1 Baseline

- [ ] Business goal agreed for the audit
- [ ] Search Console and GA4 access confirmed
- [ ] Organic clicks, sessions, and revenue recorded
- [ ] Tracking changes and site events logged

2 Crawling and indexing

- [ ] Robots.txt blocks no key sections
- [ ] No noindex on pages that should rank
- [ ] Page indexing report checked by template
- [ ] Soft 404s and 5xx errors fixed
- [ ] Permanent moves use 301 redirects
- [ ] Redirect chains removed, internal links updated
- [ ] Self-referencing canonicals on indexable pages
- [ ] XML sitemap holds only indexable 200 URLs

3 Rendering and speed

- [ ] Main content and links in raw HTML
- [ ] Accordion and tab text readable without a click
- [ ] Pagination uses crawlable links
- [ ] Core Web Vitals checked by template, mobile first

4 Structured data and product data

- [ ] Correct schema by page type, with no errors
- [ ] Merchant Center feed matches prices and stock

5 Trust and E-E-A-T

- [ ] Bylines link to real author pages
- [ ] Contact, delivery, and returns information easy to find
- [ ] Factual errors and out-of-date advice fixed

6 Structure and internal links

- [ ] Key pages a few clicks from the homepage
- [ ] No orphan pages
- [ ] No broken internal links
- [ ] Breadcrumbs follow the site hierarchy
- [ ] Descriptive anchor text

7 Keywords and on-page

- [ ] Keyword-to-URL map built
- [ ] Cannibalisation flagged: keep, merge, create, or remove
- [ ] Titles, H1s, and meta descriptions checked by template
- [ ] Category and product copy answers buyer questions

8 Links

- [ ] Referring domain trend compared with competitors
- [ ] Dead pages with backlinks reinstated or redirected
- [ ] Link patterns checked against Google's spam policies

9 AI search

- [ ] AI crawler rules reviewed in robots.txt
- [ ] AI Overview presence checked on priority queries
- [ ] Cited competitors and publishers listed
- [ ] Rankings versus traffic checked for AI Overview effects

10 Write-up

- [ ] Every finding has a priority, action, example, and reason
- [ ] URL lists held in a linked datasheet
- [ ] Delivery order agreed with owners