

THE GUIDE TO POSITION ZERO



PREPARED BY

CLICK INTELLIGENCE



Google is always finding new ways to help users find the content they need, and it seems the latest tweak has changed SEO once again. No longer is the top-ranked search an SEO goldmine. Position zero has become the ultimate top-ranked spot. For SEO experts, this requires the current tactics to change in order to meet those requirements that Google looks for when ranking you.

While aiming for that number 1 spot is still recommended, with the opportunity to get one better and reach position zero, you could see yourself gaining many more benefits, including a boost in traffic. Before you start implementing changes to your SEO campaign, however, it is first important to understand what position zero is and what it can do for you.

What is Position Zero?

Position zero is a term that refers to an organic result that appears at the very top of Google's search results, above position one, which was previously the top-ranked spot. Also known as a featured snippet, the click-through rate that comes from attaining this position can boost by nearly 114% because of the trust that comes with it.

First introduced in 2014, the featured snippet that displays the position zero ranking was designed so that users could obtain quick, direct answers to their search queries without the need to necessarily click on a website. Unlike a typical search result, which shows the page's title and URL, position zero is displayed differently due to the need to fulfill the users' needs. It is designed and enhanced specifically in order to draw attention.

WHAT IS A GOOGLE FEATURED SNIPPET?

WHAT DO GOOGLE SNIPPETS LOOK LIKE?

Depending on the search result, it can be displayed in the form of a:

• Paragraph

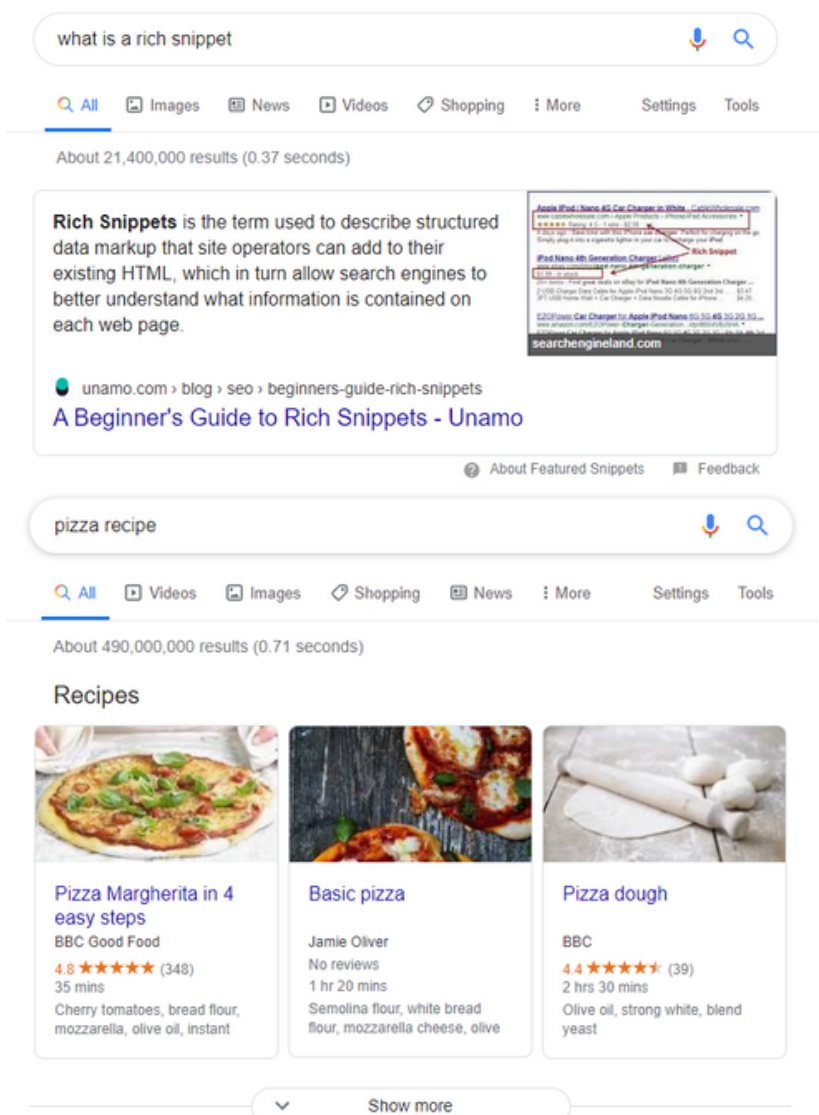
A paragraph featured snippet is the most common and is between 40 and 60 words that explain the answer to the search query in a concise, yet informative manner. Usually displayed in a block of content, this featured snippet is specifically written to entice the reader to show that you are an expert.

