



YouTube Engagement Guide

In this lesson, you will learn about

- ★ Create eye-catching thumbnails
- ★ Add Captions
- ★ Use this proven video description template
- ★ Alternate playlist layouts
- ★ Increase your video title CTR
- ★ Get more “Suggested Video” views
- ★ Optimise video tags
- ★ Rank your videos in Google Search
- ★ Optimise videos for comments, likes and subscribes
- ★ Improve your Channel’s “Session Time”
- ★ Optimise your End Screen for views
- ★ Write eye-catching playlist titles
- ★ Share video clips on social media
- ★ Boost your Session Time and YouTube views
- ★ Upload when your audience is on YouTube
- ★ Engage first
- ★ Engage off YouTube
- ★ Use the 10x rule

Create eye-catching thumbnails

- ★ Video thumbnails are a BIG deal
- ★ 9 out of 10 of the most-viewed videos on YouTube have a custom thumbnail
- ★ 90% of popular videos use a custom thumbnail
- ★ “Thumbnails are usually the first thing viewers see when they find one of your videos” - YouTube
- ★ Simple and beautiful thumbnails can increase your engagement by 154%
- ★ Specific colours that do well when used on Thumbnails:
 - Yellow
 - Orange
 - Blue
 - Green
- ★ YouTube is mainly black, red and white. If you use these colours in your thumbnail you’ll blend in. When you use Yellow, Blue, Green or Orange your thumbnail will stand out and this means people are more likely to click it
- ★ You can use a little bit of red, white and black in your thumbnail if necessary, but they shouldn’t be the dominant colours
- ★ Thumbnails are unique for each video and they let the viewer know what to expect
- ★ Adding your branding and some custom text to your image can make it stand out from your competitor and encourage viewers to click
- ★ Images should be high-resolution (1280 x 720 pixels) and the text should be readable on all screen sizes. While editing your image, try zooming in and out, to replicate what it will look like on different devices



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- ★ Creating a compelling title will help you gain the attention of your target audience
- ★ A thumbnail that doesn't match the viewers expectations will lead to a substantial initial audience drop-off
- ★ A low retention rate could mean that your viewers aren't satisfied. Updating the thumbnail/title of the video might help to create more accurate expectations and reduce the drop-off

Add Captions

- ★ Adding closed captions to your videos improves the viewers experience
- ★ Closed captions improve your content because they:
 - Help hard-of-hearing viewers enjoy your content
 - Help you grow your channel to a global audience (subtitle services translate your videos)
 - Increase video watch time
 - Improve rankings via video SEO
 - Help viewers to watch in 'quiet' environments
- ★ You can add captions in a few different ways. You could DIY it, but this is time consuming. You can use YouTube's automatic captioning, but this is not very accurate. The best option is to use a service such as rev.com which are 99% accurate and are reasonably priced too

Use this proven video description template

- ★ You need a strong intro, especially the first few lines of your description
- ★ Include target keywords in the first 2-3 sentences of description
- ★ You also want to encourage people to watch your video. The first few lines of your description show up in YouTube search, so they're important in persuading people to watch. The more interesting and compelling the description is the higher the click through rate will be
- ★ Make sure the description which comes before "Show more" sells the video
- ★ Tell potential viewers what they will get from watching your video. Include your keywords to help your video rank for these terms
- ★ Include your important links (social/website/subscribe) and a CTA

Organise Playlists & Use Sections

- ★ Organising your playlists can help viewers to easily find content that suits them
- ★ Using sections and playlists creates more visual interest.



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- ★ Create playlists with the benefit in mind;
 - Do your audience want to know how to Grow their Instagram following or increase engagement? You could have a playlist called ‘How to increase your engagement’ and within it select all relevant videos.
 - Playlists help to break down your content, so use them strategically.
 - Order your playlists bearing in mind your customer journey. Your customers start somewhere and progress, so put the playlists which relate to this common starting point at the top.
 - To move a playlist hover over the playlist until it goes grey and then you can drag and drop.
- ★ Create Sections to group playlists together
- ★ This might be a Beginner section - incorporating relevant playlists, then an Intermediate section and an advanced section, for example.
 - To add a section go to Channel customization, layout then under Featured sections you can click the + Add Section and name it and then pull in the playlists you want to add. Then when you’ve save the playlist you can click the two lines to the left of the thumbnails and drag and drop the sections around if you wish.

