

Search Engine Optimization is Your Friend

Have questions or need advice on search engine optimization tactics? Contact Kevin Dando (kdando@pbs.org/ 703.739.5073) or Jeannine Harvey (jharvey@pbs.org/ 703.739.8134)

Suggested resources: Sites

- If you only have time to look at one site, make it: www.searchengineland.com, run by search engine expert Danny Sullivan

(The site's **Daily SearchCap** newsletter is particularly helpful, and includes up-to-the-minute news, including changes in search engines algorithms, and how business deals affect the search engine landscape)

- We also highly recommend and use **SEOMoz.org**, which includes a resource-filled and frequently updated blog, and a variety of helpful, free tools producers can use to help diagnose your site's prominence on the Web. These tools — on the site's homepage — include:

[Page Strength](#) Quickly assess the value of a website

[Crawl Test](#) Diagnose potential search engine crawling issues on your site

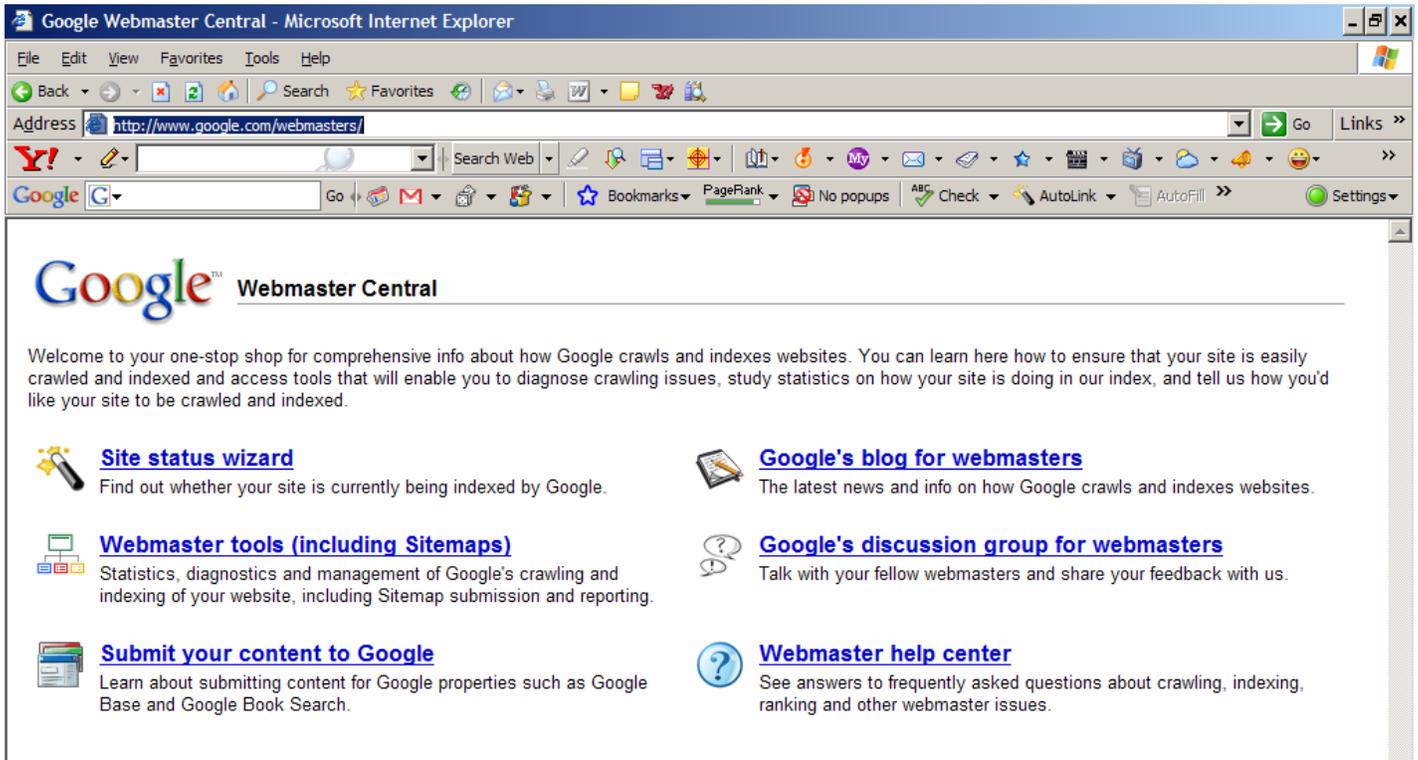
[Keyword Difficulty](#) Determine how difficult it is to rank for a term