• Lists

For content such as recipes that involve step by step instruction, a list is another way to display a featured snippet. The bullet point list or numbered lists will clearly explain the answer to the users' queries with short, simple sentences.

• Table and Charts

For some problems or questions typed into Google, the answer doesn't necessarily involve words. For some results, it might be easier to show a chart or table of figures. Sometimes, it might even require a conversion calculation, for example, converting centimeters into meters, or cups into ounces. This will be displayed as a chart of data that informs the user of the correct answer. The Google snippet chart data features many alternative options so the users can find plenty of different answers quickly and easily.



How are they different?

It is important to note that feature snippets are not the same as rich snippets or normal search results.

So, just what are rich snippets?

Rich snippets are simple enough to understand. They are the bit of text below the URL that describes in more detail the webpage. It is enough to entice a reader in but not as much as a featured snippet would do.

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WHY OBTAINING POSITION ZERO IS IMPORTANT

In recent years, the featured snippet has since become more important for businesses and websites than reaching the number one spot, especially as more and more people begin to conduct voice searches on mobile. For those that are looking to rank high on the search engines in order to get more traffic, a higher SERP visibility, and therefore more sales, position zero is the place to be. Manage to get both positions one and zero, however, and you could see your sales rise even more, as high as 28%.

This is not to say this has arrived without its concerns for many businesses.

With the featured snippet providing enough information for the user so that there is no need to click on a website, this has left many feeling uncertain about the benefits that position zero actually brings and whether there will be adverse effects on their traffic volumes.

However, position zero does, in fact, do the opposite. Due to taking up a lot more space, it has proven that having a featured snippet will increase the number of visitors and traffic to any given website in position zero because of the authority and expert status it provides you with. It shows that you are the expert in your field and are, therefore, the businesses that people should reply upon for all future answers. This, in turn, will result in a higher number of conversions being placed.

The benefits of position zero speak for themselves, and so then comes the more difficult part, how do you rank in featured snippets? Obtaining position one can be challenging, so trying to up one and become the 'new number one' at position zero will require a bit of change to your SEO campaign.

HOW DO YOU RANK IN FEATURED SNIPPETS?

Despite what you might think, the current position one ranking doesn't necessarily move up to position zero. There are many specifications that are required to take this spot and it is not as easy as people may think.

The snippets can be extremely volatile and change frequently. Even once you have reached position zero, by the following hour, it may display something else. However, there is no need to let this put you off from trying to attain position zero over position one, as there are several ways that you can gain a featured snippet quite easily.

HOW TO GAIN A FEATURED SNIPPET?

STEP ONE: GOOD SEO STRATEGIES IN PLACE

You first need to prove to Google that your website is optimized for the SERPs by having good SEO campaigns in place. This includes:

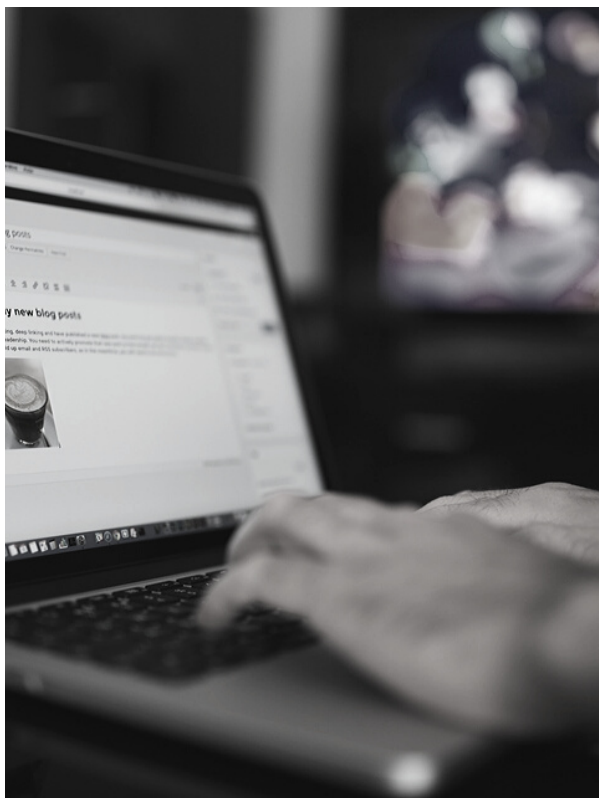
Optimizing Your Site for Both Mobile and Desktop

As we move into 2020, UX is going to be one of the more focused areas of SEO. More and more people are turning to use their mobiles to search Google for answers to their queries, and because of the rise of voice search, this brings an opportunity to feature in more snippets. Therefore, you will need to be prepared to optimize your site.

You need to ensure that the site has a fluid enough layout that when viewed on mobile, it is still great to look at but, more importantly, is also clear to navigate. Also check that your website suits many different sizes of mobiles and tablets out there.

Page titles

Using keywords within the content is good, but actually including the keywords within the page titles can bring about many benefits. It is vital to keep these titles as simple as possible in order to appear in more than one search.



Internal links

While internal links are often underused by many, they are known to improve your rankings massively. It ensures that those reading your content continue to stay on your website for a longer period of time as opposed to being directed to an external site.

Off-site SEO

When it comes to your off-site SEO, it is still important to focus on your link building and social media strategies. After all, having good content that spreads the word about your business increases the possibility of more traffic but also increases your credibility in the SERPs.

STEP TWO: TARGET QUESTIONS AROUND KEYWORDS

When somebody types a question into Google, it is not necessarily going to bring up a featured snippet. If Google deems the question too complex, for example, it could simply pull up the search results page, instead. Sometimes Google might even display rich answers themselves that are pulled from their own database that will feature at the top of the search results page.

However, if the question is just right, it will show a rich snippet. Currently, only 12.9% of websites have featured snippets in search results. Part of the problem when it comes to creating content is not the writing itself. It is actually finding the topics to write about that not only add value but also are relevant to your customers. So you first need to find the common queries that your customers are asking; this involves finding the keywords.

**ONLY 12.9% OF WEBSITES
HAVE FEATURED SNIPPETS IN
SEARCH RESULTS**

FINDING KEYWORDS

In order to create these questions, you need to find the keywords, but you have a choice when it comes to how you pick your keywords.

- **Look for the keywords that you already rank for.**

If you have a position on the first page, then you are doing something right, and that usually comes down to using the right keywords. Therefore use this to your advantage. Find which of these keywords have featured snippets.

Or:

- **Explore the keywords that you don't currently rank for.**

This involves searching your competitors' domains.

If you can't find any keywords that you are ranking for, then all is not lost. Simply search for your competitors' domains on the analytics tool and find out what keywords they are ranking for. This way, you can better optimize your content and you won't have to guess what will be successful. You can see exactly what is working and what isn't. With this tool, you can discover up to five competitors' keyword profiles and compare the similarities and differences between the keywords.

Form Your Content Questions

The question needs to be complicated enough that it warrants the need for 40-60 words, but it is important to remember that it should not be more than 6 words. Anymore, then Google will see the question as too complex, as the likelihood of people searching for that exact query is slimmer. Basing content around questions that start with one of the 5ws (who, what, why, when, and where) is the best approach. However, How-to Guides also feature heavily within the snippets that display. By including these keywords within your question, you have a much higher chance of getting that featured snippet.