Keep your videos short for happier viewers and greater user retention

- ★ YouTube values creators who have a high retention on their content. You are keeping people on YouTube for longer and they like that!
- ★ Watch time is a key metric for ranking videos. The percentage watched is more important than the number of minutes
- ★ We spend on average just 20 seconds on a web site, so we need to capture people’s attention and deliver what they want quickly or they’ll click away
- ★ The first 5-10 seconds are crucial to grabbing someone’s attention. You can retain people’s attention in a number of ways;
 - Reposition your intro and outro sections. Cut to the chase and show your personality, to engage your viewers, then you can always run the intro if you choose, when you’ve hooked them
 - Video length isn’t as important as creating an engaging, value packed piece of content. You might think that shorter videos will score higher retention, but if the content isn’t up to par people will leave whether it’s 3 minutes or 30! Educational content, specifically, tends to be longer. Just make sure it’s valuable and you keep things moving. Longer videos can also rank higher in YouTube
 - 92% of mobile viewers share videos across social networks and an average mobile session on the smaller screen is a whopping 40 minutes. So it’s crucial to optimise your videos for the smaller screen
 - Your thumbnails, Channel banner and all of your content should be optimised for mobile screens
 - Use storytelling to help you connect with your target audience



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Increase the CTR of your Video title

- ★ Together with the thumbnail, your video title has a HUGE effect on the success of your video
- ★ YouTube state that your title can make or break your entire video
- ★ Here's how to increase your title CTR:
 - Use a number in your title, for example:
 - The current year
 - The number of steps covered in a how to video
 - The number of tips or strategies
 - The amount of weight someone lost
- ★ Add brackets and parentheses to the end of your title
- ★ HubSpot's study of blog post titles found that adding brackets to a title increased clicks by 33%. And you can generalise this to videos.
- ★ Also posts with brackets get 38% more clicks
- ★ Use titles that are between 40-50 characters
- ★ Strategies to help improve rankings on Google
 - Consider writing a blog post and then you can embed the video in the post
 - Email various industry publications who might be interested in the content. If publications embed your videos in their relevant posts you will benefit from the SEO (more links from authoritative websites lets YouTube know the video is being well received) and you'll also be being exposed to a whole new audience. When people link to your video it signals to YouTube that the video is entertaining and so in turn YouTube will share it with more people
 - Actively promote your videos to your email subscribers and social followers

Keyword Research and Optimisation

- ★ Finding the right keyword should be the start of your content creation and getting this right will help you create more engagement
- ★ Using a keyword planner can be helpful in determining the competition and search volume of potential keywords
- ★ Especially search for "video keywords," such as "how to surf"
- ★ Google knows certain complex subjects need video demonstration, especially educational videos. So much more value and context can be added over purely written text
- ★ Targeting these keywords will help you get traffic from YouTube and Google
- ★ To find these "video keywords" simply search for them. If Google shows you video results at the top of the search engine rankings for a keyword you've entered, then you know it could be a good one to create a video around



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- ★ Check if the keyword gets a good amount of search volume (at least 300 Google searches a month)

Optimise the video before and after uploading

- ★ At the very beginning of the process (before you film!) you should have the keyword you wish to target
- ★ The filename of your video file must include your target keyword
- ★ The keyword should appear in your title, preferably near the start
- ★ Write a 250-word description adding keywords where appropriate
- ★ Adding relevant tags will help Google and YouTube know what your video is about and then they can share it with people who will engage with it

Get more "Suggested Video" views

- ★ Successful channels usually get lots of views from *Suggested Video*
- ★ These are related videos that YouTube promotes next to the video you're currently watching
- ★ Suggested Video can result in more views than YouTube search
- ★ How can you improve the views you get from Suggested Video?
- ★ Match tags to popular videos to rank higher in "Suggested Video"
- ★ When your tags match the tags in a popular video, you have a good chance of showing up next to that video
- ★ Use the same tags as your competitors. YouTube uses your video content metadata for Suggested Video rankings.

