

1. DO include your Location - *prominently!*

It is *extremely* important for the location of your practice to be prominently displayed on your home page, preferably near the top. When most people search for a service using Google or an alternative search engine, they are looking for a practice near where they live, e.g., they might search for “alexander technique delaware” or “posture wilmington.” If your location is not near the top so the search engine can find it, you are not likely to be found. In addition, potential students landing on your site will want to know where you teach, so don’t make it difficult to find this information!

2. DO have easy-to-find Contact Information

Make sure your contact information is accurate (in particular check your email address!) and easy for people to see on your page. You can include your contact information on every page or have a page specifically for it - or better still, have both! In addition it's useful to directly invite people to contact you to book a lesson or get information. Let people know you want to hear from them. Take it to the next level, and invite visitors to subscribe to your mailing list or e-newsletter.

3. DO use Simple, Jargon-Free Language

Most of the potential visitors to your site will not have much or any knowledge of the Alexander Technique. We are used to terms like “primary control,” “inhibition,” “use,” and the like, and we forget that these terms are not meaningful, at least not with the meaning we attribute to them, to most people. Use simple, jargon-free language to convey the essence of what you would like to say, e.g., you might use “coordination” instead of “use,” in terms that people can relate to.

4. DO NOT use a Picture of FM on your Home Page!

This may be somewhat controversial, but for similar reasons that you should steer away from Alexander jargon (see item #3), having a picture of FM on your home page is not relevant, meaningful or even attractive to visitors to your website. If you want to include photos of him on a page about the development of the Technique that's perfectly appropriate.

5. DO NOT get too Fancy

Most people looking for information on-line tend to scan quickly through a website to see if it is relevant. Don’t make them go through multiple pages, or wait for images to appear or a video to play, before they get to their main site! You may have in mind a beautiful (and probably expensive) graphic video for your home page, but you will likely lose people who do not want to wait around for the beautiful graphics to load before they can get the actual information they want! This does not mean the website should not be visually interesting - just keep it simple!

6. DO Keep it Short

Keep your information brief and to-the-point. Lengthy writing can be saved for an in-depth article, but should NOT be on your home page, or even your other main pages.

7. DO Keep it Simple and Easy to Navigate

Keep your main pages short and make sure your website is easy to navigate; i.e., it should be easy to move from page to page. Being “user friendly” is much more important than having fancy graphics! If you have longer articles you would like to post, have links to them on subsidiary pages for people who want more information, keeping your main pages uncluttered. Make sure your page links are in the same place on every page - this is so much easier for your visitors.

8. DO Highlight Key Words and Phrases

Use highlighted words, titles, key phrases, or even a short, but very to-the-point quote, especially on your home page. Use bullet points or enlarged, bold, indented or different color fonts so these key words stand out for anyone scanning the page quickly. Imagine what someone might be looking for who would benefit from lessons and make sure you include those words prominently (e.g., stress, performance, posture, back pain, acting, musicians, etc.).

9. DO include Links

Having links to and from your website is one of the most important things you can do to increase the visibility of your site on the web. It is one of the key ways that search engines find you and rank you. Connectivity is rewarded!

Make sure these sites have links to your website:

- Your AmSAT profile
- The on-line directories of any other professional organizations to which you belong
- <http://www.alexandertechnique.com> (*The Complete Guide to the Alexander Technique*), as this is often the first website people come to when searching for "Alexander Technique" on the web.
- If you use social media, even if purely personal, (e.g. facebook, twitter, LinkedIn, etc.) include a link to your website in your profile information.

Make sure your website has links to:

- All professional associations to which you belong (as above)
- www.alexandertechnique.com
- Any other websites you like, e.g. local businesses/professionals (and you can also invite them to link to your site)
- Use links to direct your visitors to extra information, like articles, videos or news items.
- Social media sites you are using professionally (NOT your personal facebook page)

10. DO Offer Something Free to your Website Visitors!

This was a piece of advice I received when I took my first "Creating Web Pages" course on-line. In reality this typically means giving something in terms of free content to your visitors, such as articles, audio or video clips, advice, or tips on how to do something (e.g., I provide information, including an audio talk-through, on lying down in semi-supine on my website), book recommendations, etc. Of course, you can also make special offers through your website for a discounted lesson or workshop if you wish.

11. DO add Video or Audio to your Site

This isn't actually necessary, but adding audio or video content a great way to enhance the effectiveness of your site. Some of the most visited pages on the web are those with audio or video content.

- Add audio content - or a link to an audio interview/podcast - that you can either listen to immediately or download and listen to later on your MP3 player. Record your own audio, or do an interview with Robert Rickover about your practice - find out more at: www.alexanderaudio.com/teachers/interview
- You do not need to record your own video to have video on your website. All videos posted on YouTube are freely available to the public, so if you find an Alexander Technique video you like you can have a link to it, or even embed (so the video appears on your page) it right into your website. If you do want to record your own video/s, sites like YouTube make it very easy for anyone to post a video free of charge, and that video can then be embedded right into the page of your website.

Resources:

If you are somewhat proficient at using the computer, these sites provide free platforms to create your own website:

- weebly.com - create your own website for free (probably the easiest to use, and doesn't look like a blog!)
- wordpress.com - great if you want to blog. Can also be used as a website, but harder to manipulate if you're not familiar with it.
- blogger.com - great if you want a blog. Slightly easier to use than wordpress, but not as many features; can also be manipulated to be a website at a push.

If you have no or little technical knowledge/ability in using the computer (or just don't have the time!), check out:

- www.alexandertechniquewebsites.com

And for more information on websites, hosting, domain names and more, visit:

- www.alexandertechnique.com/ats/internet