OTHER TYPES OF CONTENT YOU COULD CREATE INCLUDE:

- **DEFINITIONS**
- **COMPARISONS**
- **PRICE/COST BREAKDOWN**
- **BEST LISTS**
- **FAQ**

STEP THREE: CREATING CONTENT

Once you have the keywords and a title, you need to create the content around it.

Content Will Always Be King

This statement is as true now as it was when it was first coined by Bill Gates back in 1996. Content is king, and it always will be when it comes to ranking high on the SERPs.

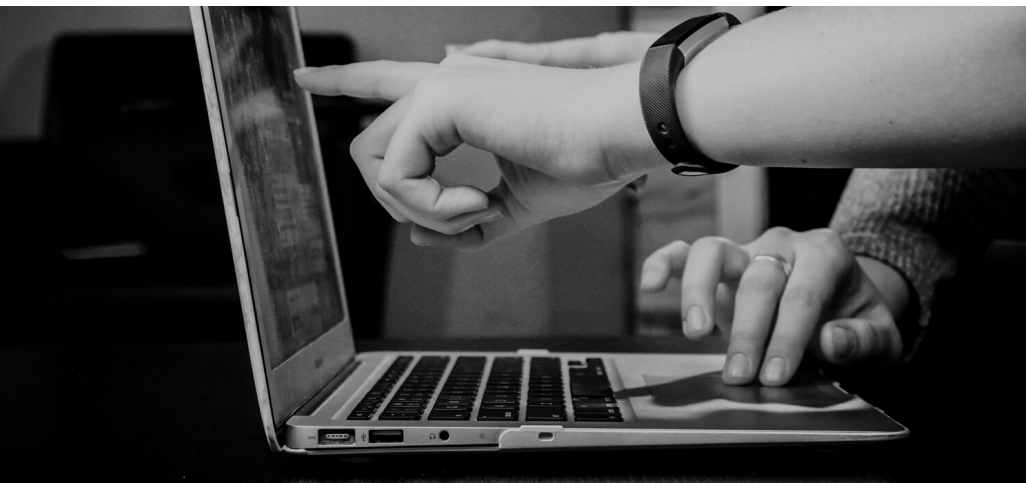
However, it's no good just flooding your website with content every second of every day, Google will be able to spot low-quality pieces of content from a mile and won't be fooled anymore. You need to ensure that what you are posting to your website is high-quality content that Google will see adds value and provides expert answers for the users' questions.



SO HOW DO YOU ENSURE YOU HAVE HIGHER QUALITY CONTENT?

In-Depth Content

The first place to start is by creating longer pieces of content. Rather than putting out pieces of 500 words, it will benefit you more to produce content that explores avenues of 1200 words or more. Longer content not only lets you explore the question fully, but you can show the extent of your knowledge a lot easier than you would have done with fewer words. Some pieces of content assume that the reader has prior knowledge, but this is not always the case. With the additional words, you have the flexibility to approach it with a mindset that there is no prior knowledge of the reader. If written well, you will not only attract people who already know the very basics but also those who are completely new to it too.



Context

On top of having a longer piece of content, you need to ensure that it isn't just filler. Google will notice this. They want to only show high-quality content on the first page of SERPs and so in order to gain that position zero, you need to ensure that the context of the content is relevant and adds value.

Add more details and case studies to back up what you are saying. Then combine this with images and videos to break up the text.

Formating

You might have longer and higher quality content (your content might even be the best out there), but if your blog isn't formatted the right way for a featured snippet, then Google will not consider you. Therefore, formatting is a big thing to consider when looking at your content. Take a look at all your previous blogs.

Could Google condense down your content to form a snippet using your sub-headers? Do they make sense on their own as a standalone step to follow?

STEP FOUR: WRITE SUMMARIES

As you already know, the featured snippet does not show your entire article. It will only show a short snippet. If you decide to go down the route of writing How-to Guides or a list post, then be sure also to write a summarized version of the same guide. This could be displayed at the start of the blog in the introduction. Start the blog with a short and concise answer to the question in the introduction and follow this up with a more detailed explanation below.



