

Learning SEO: Why, Where, How?

Learning SEO, or search engine optimization, is an excellent idea for anyone who produces content for the web, whether you are a writer, a coder or programmer, or a designer. Even if you are not in charge of optimizing your companys web site on a day to day basis, knowing the fundamentals of good SEO makes it easier for you to produce pages that are ready for optimization. If you would like to know how to start studying SEO, read on for a quick guide for all levels of learners.

If you are a novice, you should start by reading a self guided textbook or taking a class at your local adult learning center, whichever method is more in tune with your learning style. This will help you to master the basics. This is doubly true if you are also a novice at HTML and CSS. If you have a slightly more advanced understanding of the fundamentals of SEO, a short class or seminar (say, one to three days) would be a good way to top off your knowledge of optimization.

Once you have the basics, self study is the way to go. There are dozens of reputable blogs and article collections that can get you started, as well as a few good SEO forums. (Choose your sites carefully. SEO information on the web is of highly variable quality, so finding sites that will not mislead you is vital.) After the first week of study, you will probably find yourself moving away from "how to" sites and article directories and toward SEO blogs and forums. This is a good sign. It means you fully understand the techniques of SEO and are looking for advanced tricks and new developments.

Keeping your knowledge of SEO and all the developments in the field up to date is essential. As search engines change their algorithms to weed out spammers, web professionals must change how they write, code, and design their sites. Missing a new development can be the difference between the first page of the search results and the 317th page. You can catch breaking developments in SEO by reading the best forums and blogs, and web specialist conventions and seminars will hone your competitive edge.

As you can see, learning SEO is not as simple as taking a class and getting an official "SEO master" certificate at the end. First you need to get your feet under you, then you need to keep track of changes in the field. However, once you have the basics of SEO down, an hour or two a week is all it takes to stay current in the field. Persistence is the key. Keep reading, and soon you, too, will be a master of SEO.

About the Author

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