SHOPIFY NATIVE SEARCH

The Synonym Group Triage Sheet

Shopify retired custom synonyms in September 2026. Which of your old groups still need a rule? Sort each group by why it existed, write your own groups in the last column, then label your top searches in the grid below.

1. Why did each group exist?

#	WHY THE GROUP EXISTED	EXAMPLE	WHAT SHOPIFY DOCUMENTS TODAY	WHAT TO DO ON NATIVE SEARCH	RULE?	YOUR GROUPS
1	**Misspellings**	cofee, coffee	Typo tolerance for one wrong or two swapped letters	Nothing	No	
2	**Singular and plural**	puppy, puppies	Singular and plural forms match	Nothing	No	
3	**Plain synonyms, regional terms**	sofa, couch	Semantic understanding uses related terms	Test top pairs in Search preview	Rarely	
4	**Abbreviations, slang**	lbd, pjs	Not documented either way	Test; add the full term to tags or title if it fails	Test	
5	**Compound spellings**	belt bag, beltbag	Old docs: not treated as the same; current docs silent	Test; add variants to tags if they fail	Test	
6	**House names**	"Shine" for a rainbow print	Semantic reads product text, not images	Put the plain words in the product text	Yes, as product data	
7	**Renamed or legacy names**	old name, new name	Not documented	Keep the old name in tags or description	Yes, as product data	
8	**Part numbers**	partial SKUs	Synonyms never applied to SKUs; partial SKU match from the start	Nothing lost	No	
9	**Query-to-page routing**	"returns" to the policy page	No query redirect in Search and Discovery	Not available natively	Yes, needs redirects	
10	**Never-surface terms**	a restricted product	Unlisted status keeps a product out of search	Unlist it, or remove the term from product text	Yes	
11	**Loosely related groups**	men, boys	Shopify warned against these	Nothing to keep	No	

2. Label the first eight results of your top 10 searches

#	QUERY	SEARCHES	NO-CLICK SEARCHES	E	S	C	I	FIELD CAUSING BAD MATCHES, AND ACTION
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								

What your result means

4 or more exact matches in the first eight: native search is handling it. Recheck after your next launch.
Fewer than 4 exact matches: a priority. Find the field causing bad matches, then boost one or a few right products.
Mostly irrelevant: look for a shared tag or a boilerplate description pulling in the wrong products.

Label key (Amazon ESCI)

E, Exact: the product you meant.
S, Substitute: right type, wrong design or spec.
C, Complement: goes with what you meant.
I, Irrelevant: no reason to be there.
The threshold of 4 is our heuristic, not a Shopify rule.

Steps

1. Confirm Shopify's native search runs your results page and dropdown.
2. Export Searches by search query and Searches with no clicks.
3. Pick your top 5 by searches and top 5 by no-click searches.
4. Open each in Search preview and label the first eight results.
5. Fix the field or add a boost, then re-label the same terms a week later.

Want us to run this live on your catalog?

Bring your old synonym list and your top no-click searches, and we'll run them through our search live.

Book a demo