STEP FIVE: LEARN HOW TO BE CONCISE

Google will then look for a balance of both a simple and complex answer. The subject matter needs to be simple enough that it can be defined in 60 words or less. However, it also needs to be complex enough that it shows your expertise and knowledge.

HOW TO FIND THE GAP BETWEEN YOU AND YOUR COMPETITORS

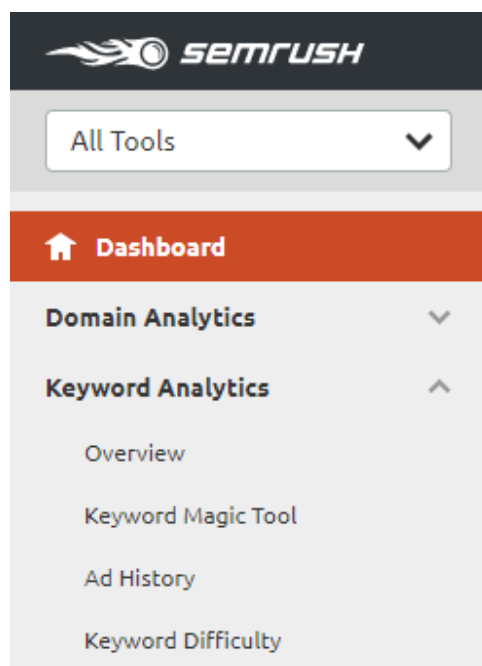
Knowing how to stand a chance of getting position zero is the first stage. Finding the gap between you and your competitors takes it to a whole new level. As a business looking to come out on top, this is the more important, if not, the most crucial stage.

Keyword Analysis Tool on SEMrush

Finding out what your competitors are ranking for will ensure that you are putting your efforts into the right areas and will see results.

1. Open the Keyword Magic Tool
2. Enter the keyword that you want to search for

Choose the keyword that is relevant to what your business does. For example, this might be 'shoes,' 'dance,' or 'content.'



Top Tip: There is no point in searching for keywords that are not relevant to you or your business. You need to determine whether the content you are producing is going to bring value to you and whether it is worth getting a feature. There is no need putting out irrelevant content that people then don't need to click on your website for.

3. Choose a county

Pick an area, such as the US, to bring up a search database. Each search database will bring up different search volumes. For this example, we are going to keep it as the US.

Keyword Magic Tool

An easy-to-use keyword research tool that provides all the keywords you need to build your most profitable SEO or PPC campaign

US

New list

Search

Keyword examples: [buy books](#) [loans](#) [movies](#)

4. Click on create a new list

You are allowed up to 50 lists (these are all saved with SEMrush). If you reach the maximum number of lists, you simply delete the old files so that you can create your new list.

5. View the list of keywords

The search will bring up a list of all the keywords that are ranking in the SERPs. However, this list can be lengthy and confusing. Therefore, you need to make the most of the filters that are available.

Dashboard > Keyword Analytics > Keyword Magic Tool > List 1

User manual
 Send feedback

Keyword Magic Tool: List 1

keywords
 + New keyword

US

Broad Match
 Phrase Match
 Exact Match
 Related

All
 Questions
 Advanced filters

By number
 By volume

All keywords: 124,841
 Total volume: 821,570
 Average KD: 69.69%

Add to K.A. (0/1,000)
 Export

Keyword	Volume	Trend	KD%	CPC (USD)	Com.	SF	Results in SERP
search	12,211						
google keyword planner	40,500		77.60	3.31	0.11	3	11.4M
keyword planner	33,100		78.80	2.45	0.11	2	22.7M
keyword	22,200		77.93	1.50	0.12	2	1.9B
keywords everywhere	12,100		65.87	2.72	0.02	3	115M
google keyword tool	8,100		71.08	4.96	0.27	3	94.8M
google keywords	8,100		76.90	3.01	0.19	2	848M
keyword tool	8,100		73.41	1.91	0.31	3	181M
keyword research	5,400		77.32	4.28	0.40	2	248M
keyword search	5,400		75.67	3.23	0.33	2	1.4B
resume keywords	5,400		78.08	1.55	0.02	2	95M

HOW DO THE FILTERS WORK?

