

About ad position and Ad Rank

Ad position is the order of your ad in the auction results as compared to other ads. For example, an ad position of "1" means an ad was the first ad shown, with no other ads ahead of it. An ad position of "2" was the second ad shown, and so on.

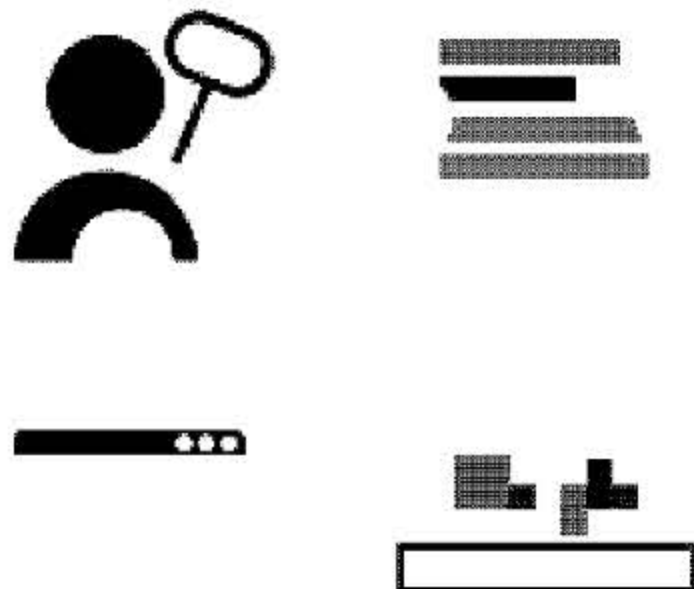
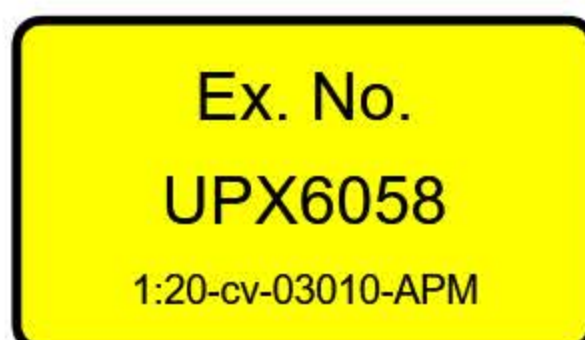
Note that ad position isn't necessarily the location of your ad on the search results page. For example, an ad position of "1" doesn't necessarily mean that your ad is above the organic search results. It can be your ad position if there are no ads above the search results and your ad is the first ad shown beneath the organic search results. Similarly, an ad position of 2 only means you were the second ad shown by order, and in practice for text ads you could be located in either the second position above the search results, or in the first position below the search results (if the first ad is above the organic search results), or in the second position below the search results (if the first ad is also below the organic search results).

You can see where your ads are showing on the search results page, by checking your top and absolute top metrics.

Tip

On the Search Network, if you want to understand the location of your ads on the search engine result pages (SERPs), you can use the top and absolute top impression rate metrics "Impr. (Abs.Top) %" and "Impr. (Top) %." If you want to bid on page location, you can use the top and absolute top impression share metrics "Search abs. top IS" and "Search top IS". To do this, you can use the Target Impression Share bid strategy with the option to target the top or absolute top of the page.

How ad position is determined



The ad auction is how Google decides which ads to show and how they're positioned.

Google Ads calculates Ad Rank for every ad in the auction. Ad Rank determines your ad position and whether your ads are eligible to show at all.

Generally speaking, the ad with the highest Ad Rank gets to show in the top position and the ad with the second-highest Ad Rank gets to show in the second position (assuming the ads clear the relevant thresholds), and so on.

