

# ■ VIDEO LAUNCH CHECKLIST

## ■ PHASE 1 — BEFORE YOU HIT RECORD

■ *Do this before scripting. Skipping this phase = uploading content nobody is looking for.*

- ☐ **Use Google Gemini to generate keyword ideas for your niche**  
*Prompt: 'Give me trending YouTube keywords for [your niche]'*
- ☐ **Research your topic on Google Trends**  
*Set filter to YouTube Search, last 90 days — confirm the trend is consistently going UP*
- ☐ **Verify keyword on YouTube Search using VidIQ Chrome Extension**  
*You want: HIGH search volume + LOW competition*
- ☐ **Check your own analytics — has a similar topic performed well before?**  
*If yes, this is a green light to double down and recreate it*
- ☐ **Research 2–3 competitor videos on this topic (small-to-medium channels)**  
*Study their title structure, thumbnail style, and hook — then model, don't copy*
- ☐ **Confirm your video idea is 100% niche-specific — no off-topic content**  
*Off-niche videos confuse the algorithm AND your audience*

## 📌 ■ PHASE 2 — SCRIPTING YOUR VIDEO

■ *A scripted video always outperforms a 'wing it' video. Use your framework every time.*

- ☐ **Write your opening hook — grab attention in the first 5–10 seconds**  
*Show a result, stat, or tease the most interesting part of the video immediately*
- ☐ **Write the body of your video — deliver all your value points clearly and specifically**  
*Be specific. Don't pad. Deliver exactly what the title promises — no more, no less.*
- ☐ **Insert your mid-video CTA (ask for likes, subscribe, or comment a word)**  
*Place this when engagement is still HIGH — not at the very end*
- ☐ **Write your close — direct viewers to ONE related video**  
*Only one. Don't give options — split attention means fewer clicks*
- ☐ **Review script: cut filler, long intros, repetition, and off-topic tangents**  
*Every sentence should earn its place. Tight scripting = better retention = more views.*

## ■ PHASE 3 — PRODUCTION & EDITING

■ *Quality matters — but don't let perfection stop you. A published video beats a perfect draft.*

- ☐ **Record your video (screen share, face-cam, or voiceover — stay consistent with your format)**  
*Your recording format should match your niche and what's already working on your channel*
- ☐ **Edit: cut dead air, long pauses, and filler words throughout**  
*Use CapCut, DaVinci Resolve, or your preferred editing tool*

- ☐ **Add copyright-free background music (Pixabay or YouTube Audio Library)**  
*Keep volume LOW — music should create flow, not overpower your voice*
- ☐ **Add text overlays, cuts, or visuals every 10–15 seconds (pattern interrupts)**  
*This directly improves your Average View Duration (AVD) — the algorithm loves this*
- ☐ **Design thumbnail: model the style of a high-performing video in your niche**  
*Use Canva — bold readable text + contrast colours + close-up face if applicable*
- ☐ **Do a full watch-through before exporting — check audio, visuals, and pacing**  
*Watch it once as a viewer, not as the creator. If you're bored, your viewers will be too.*

## ■ PHASE 4 — YOUTUBE SEO & UPLOAD SETUP

■ *This is where most small creators leave views on the table. Don't rush through this phase.*

- ☐ **Build your video TITLE from your researched keyword — not the other way around**  
*Make it curiosity-based AND keyword-rich. E.g. '7 Mistakes That Killed My Views (I Fixed It)'*
- ☐ **Write a long keyword-rich video description — repeat your main keyword naturally throughout**  
*Do NOT keyword-stuff. Write like you're explaining the video to a friend, with your keyword woven in.*
- ☐ **Add 10–15 relevant SEO tags based on your researched keywords**  
*Start with your exact title keyword, then add related and longer-tail keyword variations*
- ☐ **Set the correct video Category (Education, Entertainment, How-to & Style, etc.)**  
*Wrong category = algorithm confusion. This matters more than most creators realise.*
- ☐ **Upload your thumbnail (designed in Phase 3)**  
*Double-check it looks good at both small size (mobile) and large size (desktop)*
- ☐ **Add end screen with ONE related video link — the video you already mentioned in your script**  
*One video only. Don't give options. This is the same video you teased at the end of your script.*
- ☐ **Add subtitles/captions — YouTube auto-generates them, review and correct errors**  
*Captions boost accessibility AND give YouTube more text to understand your video's topic*
- ☐ **Upload video as UNLISTED 24–48 hours before your planned publish date**  
*This gives YouTube time to run its copyright check before you go public*

## ■ PHASE 5 — PUBLISH DAY

■ *Your job doesn't end at publish. The first few hours after going public are critical.*

- ☐ **Check if copyright flags came back during the unlisted period — fix before publishing**  
*If flagged, swap out the music or mute the flagged section before changing to Public*
- ☐ **Small/no subscriber base? UNTICK 'Publish to subscription feed & notify subscribers'**  
*Zero subscribers = zero notifications = this ticked box actively hinders your video's reach*
- ☐ **Growing subscriber base? TICK 'Publish to subscription feed'**  
*Only do this once you have real, organically grown subscribers — not begged ones*
- ☐ **Set video to PUBLIC at your planned publish time — stick to a consistent time daily**  
*A consistent schedule creates a mental deadline for you and builds viewer expectation*
- ☐ **DO NOT share to WhatsApp, Instagram, or external social media right after upload**  
*External traffic immediately after upload stunts YouTube's natural recommendation traction*

- ☐ **Drop 3–5 comments on your own video within the first few hours after publishing**  
*Pin your best comment. This seeds engagement and often triggers real viewers to respond.*
- ☐ **Reply to every comment that comes in within the first 24 hours**  
*Engagement signals quality to YouTube's algorithm. Don't leave comments sitting unanswered.*

## ■ PHASE 6 — POST-PUBLISH ANALYTICS (Day 3 & Day 7)

■ Use data to improve — not to judge yourself. One small tweak per video = compounding growth.

- ☐ **Check Impressions — is YouTube actually showing your video to people?**  
*Low impressions = your SEO or content type may not match what YouTube is currently promoting*
- ☐ **Check CTR (Click-Through Rate) — target between 4% and 10% as a small channel**  
*Low CTR = your title or thumbnail isn't compelling enough. Try testing a new thumbnail first.*
- ☐ **Check Average View Duration (AVD) — are people staying to watch?**  
*Dropping early = weak hook. Dropping in the middle = pacing lost or content went off-topic.*
- ☐ **Review the Audience Retention Graph — where exactly are people leaving?**  
*Find the drop-off point. Ask yourself: what was I saying or showing there? Fix it next time.*
- ☐ **Check Traffic Sources — where are your views coming from?**  
*YouTube Search = SEO is working. Suggested Videos = algorithm is picking you up. Both are wins.*
- ☐ **Identify your best-performing recent video — double down on that topic**  
*Make a Part 2, a deeper version, or a related video. Small channels grow by repeating what works.*
- ☐ **Note ONE thing to improve in your next upload based on this data**  
*Don't try to fix everything at once. One improvement per video adds up to massive growth over time.*

YouTube Growth Strategy Guide • Repeat this checklist for every single video. Consistency is the strategy.