Website Speed and Core Web Vitals: Why They Matter and How to Fix Them

A slow website quietly costs you money. Visitors leave before the page appears, search engines rank you lower and advertising budgets are wasted on clicks that never convert. The good news is that website speed is one of the most fixable problems in digital marketing. This guide explains what to measure, what usually causes slowness and how to improve it.

Why Speed Matters

- **User experience.** People expect pages to appear almost instantly, especially on phones. Every extra second increases the chance they will give up.
- **Conversions.** Faster checkout and form pages mean fewer abandoned sales and enquiries.
- **SEO.** Google uses page experience signals, including Core Web Vitals, as part of its ranking systems. Speed will not rescue weak content, but it can separate you from a close competitor.
- **Advertising efficiency.** If your landing page is slow, you pay for visitors who never see it.

Understanding Core Web Vitals

Core Web Vitals are three measurements Google uses to describe real user experience:

1. **Largest Contentful Paint (LCP).** How quickly the main content loads. A good result is 2.5 seconds or less.
2. **Interaction to Next Paint (INP).** How fast the page responds when someone taps or clicks. A good result is 200 milliseconds or less.
3. **Cumulative Layout Shift (CLS).** How much the page jumps around while loading. A good score is 0.1 or lower.

You can check your own numbers for free with Google PageSpeed Insights and the Core Web Vitals report in Google Search Console.

The Most Common Causes of a Slow Website

- **Oversized images.** Large photos are the number one culprit. Uncompressed JPEGs straight from a camera can be many times larger than needed.
- **Too many plugins or scripts.** Every chat widget, tracker and add-on adds weight, especially on WordPress sites.
- **Cheap or overloaded hosting.** Shared servers slow down when other sites on them get busy.
- **No caching or content delivery network.** Without them, every visitor makes your server rebuild the page.
- **Render-blocking code.** Heavy CSS and JavaScript can stop the page from displaying until everything has loaded.
- **Unstable layouts.** Images without set dimensions, late-loading ads and web fonts cause content to jump.

How to Fix It: A Practical Checklist

1. **Compress and resize images.** Use modern formats such as WebP and make sure each image is no larger than it needs to be.
2. **Lazy-load below-the-fold content.** Images and videos further down the page should load only when needed.
3. **Remove what you do not use.** Delete unused plugins, scripts and fonts.
4. **Enable caching and a CDN.** This serves pages faster to visitors wherever they are.
5. **Minify and defer code.** Reduce file sizes and delay non-essential scripts.
6. **Reserve space for images and ads.** Setting width and height prevents layout shifts.
7. **Upgrade hosting if needed.** Reliable servers with good performance are worth the cost.
8. **Test on real phones.** Mobile networks are slower than office Wi-Fi, so check there first.

Build Speed In From the Start

It is far easier to build a fast site than to rescue a slow one. Clean code, a lightweight design and the right framework make a lasting difference. Our web development team builds mobile-first websites with performance in mind, and our DevOps and cloud solutions keep hosting, monitoring and backups in good shape.

Speed and SEO Work Together

Technical performance is one part of search visibility. Quality content, clear page structure and strong local signals matter just as much. Our SEO services combine technical fixes with content and local optimisation, so speed improvements turn into real rankings.

Not Sure How Your Site Performs?

A specialist can review your speed, SEO and mobile experience and tell you what to fix first. Request a free website audit and get a clear, prioritised report.

FAQs

What is a good page load time? Aim for your main content to appear within about 2.5 seconds on a typical mobile connection.

Does website speed directly affect Google rankings? Page experience is one of many signals. It matters most when competing pages are otherwise similar, and it always affects user behaviour.

Why is my site fast on my computer but slow on my phone? Phones have less processing power and often slower connections, so heavy pages suffer more.

How often should I test my website speed? Check monthly and after major changes such as new plugins, redesigns or marketing scripts.

Conclusion

Website speed is a simple promise to your visitors: respect their time. Measure your Core Web Vitals, fix the biggest causes of slowness first and keep monitoring as your site grows. Small technical improvements often lead to noticeably better engagement, conversions and search

performance.