At a high level, think of Ad Rank as having six factors:

1. Your bid - When you set your bid, you're telling Google Ads the maximum amount you're willing to pay for a click on your ad. How much you actually end up paying is often less, and you can change your bid at any time.
2. The quality of your ads and landing page - Google Ads also looks at how relevant and useful your ad and the website it links to are to the person who'll see it. Our assessment of the quality of your ad is summarized in your Quality Score, which you can monitor—and work to improve—in your Google Ads account.
3. The Ad Rank thresholds - To help ensure high quality ads, we set minimum thresholds that an ad must achieve to show.
4. The competitiveness of an auction - If two ads competing for the same position have similar ad ranks, each will have a similar opportunity to win that position. As the gap in ad rank between two advertisers' ads grows, the higher-ranking ad will be more likely to win but also may pay a higher cost per click for the benefit of the increased certainty of winning.
5. The context of the person's search - With the ad auction, context matters. When calculating Ad Rank, we look at the search terms the person has entered, the person's location at the time of the search, the type of device they're using (e.g., mobile or desktop), the time of the search, the nature of the search terms, other ads and search results that show on the page, and other user signals and attributes.
6. The expected impact from your ad extensions and other ad formats - When you create your ad, you have the option to add additional information to your ad, such as a phone number, or more links to specific pages on your site. These are called ad extensions. Google Ads estimates how extensions and other ad formats you use will impact your ad's performance.

Example

Here's a simplified example of how Ad Rank works. It doesn't account for all of the factors discussed above, but instead aims to give you a high-level overview of our algorithms:

Assume five advertisers are competing for a maximum of four ad positions above search results on the Google search results page. The respective Ad Rank of each of the advertisers is, say, 80, 50, 30, 10, and 5.

If the minimum Ad Rank necessary to show above the search results is, say, 40, only the first two advertisers (with Ad Ranks of 80 and 50) exceed the minimum and show above the search results.

If the minimum Ad Rank necessary to show below the search results is 8, then two of the three remaining advertisers (with Ad Ranks of 30 and 10) will show beneath the search results. The advertiser with an Ad Rank of 5 didn't meet the minimum Ad Rank and so won't show at all.

For top and absolute top metrics, the advertiser with an Ad Rank of 80 (in the first position above the results) will have 1 impression counting both for top and absolute top, the advertiser with Ad Rank of 50 (in the second position above the search results) will have 1 impression on top, and the advertiser with an Ad Rank of 30 (in the first position below the search results) will have 0 impressions on top or absolute top, same as the advertiser with an Ad Rank of 10 (in the second position below search results).

	Ad Rank	Impr. on absolute top	Impr. on top	Impr. (Abs top) %	Impr. (top) %
Advertiser A	80	1	1	100%	100%

	Ad Rank	Impr. on absolute top	Impr. on top	Impr. (Abs top) %	Impr. (top) %
Advertiser B	50	0	1	0%	100%
Advertiser C	30	0	0	0%	0%
Advertiser D	10	0	0	0%	0%

To improve your share of the top and absolute top location on the search result page, you can:

- Improve the quality of your ads and landing page experience
- Increase your bid

Better ads mean better Ad Rank

Every time someone does a search that triggers an ad that competes in an auction, we calculate an Ad Rank. This calculation incorporates your bid and auction-time measurements of expected CTR, ad relevance, and landing page experience, among other factors. To determine the auction-time quality components, we look at a number of different factors. By improving the following factors you can help improve the quality components of your Ad Rank:

- **Your ad's expected clickthrough rate:** This is partly based on your ad's historical clicks and impressions (adjusting for factors such as ad position, extensions, and other formats that may have affected the visibility of an ad that someone previously clicked)
- **Your ad's relevance to the search:** How relevant your ad is to what a person searches for
- **The quality of your landing page:** How relevant, transparent, and easy-to-navigate your page is

Why ad quality matters

The quality components of Ad Rank are used in several different ways and can affect the following things:

- **Ad auction eligibility:** Our measures of ad quality help determine the Ad Rank thresholds for your ad, and therefore whether your ad is qualified to appear at all.
- **Your actual cost-per-click (CPC):** Higher quality ads can often lead to lower CPCs. That means you pay less per click when your ads are higher quality.
- **Ad position:** Higher quality ads often lead to higher ad positions, meaning they can show up higher on the page.
- **Eligibility for ad extensions and other ad formats:** Ad Rank determines whether or not your ad is eligible to be displayed with ad extensions and other ad formats, such as sitelinks.

Overall, higher quality ads typically lead to lower costs, better ad positions, and more advertising success. The Google Ads system works best for everybody—advertisers, customers, publishers, and Google—when the ads we show are relevant, closely matching what customers are looking for.

Related links

- Improve your ad quality

- How do text ads cycle through the search result pages?

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