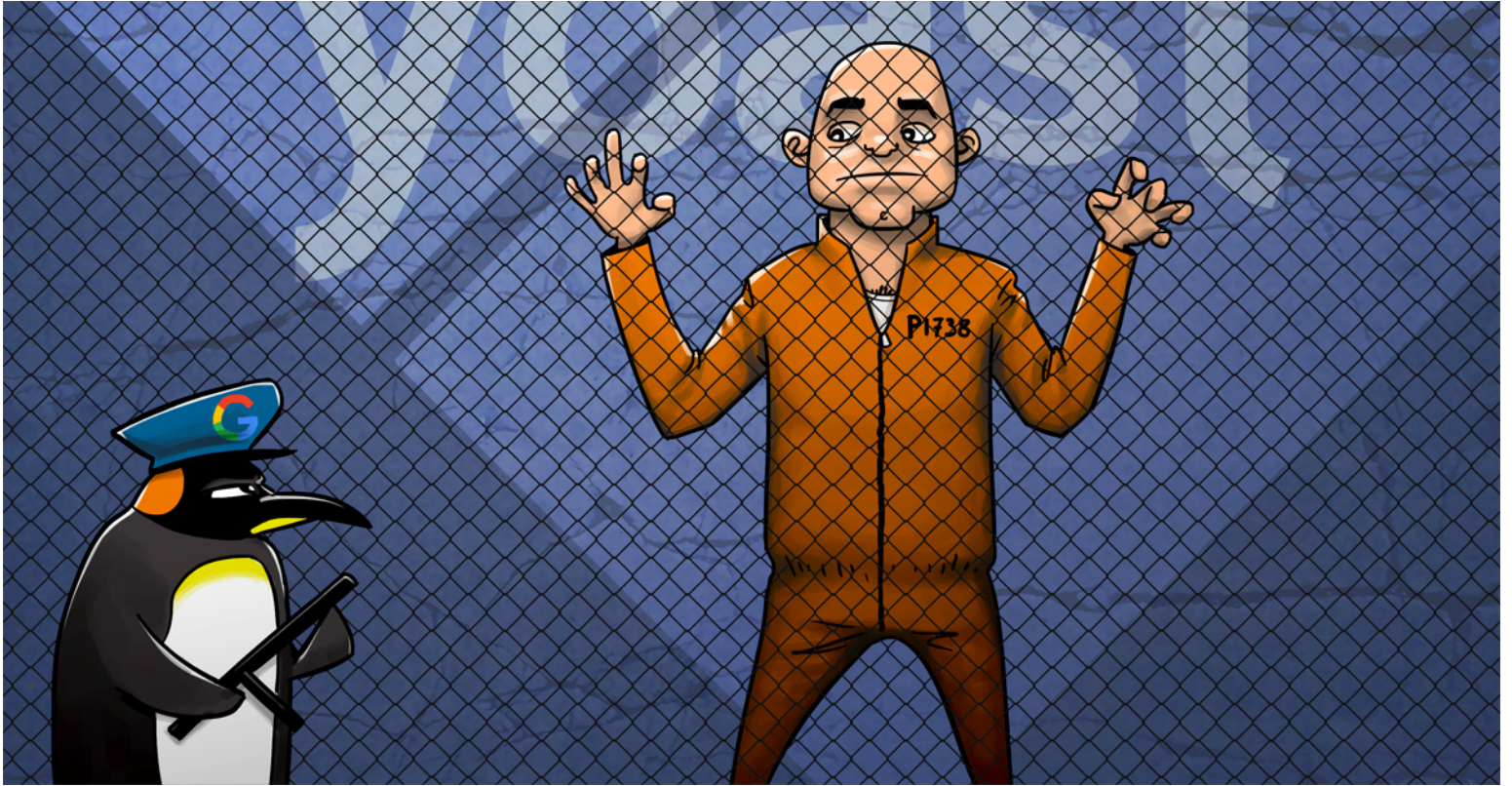


# 5 link building DON'Ts you didn't know about



A lot of link building strategies can backfire, causing more damage than doing good. If you want to improve your ranking in the long term, use a holistic SEO strategy, and avoid certain link building tactics. In this post, I'll discuss some link building DON'Ts: tactics you should most definitely NOT use. Some of these, you probably already know about; I'll cover those first. Then, let's move to 5 *less well known* – but equally important – DON'Ts.

