

Core Web Vitals Checklist 2026

Section-wise tracker — check off each item as you complete it

Total items: 30 | 6 sections

1. Overall Diagnosis

☐	Run field data check in Google Search Console (Core Web Vitals report)	Real-user data, grouped by URL
☐	Run lab data check via PageSpeed Insights or Lighthouse	Simulated test, good for diagnosing one issue
☐	Confirm LCP is 2.5 seconds or less	At 75th percentile of real visits
☐	Confirm INP is 200 milliseconds or less	At 75th percentile of real visits
☐	Confirm CLS is 0.1 or less	At 75th percentile of real visits
☐	Test mobile performance separately from desktop	Google scores them separately
☐	Review field data in Search Console, not just a lab score	Lab data can look good while field data fails

2. LCP - Largest Contentful Paint

☐	Compress and resize hero images; serve as WebP or AVIF	Reduces the largest element's load time
☐	Do not lazy-load the LCP image	Lazy-loading delays the largest element
☐	Preload the LCP image with <link rel="preload">	Don't preload everything; competing preloads hurt performance
☐	Review and cut server response time (TTFB)	A faster host or CDN is often the real fix
☐	Remove or defer render-blocking CSS and JavaScript	Blocks the browser from painting content
☐	Preload key fonts with font-display: swap	Prevents late-loading fonts delaying paint

3. INP - Interaction to Next Paint

	Audit and remove unnecessary third-party scripts	<i>Chat widgets, trackers, pop-up libraries</i>
	Break long-running JavaScript tasks into smaller chunks	<i>Lets the browser respond to input between tasks</i>
	Reduce DOM size	<i>Large, deeply nested pages respond more slowly</i>
	Defer non-critical JavaScript until page becomes interactive	<i>Improves responsiveness after first load</i>

4. CLS - Cumulative Layout Shift

	Set explicit width and height on every image, video, and iframe	<i>Prevents layout jumping as they load</i>
	Reserve space for ads and dynamic content before it loads	<i>Stops content pushing down unexpectedly</i>
	Use font-display: swap so text doesn't reflow	<i>Prevents jump when custom fonts load</i>
	Avoid inserting new content above existing content unprompted	<i>Common cause of accidental mis-taps</i>

5. WordPress-Specific Fixes

	Optimise images to appropriate display size	<i>Don't display a large image scaled down</i>
	Review and properly configure the caching plugin	<i>Avoid switching on every option without testing</i>
	Audit plugins; remove unused ones	<i>Check active plugins for scripts loading on unrelated pages</i>
	Reduce third-party scripts	<i>Chat tools, analytics, and social widgets add up fast</i>
	Check the theme for unused CSS, large fonts, sliders, animation libraries	<i>Common source of theme-level bloat</i>

6. Monitoring and Re-Check

	Re-check scores after any major site update	<i>New plugin, redesigned banner, or bulk image upload can undo fixes</i>
	Allow ~28 days for CrUX field data to reflect a fix	<i>Scores come from a rolling 28-day window</i>
	For "not enough data" pages, use PageSpeed Insights instead of GSC	<i>Low-traffic URLs won't have a reliable field sample</i>
	Identify which single metric is failing before changing anything	<i>A page can have good LCP/CLS but poor INP, or vice versa</i>