

The Essential TikTok SEO Cheat Sheet

FOLLOW THESE ACTIONABLE
TIPS TO RANK YOUR VIDEOS FOR
TIKTOK SEARCH RESULTS.

THE
LEAP



Want to increase
your visibility 🙄🙄
on TikTok? Let this
📅 cheat sheet be
your go-to resource
for getting your
videos 📺 in front
of as many eyes as
possible. Keep this
open when 🙌🙌
creating content,
and watch it reach
the 🏆 top of
TikTok's search
results in no 🕒 time.

What is TikTok SEO?

The term SEO stands for search engine optimization, referring to the process that gets a piece of content ranking high on search engines like Google. In the context of TikTok, you can use SEO to make your videos more easily discoverable through the platform's own search function. This offers an alternative way to reach more users than figuring out how to get your content on TikTok's For You Page.

With TikTok being used more as a search engine today, it's worth paying attention to these practices as you create new content. Otherwise, you may lose out to competitors who are optimizing their content for TikTok SEO.

“The goal of SEO is to make your videos searchable, meaning when someone looks up ‘how to tie a tie,’ they will see your video first. Prioritizing this allows you to reach a larger audience, because your video is easy to find.”

—CAITLIN JENCO (@CAITLINJENCO)



Why does SEO matter for TikTok?

While previous generations are used to Googling just about anything, younger people are now using TikTok to do the same thing. Whether it's because they prefer visual content or trust content creators more than Google's algorithms, Gen Z will go to TikTok for everything from skincare tips to restaurant recommendations.



“As TikTok matures as an app, it is becoming more and more like a search engine. The more you focus on SEO, the better chance you have at your content being pushed out into the algorithm and coming up when searched about.”

—KELSIE EXLEY (@[SOCIALLYKELS](#))



TikTok SEO Hacks

Going viral is great, but this isn't the only way to reach millions of viewers. Follow these steps to level up your SEO game for your TikTok content.

1

Understand Your Audience

If you don't know your audience, it'll be tough to optimize your content for them.

Let's say you're a fitness influencer.

Depending on the type of physical activity you promote, your audience could be very different. Are your followers looking for ways to get jacked? Do they come to your TikTok for their daily yoga practice?

Here's what you should ask yourself about your audience:

Who are they? Do they skew younger? Older?

What are they looking for?

How are they different from a similar audience of another creator in your niche?

What kinds of products or services do they need?

2

Do Your Research

Next, figure out what keywords you need to target with your SEO efforts.

Here are a few ways to find the keywords you should be including in your content:

Find TikTokers in your niche and go through their content, paying special attention to their hashtags, closed captions, and voice-overs.

Research content creators on other platforms, like Instagram and YouTube.

Visit websites in your niche and see what kind of keywords they use on their pages.

“When it comes to keywords, a good way to think about it is ‘what is someone typing into the TikTok search bar to find the content you’re creating?’”

—JERA BEAN (@[JERA.BEAN](#))



3

Pick the Right Mix of Keywords

After doing your research, you should have a big list of keywords to draw content ideas from. But which ones should you go for?

Let's imagine that you run a TikTok account where you teach people how to make their own clothes. When you did your keyword research, you might have come up with a list like this:

- Sewing
- Sewing machine
- Sewing patterns
- Best sewing machine
- Handmade clothes
- Custom clothes
- How to sew
- How to sew your own clothes

Here's what you should keep in mind when picking keywords:

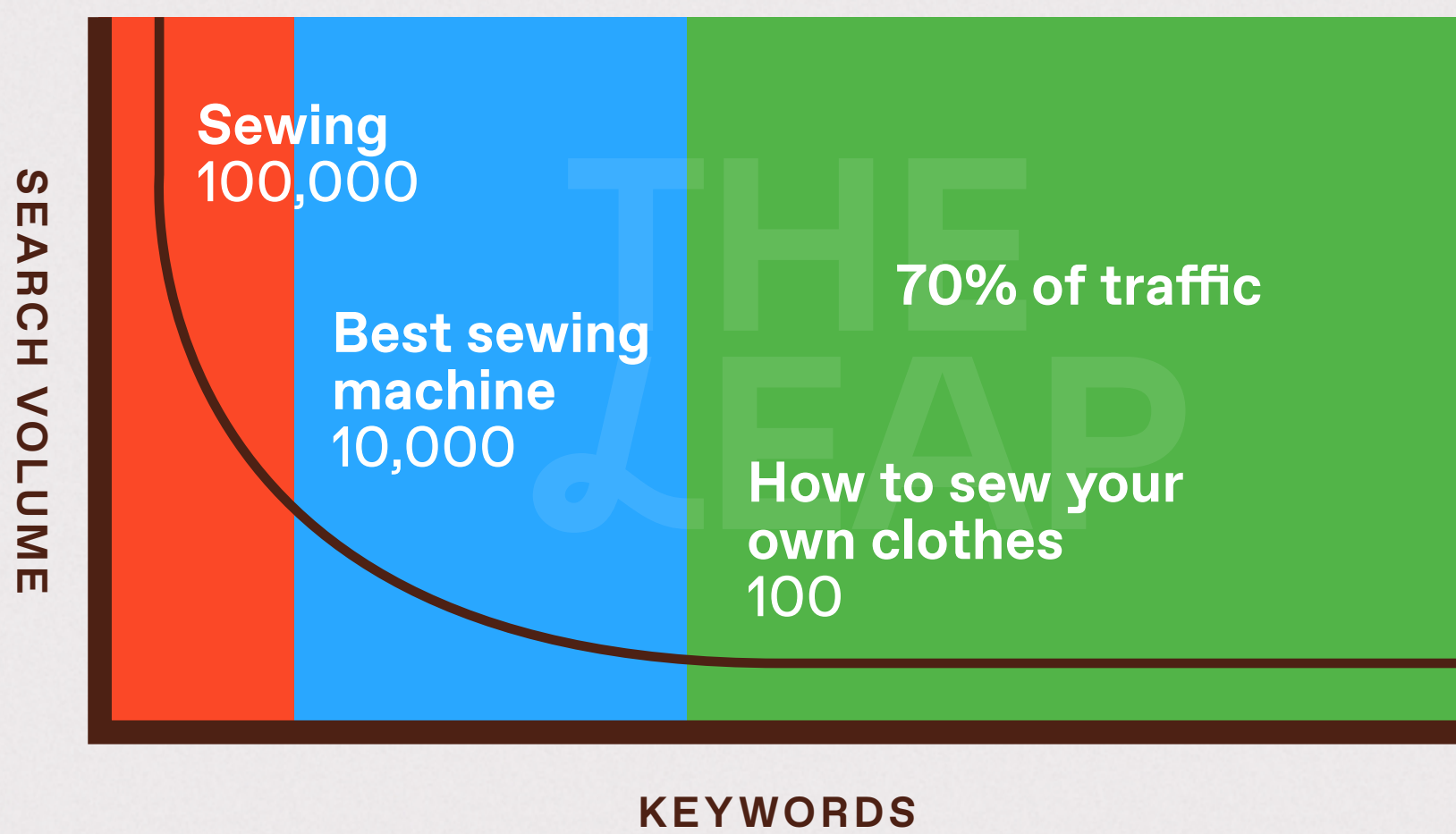
Use **short-tail** keywords (e.g. "sewing," "sewing machine," "custom clothes"). These are shorter and get a ton of searches, but they are less specific to what you offer.

Use **long-tail** keywords (e.g. "how to sew your own clothes"). They're longer and have fewer searches, but they are more specific.

Ensure you are using a mix of both kinds of keywords overall.

Regularly review the keywords you're using.

Search Demand Curve



What about TikTok trends?

TikTok trends are usually short-tail keywords. Don't hesitate to create content for them, but make sure you are making some long-tail keyword content, too.

4

Optimize Your Content in Every Way Possible

Now that you know which keywords you want to create content for, let's go into how you're going to use them.

Here are some tactics to give your content the best chance to appear at the top of TikTok's search results:

Add your keywords to your video's text overlay.

Mention the keywords in your voice-over.

Include keywords in your caption.

Use specific and niched-down hashtags that match your keywords.