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Marieke van de Rakt

Marieke van de Rakt is the founder of Yoast Academy and CEO of Yoast. Her favorite SEO topics are SEO copywriting and site structure.



*Before we dive in, if you want to learn more about link building strategies and other essential SEO skills, you should check out our [All-around SEO training](#)! It doesn't just tell you about SEO: it makes sure you know how to put these skills into actual practice!!*

## Risky link building tactics

In the old days, link building meant putting links on as many external pages as possible, often by buying or trading links. Since Google Penguin, these tactics have become a risky SEO strategy. If your link building tactics include spamming, your site risks a Google Penalty and could be banned from Google's results completely. Placing a lot of links may help the ranking of your site for a short while, but probably not in the long run.

## Obvious link building DON'Ts

I suspect most of you will already know quite a few of these obvious link building tactics one must definitely not apply:

- You shouldn't buy large amounts of links.
- Don't exchange links.
- Avoid automated programs to get links.
- Don't do guest blogging with very thin and off-topic content.
- Don't comment on blogs or forums if your only purpose is to leave a link in the comment.
- Over-optimizing your anchor text isn't a good idea.
- You shouldn't have links that are unrelated to the topic of your website.
- Avoid having links from sites that have no real content.
- You shouldn't have links from spammy sites whose only purpose is to advertise for gambling, viagra, or porn (unless your website is about gambling, viagra or porn).

So, now that we've covered these, let's move on to some lesser known link building DON'Ts.

### 1. Linking only to the homepage? Don't!

You should make sure to get links to different pages on your website and not solely to your homepage. If you only – or mainly – receive links to your homepage, your

link building will look spammy. Of course, if someone is writing about your brand, a link to your homepage is appropriate. But if a website writes about products or about news from your company, they usually link to your product, news or blog pages. That is just the natural way people link to other pages.

You should make sure your link building strategy resembles the natural way people link to websites. Extra benefit: linking to a more specific page will probably lead to a better conversion on your website! So you should work on getting links for important product pages, or for your cornerstone content pages. Get links to those pages where the deal is closed! It will get your website a trustworthy link profile and will increase the conversion at the same time!

## 2. Pay for specific links? Don't!

Another link building DON'T is buying links. You probably all know that buying links in large bulks from companies claiming to get you ranked fast is not something Yoast would recommend. But what about a single link from an individual company? From a high-quality website right in your niche? Is it wrong to buy one link from such a company? How will Google ever find out about that?

Google won't know about one link you buy from one company. Still, we would recommend not to do so. If this company has sold one link to you, they could sell more links to more people. And although one link will not alarm Google, as the number of questionable links on a website increases, the risk of getting hit by Penguin or a manual penalty rises as well.

## 3. Recycling your content on different sites? Don't!

A way to get links is to write articles about your company or about your products and try to get these articles published on other sites. Beware to not publish the same content on different sites though! An article in which some sentences and paragraphs are switched and a few words are altered still remains duplicate content to the original article. Especially if you repeat this trick several times.

In short: recycling content is not creating new content. It is a link building trick and it could backfire. Write the articles for the audience of the website you're sending your piece to. Yes, that is a lot of work. No one said link building is easy...

## 4. Forgetting about social media? Don't!

If you're building links, do not leave out social media! Social media should definitely be included in your link building strategy, even if it's not totally clear to what extent links from social media actually help in your ranking. If you receive many links from other websites all of a sudden, it would be extremely weird if you didn't get any links from social media sites as well. That doesn't add up and could make you look spammy in Google's eyes. So alongside your attempts to receive links from appropriate websites, invest in getting shares, tweets and likes on social media platforms as well.

## 5. Faking it? Don't!

Your link building strategy shouldn't *look* natural, it should *be* natural! Make sure your link building isn't fake. Links should be placed because the link could benefit the user of a website. They should fit the content of the page they're added to. Ideally, your link building strategy is part of a marketing strategy aimed at telling people about your company, your website or your products. It should never aim only at getting as many quality links as possible.

## Conclusion: links should always be useful

From a holistic SEO perspective, links should be useful for the user of a website. A link should be there because it means something; because the text in which the link is embedded refers to that specific page. If a link is merely there for Google and won't receive any clicks, the link probably shouldn't be there.

Links are meant to be clicked on. Link building should, therefore, be about creating links that are useful for the audience of a website, so they will click! Keep that in mind, with these DON'Ts, and your link building strategy should be well under way.