In addition, SEOMoz just published its comprehensive survey of **Search Engine Ranking Factors** — which, the site says, “represents the collective wisdom of 37 leaders in the world of organic search engine optimization.” Together, they voted on the various factors that are estimated to comprise Google's ranking algorithm (the method by which the search engine orders results). This is an extremely valuable tool — at <http://www.seomoz.org/article/search-ranking-factors>.

Two Major Tools and Resources You Should be Using *Right Now*:

- **Verify your Website(s) and Use Google Webmaster Central**
(www.google.com/webmasters)

Loaded with daily-updated tools you can consult to help bolster your search engine ranking, and see how sites on the Web link to you right now.

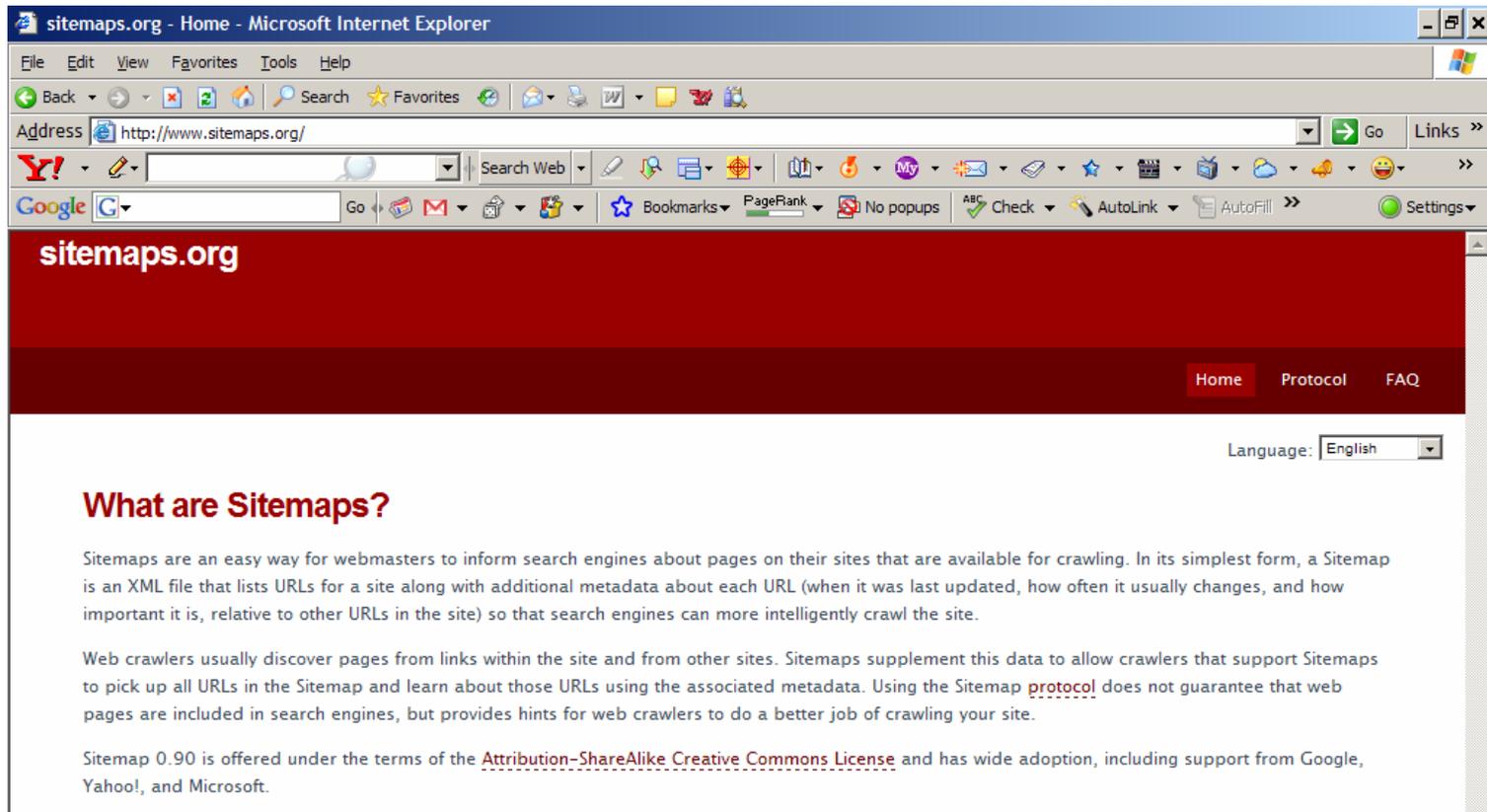


The screenshot shows the Google Webmaster Central interface in a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window. The address bar displays <http://www.google.com/webmasters/>. The page content includes the Google logo and the heading "Webmaster Central". Below the heading, a welcome message states: "Welcome to your one-stop shop for comprehensive info about how Google crawls and indexes websites. You can learn here how to ensure that your site is easily crawled and indexed and access tools that will enable you to diagnose crawling issues, study statistics on how your site is doing in our index, and tell us how you'd like your site to be crawled and indexed." The page features six main resource links, each with an icon and a brief description:

- Site status wizard** (Wrench icon): Find out whether your site is currently being indexed by Google.
- Webmaster tools (including Sitemaps)** (Computer monitor icon): Statistics, diagnostics and management of Google's crawling and indexing of your website, including Sitemap submission and reporting.
- Submit your content to Google** (Document icon): Learn about submitting content for Google properties such as Google Base and Google Book Search.