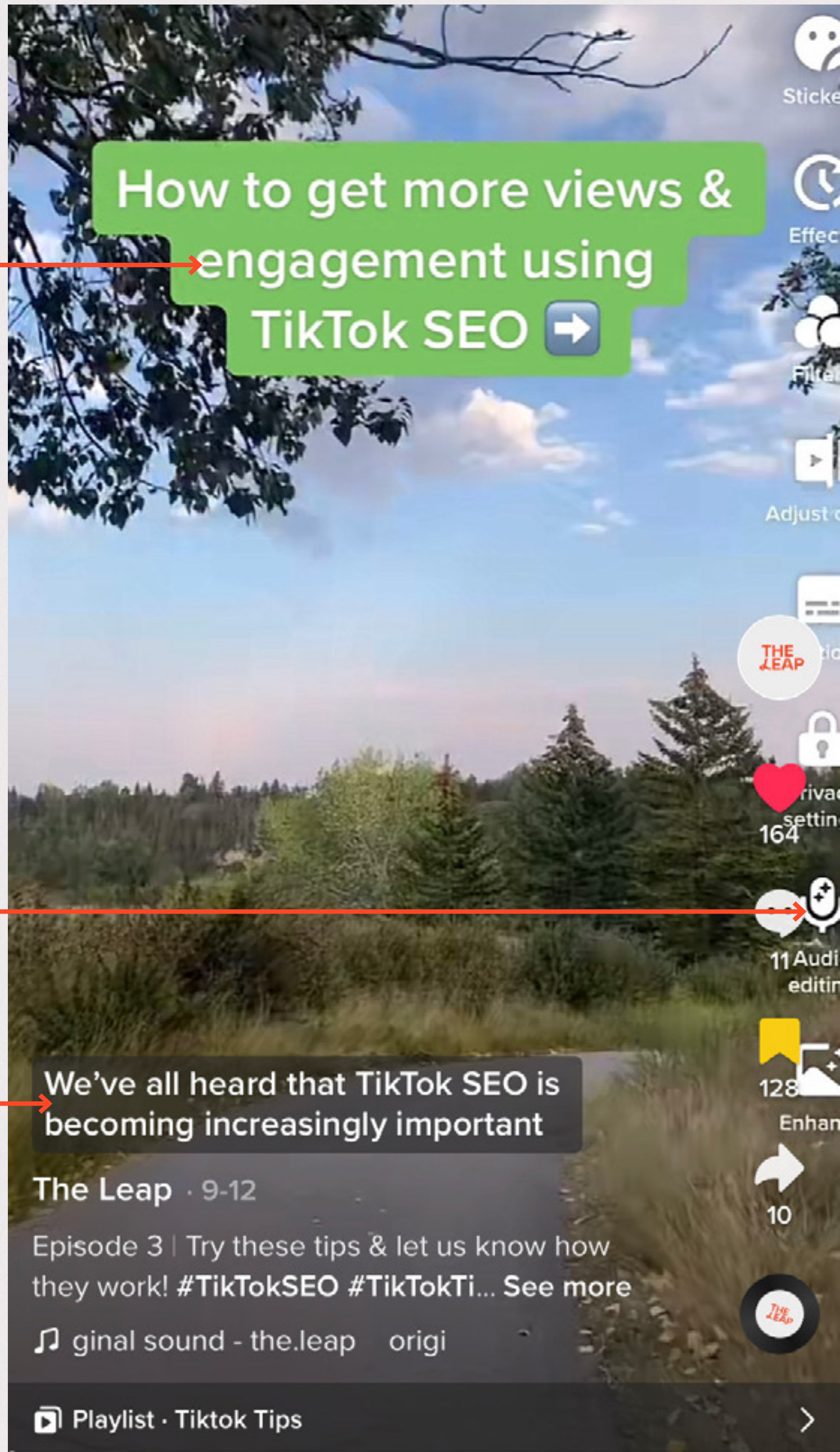


“It's important that you add text on-screen, as well as closed captions, directly within the app using TikTok's features. Worry less about the aesthetics and more about hitting the keywords to help your video leverage the algorithm.”

—CAITLIN JENCO (@CAITLINJENCO)