There are multiple options when it comes to applying filters that will help cut down the list of keywords to the most relevant. The first filter that you need to apply is the SERP Features box.

Tick the **Featured Snippet** box.

This will display all the keywords that are currently used in an article that is currently in position zero for a search result. You will notice that this takes the number of keywords right down to a much more manageable figure.

The screenshot shows the Google Keyword Planner interface. At the top, there's a search bar with 'keywords' and a dropdown for 'US'. Below the search bar are buttons for 'Broad Match', 'Phrase Match', 'Exact Match', and 'Related'. There are also buttons for 'All', 'Questions', and 'Advanced Filters'. A section for 'Include keywords' and 'Exclude keywords' is visible, with 'Broad Match' and 'Exact Match' selected. Below this are various filter categories: 'Words count', 'Volume', 'KD %', 'CPC (USD)', 'Competitive Density', 'SERP Features', and 'Results in SERP'. The 'SERP Features' dropdown is open, showing options like 'Featured Snippet' (checked), 'Instant Answer', 'Knowledge Panel', 'Carousel', 'Local Pack', 'Top Stories', and 'Images'. At the bottom, there's a table of keywords with columns for 'Keyword', 'Volume', 'Trend', 'KD%', and 'CPC (USD)'. The first row shows 'google keyword planner' with a volume of 40,500 and a KD% of 77.60.

However, you can filter this even more. The list is currently displaying both short and long-tail keywords. In order to have a better chance to secure a featured snippet, you want to be making the most of long-tail keywords.

Filter the type of keywords

Located underneath the search bar, you will find two buttons: **All** and **Questions**.

Click on the **Questions** button. Then click on **Apply Filters**. This will only display long-tail keywords now.

Focusing on long-tail keywords will benefit you due to mobiles being used more often. People who are using their mobile to search will use their voice as opposed to typing. This means the questions they are asking are likely to be part of a longer phrase or sentence instead of short keywords.

By honing in on this trend, you have a higher chance of featuring for a snippet because voice search results rely heavily on these.

6. Analyze the results

Once you are happy with the filters you have applied, you can then start to analyze the results. The table will show 7 columns: **Volume**, **Trend**, **KD%**, **CPC (USD)**, **Com**, **SF**, and **Results in SERP**.

YOU WILL WANT TO FOCUS ON KD% AND RESULTS IN SERP FIRST.

What is KD%?

KD stands for keyword difficulty and this determines how hard it is to rank in SERPs. The lower the percentage, the better.

What is Results in SERP?


Results in SERP means how many results show up in the SERPs for that keyword. The lower the search result is, the more niche that the keyword is.

You want to find a keyword that is both lower in keyword difficulty but also SERP results so that you have more chance of featuring for a snippet.

Look at the trend graph

Once you have looked at these two columns, it would also be worth looking at the trend column. This will display a small graph that is a representation of how popular that keyword is over a period of time.

Some keywords will feature quiet months and then see a spike another, while others will see the opposite effect.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Keyword	Volume	Trend	KD%	CPC (USD)	Com.	SF	Results in SERP
<input type="checkbox"/>	how to search for keywords	1,600		80.13	3.83	0.08	2	358M

7. Research the top competitors

The best way to beat your competitors is to see what they are up to. You can view the top competitors from the results that are displayed to see who is ranking for the particular keywords that are showing up. You can analyze these further to your advantage.

Copy the keyword into Google and hit the search button. This will bring up the current SERPs and show you who has got the featured snippet.

You can take note of what the current snippet is. Is it a list snippet or a paragraph? This is important to write down because you can then mimic the current featured snippet. Why optimize the content for a paragraph snippet when a list snippet is what is featuring for a competitor?

Top Tip: You can also see if their content is optimized properly. If it is not, this is where you can take the lead. It is not just about making the writing optimized for the featured snippet but also the image.

