoid misleading claims, fake urgency or irrelevant trending words.
- ☐ Keep it readable at a glance
Use normal capitalization; use ALL CAPS and emoji sparingly.
- ☐ Choose your title approach
Use a clear search-style title or an intriguing title that still represents the video honestly.

3. DESCRIPTION CHECK

- ☐ Write a unique description
Do not paste the same generic text onto every upload.
- ☐ Make the first lines useful
Summarize the video before extra links or general channel information.
- ☐ Use the core topic naturally
Include the main phrase in title and description where it genuinely fits; avoid keyword stuffing.
- ☐ Add helpful links and context
Include resources, credits and related playlist links only where useful.
- ☐ Use chapters when helpful and available
For manual chapters: first timestamp 00:00, at least three ascending timestamps, each segment at least 10 seconds.

Main topic / search phrase: _____	Title draft: _____
First two description lines: _____ _____	Viewer benefit / promise: _____ _____

Final Upload & Publish Review

Use this page in YouTube Studio before you publish, then review performance once enough data is available.

4. THUMBNAIL, FILE & METADATA

- ☐ **Thumbnail represents the real video**
Use one clear subject, readable text if needed, good contrast, and no misleading visual promise.
- ☐ **Thumbnail checked on a small screen**
Important faces, objects and text remain recognizable when reduced.
- ☐ **Video file and audio reviewed**
Confirm the export, picture quality, voice/music balance, opening and ending.
- ☐ **Tags used realistically**
Title, thumbnail and description are more important; tags are mainly useful for common misspellings or variants.
- ☐ **Hashtags and links are relevant**
Avoid unrelated/excessive keywords or hashtags; test every URL.
- ☐ **Extra features considered**
Add captions, playlist, cards, end screen or chapters where supported and genuinely helpful.

5. YOUTUBE STUDIO SETTINGS

- ☐ **Audience selected correctly**
Choose Made for Kids / Not Made for Kids accurately; do not guess or choose as an SEO tactic.
- ☐ **Visibility and schedule confirmed**
Public, Unlisted, Private or scheduled setting matches your plan.
- ☐ **Checks and restrictions reviewed**
Look over copyright checks, restrictions and notices in Studio.
- ☐ **Altered or synthetic content considered**
If realistic altered/synthetic content is involved, review YouTube's disclosure requirement and answer accurately.
- ☐ **Category and monetization settings checked**
Complete relevant settings available for your channel and upload.
- ☐ **Final preview completed**
Review title, description, thumbnail, sound and processed playback where possible.

6. AFTER PUBLISHING

- ☐ **Open the live link**
Confirm visibility is correct and links work.
- ☐ **Check the viewer experience**
Review the thumbnail, title, description, captions and playback on phone/desktop.
- ☐ **Share in appropriate places**
Avoid spam, forced clicks or misleading promotion.
- ☐ **Review analytics after data accrues**
Look at impressions, click-through rate, retention and traffic sources; compare similar videos.
- ☐ **Record one next improvement**
Pick one thing to test or improve on the next upload.

PUBLISH LOG	NOTES
Video / date: URL:	What worked / what to improve: Next test:

Official YouTube Help: [Thumbnail & title tips](#) • [Descriptions](#) • [Tags](#) • [Chapters](#) • [Audience setting](#) • [Upload videos](#)