Where to Insert Keywords

Text on Screen

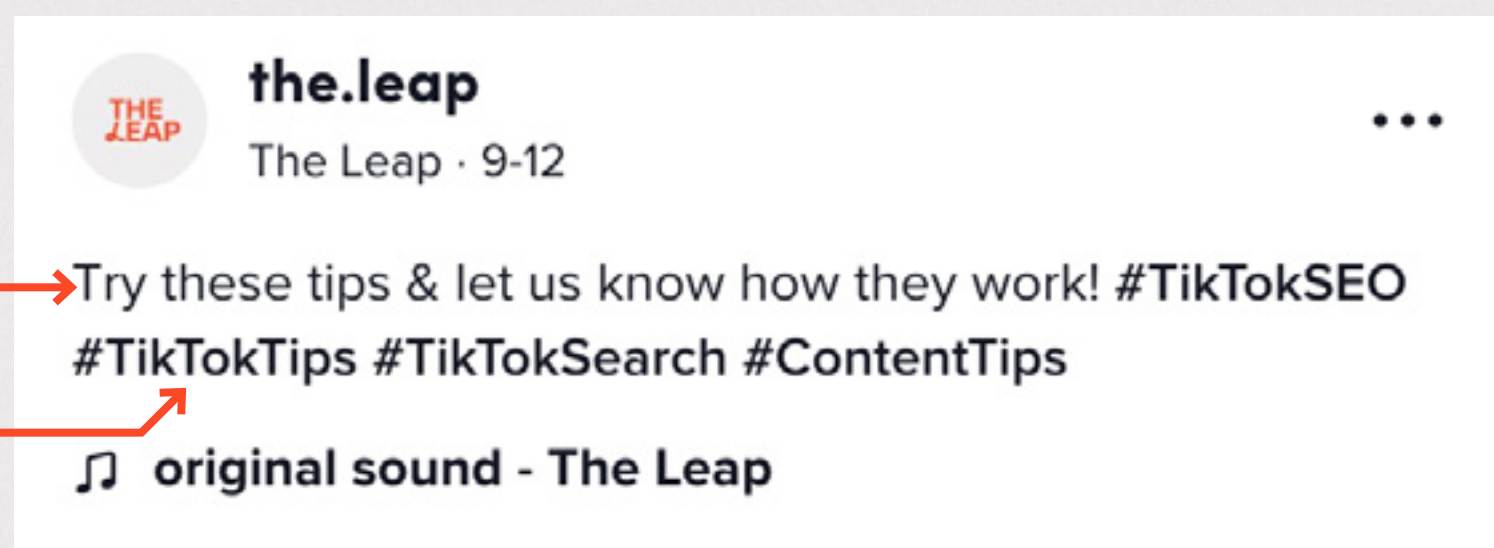


Voice-Over

Closed Captions

Caption

Hashtags



5

Jump On Trends

(When They Make Sense)

When you create a TikTok that hits the trend just right, you could get many new followers, a ton of likes, and a serious uptick in your rep as a TikToker. However, only go for trends that match the kind of content you're already creating. Otherwise, you may end up with a bunch of followers who drop off right after watching your one viral video.

Here are a few questions to ask yourself before jumping on a trend:

Who is participating in this trend right now?

Are the people participating in this trend in my niche?

Does the trend's hashtag fit with SEO keywords that match my niche?

Would new followers gained from this trend be interested in what I have to offer?

How much effort do I have to put in this trend vs. what I'll get out of it?

6

Rework Old Content

SEO isn't just about creating new content. Ever have a TikTok go viral months after you created it? Maybe you accidentally hit on a trend right before it really took off, or the serendipity of the algorithm picked up your content way later. Well, you can replicate that with SEO.

Here's how you can revisit and freshen up old content for SEO:

Look through old content to find TikToks that could be optimized for certain keywords but aren't.

Find the right keywords.

Record a new TikTok similar to the old piece of content.

Optimize the new video for SEO and publish it.

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Create Consistently

A big part of SEO is experimentation and putting more resources into the experiments that work. That's more easily done when you're creating often and consistently.

With the previous hacks in mind, here's what an SEO strategy based on consistent creation would look like:

Research keywords about once a month.

Draft a list of high-value keywords, both short-tail and long-tail.

Prioritize the keywords you want to target first by looking at how popular and close to your niche they are.

Create multiple pieces of content a week that target prioritized keywords.

Regularly review your content's performance and adjust your strategy as needed.

Get Your TikToks Noticed

Having your TikTok videos seen by the right audiences is part SEO and part luck, but the strategies in this cheat sheet should help put the odds in your favor.

Here's a quick recap — be sure to check off this list before hitting publish on TikTok:

Understand your audience

Do your research

Pick the right mix of keywords

Optimize your content in every way possible

Jump on trends
(when they make sense)

Rework old content

Create consistently

Want more tips as you build up your content creator career? Make sure to [subscribe to The Leap's weekly newsletter.](#)