For some snippets, the image that is next to the text is not actually from that same site. If you were to click on that image rather than the link below, you might find yourself on a different website with different information available. Therefore, be sure to optimize your content right through to the image that is used to ensure that every featured snippet is not a waste.

8. Add to KA

Once you have found the keywords that you feel are worth trying to gain a featured snippet with, you will want to add these to the **Keyword Analyzer** (KA). Here you can create your own set of keywords that you want to make a note of.

Tick the keyword(s) that you want by clicking on the box to the left side of the keyword.



Click on **Keyword Analyzer** at the top of the page. It will bring up the Keyword Analyzer tool with the list of the keywords you have added. The first thing you will want to do on this page is to refresh the SERPs. Refreshing the SERPs forces a crawl of all those keywords to ensure that only the top competition is shown and is accurate.

Keyword Analyzer: List 1

Keywords in KA / Available limit 100/1,000 [Import](#)

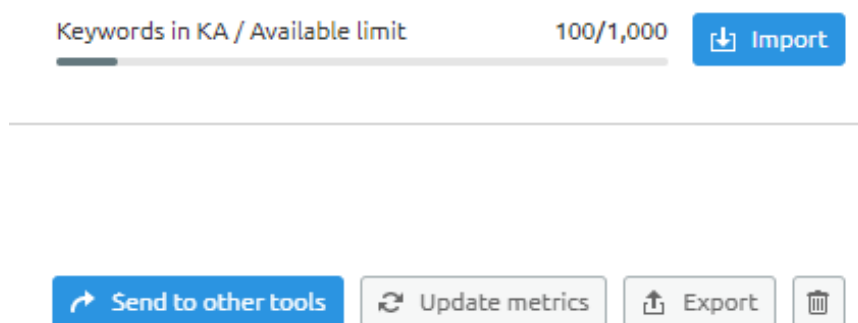
Keywords: 100 | Total volume: 15,830 | Average KD: 73.76%

[Send to other tools](#) [Update metrics](#) [Export](#) [Import](#)

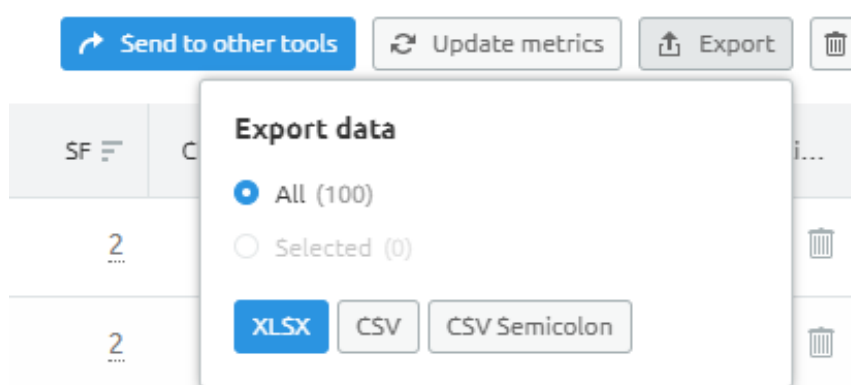
<input type="checkbox"/>	Keyword	Group	Seed Keyw...	Volume	Trend	CPC (US\$)	Com.	KD%	SF	Click Pol	Top Comp.	Last Change	Actions
<input type="checkbox"/>	 how to search for keywords	keywords	keywords	1.6K		3.83	0.08	79.84	2	50.00	Show	11/12/2019	Refresh Delete

9. Export

To ensure that all this valuable information is saved simply click on Export towards the right of the screen.



This will give you the option to export it into a different format that you can download onto your computer. By making it easy to access, you can refer to this list of keywords at any time. However, do remember the importance of keeping up to date with trends and results. The SERPs can change from day to day, as can how popular a keyword is.



So be sure to make the most of the tool and follow up and repeat the steps as detailed above to ensure you are ranking for the right keywords and increase your chances of reaching position zero.

