

The background of the slide is a photograph of the New York City skyline, featuring the Empire State Building prominently in the center. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds. On the far left, there is a vertical decorative bar with green, blue, and yellow segments.

Keyword Research Checklist for Dentists

Overview

Keyword research is the foundation of successful dental marketing campaigns — whether you're running Google Ads or improving your SEO.

It helps identify what potential patients are searching for and ensures your clinic appears for the right terms at the right time.

Strategic keyword selection improves ad performance, reduces wasted budget, and increases patient bookings.

Goal: To discover and organize high-intent, service-specific, and location-based keywords that attract qualified leads (MQLs & SQLs) for dental services while minimizing irrelevant clicks and improving ROI.

Target Audience:

- **Local Patients** searching for dental services (e.g., “dentist near me”, “teeth cleaning [City]”)
- **Emergency Dental Seekers** (e.g., “emergency dentist open now”)
- **Cosmetic Dental Clients** interested in elective treatments (e.g., “Invisalign cost”, “teeth whitening clinic”)
- **Parents** seeking pediatric or family dental care
- **Adults & Seniors** needing restorative work (e.g., implants, crowns, dentures)

1. Understand the Intent Behind Searches

✓ **Identify High-Intent Keywords:** Focus on those showing readiness to book

("emergency dentist near me", "book dental cleaning").

✓ **Segment by Intent:**

- **Transactional:** "best Invisalign near me", "dental implant clinic [City]".
- **Informational:** "how to manage tooth pain", "what is gum disease?"
- **Navigational/Branded:** "SmileBright Dental hours", "Dr. Patel reviews".

✓ **Include Local Intent Keywords:** Combine services with location or "near me" ("family dentist in [Neighborhood]", "kids dentist near [Zip]").

2. Use Keyword Research Tools

- ✓ **Google Keyword Planner:** For search volumes and CPC estimates.
- ✓ **Third-Party Tools:** SEMrush, Ahrefs, Moz, Ubersuggest—for competition analysis, keyword gaps, and suggestions.
- ✓ **Google Autosuggest & People Also Ask:** Type dental phrases in Google and note autocomplete suggestions and "People Also Ask" questions.
- ✓ **Related Searches:** Scroll to the bottom of Google SERPs for more keyword inspiration.
- ✓ **Google Trends:** Identify trending dental keywords by season or event ("teeth whitening" spikes before weddings/holidays).

3. Categorize Keywords by Service

- ✓ **General Dentistry:** “dentist office near me”, “dental checkup [City]”.
- ✓ **Cosmetic Dentistry:** “zoom teeth whitening [City]”, “porcelain veneers cost”.
- ✓ **Emergency Dental:** “24 hour dentist [City]”, “broken tooth emergency”.
- ✓ **Pediatric Dentistry:** “children’s dental clinic”, “kids cavity treatment.”
- ✓ **Orthodontics:** “best braces for adults”, “Invisalign provider near me”.
- ✓ **Specialties:** “periodontist near me”, “wisdom tooth extraction clinic.”
- ✓ **Insurance/Payment Terms:** “dentist accepting Medicaid”, “no-insurance dentist”.

Pro Tip: Create clusters/ad groups for each service and patient type for ultra-relevance.

4: Analyze Keyword Metrics

- ✓ **Monthly Search Volume:** Focus on a mix of high and “long-tail” medium-volume keywords.
- ✓ **Competition Level:** Prioritize lower competition when starting; add higher-competition terms as budget grows.
- ✓ **Cost-Per-Click (CPC):** Choose keywords within your budget and with strong intent.
- ✓ **Long-Tail Keywords:** Target specific, lower-competition terms (e.g., “affordable children’s braces [City]”) for higher conversion and lower cost.
- ✓ **Intent Filter:** Exclude general research terms from PPC—focus on booking, cost, or consultation intent.

5: Build a Negative Keyword List

☒ Exclude Irrelevant and Informational Terms:

- **Job seekers:** “dental assistant jobs”, “dental hygiene schools”
- **Freebies/DIY:** “free dental clinic”, “DIY tooth extraction”
- **Research/academic:** “dental anatomy PDF”

☒ Regularly Review Search Terms Reports to expand your negative list and protect your ad budget.

6. Include Location-Specific Variations

- ✓ "[Service] in [City/Neighborhood]"
- ✓ "[City] [Service] near me"
- ✓ "Top-rated [Service] [Neighborhood/Area]"
- ✓ "[Service] open now [Zip code]"

Include colloquial and local landmark references.

7. Competitor Keyword Research

☒ Use SEMrush, SpyFu, or Google Ads Transparency Center to:

- See what competitors rank/bid for in your region.
- Discover overlooked long-tail opportunities.
- Benchmark competitor ad copy and landing page topics.

☒ **Search like a patient:** note competitor offers and USPs.

8. Ongoing Review, Test, and Refine

- ✓ **Monitor Google Ads Search Terms Report:** Find converting and irrelevant queries.
- ✓ **Google Analytics:** Track keyword conversion rates, time on site, and bounce rates.
- ✓ **A/B Test:** Try new keywords and ad copy variants against your control set.
- ✓ **Use Google Trends:** For shifts in dental demand and seasonality.
- ✓ **Review Each 2–4 Weeks:** Expand or pause keywords based on real-world performance.



Bonus Advanced Techniques

- ✓ **Use Keyword Modifiers:** “Best”, “Top”, “Affordable”, “Walk-in”, “Same-day”, “Emergency”, “[City]”, “Near me”, “[Zip]”, “24hr”.
- ✓ **Include Brand and Doctor Names:** For capturing referrals and returning patients.
- ✓ **Leverage FAQ and Q&A Phrases:** “Is [treatment] painful?”, “How much does [service] cost in [City]?”