Optimise video tags

- ★ Tags are important for video SEO, because YouTube uses tags to understand what your video is about
- ★ YouTube video tags correlate with rankings. The better the tags = the higher the ranking
- ★ Tags to use:
 - Main keyword tags
 - Variations of that keyword tags
 - 1-2 Category tags - broad words describing the overall topic

Rank your videos in Google Search

- ★ If your videos rank in Google you will get lots of additional views
- ★ How do you get your videos to rank?
- ★ Say your keyword/keyword phrase in your video a few times
- ★ Upload a transcript (closed captions) of your video to YouTube. That way, Google can read and understand all of the content in your video



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Optimise videos for likes, comments and subscribes

- ★ These are all engagement markers that YouTube want to see on your videos
- ★ These signal that people are actually engaging with your video
- ★ Positive correlation between ranking in YouTube and user engagement
- ★ What's the best way to increase engagement on your videos? Ask people to engage!
 - This could be asking people to leave a comment
 - Ask them a question and direct them to the comment section to answer
 - Ask them to like and subscribe
 - Direct them to hitting the bell to be notified when you next post a video
 - Direct them to a lead magnet

Improve Your Channel's "Session Time

- ★ Session Time is more important than Watch time and Audience Retention
- ★ Session Time (also known as "Session Watch Time") is the total amount of time someone spends on YouTube after watching your video
- ★ YouTube "The goals of YouTube's search and discovery system are twofold: to help viewers find the videos they want to watch, and to maximize long-term viewer engagement..."
- ★ If someone watches your video and then leaves YouTube, it will damage your channel's Session Time:
- ★ If a viewer leaves YouTube after watching your video, your Session Time will decrease
- ★ If a viewer stays on YouTube after watching your video, your Session Time will increase
- ★ The best way to retain viewers on your channel is to promote your best videos on your channel page

Optimise your End Screen for views

- ★ Pick a popular video from your channel
- ★ Then find one of your videos that someone would want to watch after they've watched your most popular video
- ★ Then feature that video at the end of your popular video on the End Screen

Write eye-catching Playlist titles

- ★ Put some thought into your Playlist titles and make them compelling
- ★ Think about the result someone wants from watching your video



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- ★ Instead of 'Advanced SEO' you could use 'How to Rank #1 on Google" (if your videos can do that!)

Share video clips on social media

- ★ It might be tempting share the link to your video on other social media platforms, but resist the temptation
- ★ Facebook wants to keep people on Facebook, so they will not share a post to many people that includes a link to a competing platform. The other social media platforms are the same. They want to keep the traffic they have on their sites.
- ★ Instead upload a clip taken from your video as native snippet video on that specific social media platform
- ★ When you've posted the video clip, you can add the link to the full video as the first comment so people can find the full video

Boost your Session Time and YouTube views

- ★ Choose a video and look at the audience retention report
- ★ Find where there was a large retention drop (lots of people stopped viewing)
- ★ Add a card appear at that specific time to promote another of your popular or related videos
- ★ This will encourage the people who were going to click away to click on one of your other videos instead

Upload when your audience is on YouTube

- ★ Rather than picking an upload time and sticking to it, try varying the day and time you publish your YouTube content, so you can see when your viewers are online and which publication time leads to more engagement

Engage first

- ★ Give the engagement you wish to receive, even if it's slow to start with
- ★ Find people who would be ideal for your channel and comment on their posts
- ★ Start building a community off your channel and then it will naturally transfer over to your channel when people become curious about you

Engage off YouTube

- ★ Engagement on other social platforms will eventually increase engagement on YouTube



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Use the 10x rule

- ★ If you want 1 comment, leave 10 comments on other people's content
- ★ If you want 10 likes on your video, like 100 videos

Key Takeaways

- ★ YouTube is a great channel to build an audience for your business
- ★ Greater optimisation of your content will lead to increased engagement
- ★ Analytics are your friend and will help you maximise you watch time, session time & retention
- ★ Promoting your video is essential, but don't share the link to the YouTube video directly on other social media platforms, upload a clip natively