- Google's blog for webmasters** (Book icon): The latest news and info on how Google crawls and indexes websites.
- Google's discussion group for webmasters** (Speech bubbles icon): Talk with your fellow webmasters and share your feedback with us.
- Webmaster help center** (Question mark icon): See answers to frequently asked questions about crawling, indexing, ranking and other webmaster issues.

2. **Submit sitemaps to the major search engines** (Google, Yahoo!, MSN Live and Ask) to tell them about your Web sites. (For news sites, there are special sitemap recommendations – see Kevin or Jeannine for more details.)

Sitemap submission tips are at sitemaps.org.



The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the homepage of sitemaps.org. The address bar shows the URL <http://www.sitemaps.org/>. The page has a dark red header with the sitemaps.org logo on the left and navigation links for Home, Protocol, and FAQ on the right. A language dropdown menu is set to English. The main content area features a section titled "What are Sitemaps?" with the following text:

Sitemaps are an easy way for webmasters to inform search engines about pages on their sites that are available for crawling. In its simplest form, a Sitemap is an XML file that lists URLs for a site along with additional metadata about each URL (when it was last updated, how often it usually changes, and how important it is, relative to other URLs in the site) so that search engines can more intelligently crawl the site.

Web crawlers usually discover pages from links within the site and from other sites. Sitemaps supplement this data to allow crawlers that support Sitemaps to pick up all URLs in the Sitemap and learn about those URLs using the associated metadata. Using the Sitemap [protocol](#) does not guarantee that web pages are included in search engines, but provides hints for web crawlers to do a better job of crawling your site.

Sitemap 0.90 is offered under the terms of the [Attribution-ShareAlike Creative Commons License](#) and has wide adoption, including support from Google, Yahoo!, and Microsoft.