

KNOWLEDGE BASE · PUBLIC DOCUMENT

Faster first paint: preload, preconnect and render-blocking CSS

Speed, Cache & CDN

CODE

RLX-AO-KB-1712

VERSION

v2026.10.15

COUNTRY · LANGUAGE

Angola · English

Interweb Angola

RLX Angola, Lda. · Group RLX Holdings

Tax ID (NIF) 500 260 5724 · Commercial registration no. 26464-25/250724

<https://www.meu.interweb.ao/knowledgebase/1712>



The short answer: before showing the page, the browser has to download the CSS and discover which images and fonts it needs. Two hints in the page code can save it that time: **preload** (“go and fetch this file now, you will need it”) and **preconnect** (“open the connection to this server now”). Used sparingly they help; **overused, they get in the way.**

What each one does

Hint	When to use	Example
preconnect	When the page fetches things from another server (fonts, statistics) and needs them straight away.	<pre><link rel="preconnect" href="https://fonts.gstatic.com" crossorigin></pre>
preload of an image	For the big image at the top of the page, which the browser would only discover late (for example, if it comes from a CSS rule).	<pre><link rel="preload" as="image" href="/images/top.webp" fetchpriority="high"></pre>
preload of a font	For the main text’s font, so unstyled text does not show and then swap.	<pre><link rel="preload" as="font" type="font/woff2" href="/fonts/text.woff2" crossorigin></pre>

The `crossorigin` is required on fonts, even from your own site: without it, the browser loads the file twice. These lines go inside `<head>` .

CSS that blocks the page

The browser shows nothing until it has downloaded the CSS that is in the `<head>` . If the file is big, the page stays blank for that time. What helps:

1

Load less CSS. Many themes and plugins bring stylesheets for things your site does not use. Remove the plugins you do not need.

2

Put the critical CSS in the page itself (only what is needed for what shows first) and load the rest afterwards. Doing this by hand is work; **some cache plugins** do it for you. LiteSpeed Cache has CSS options in its optimisation page: see [LiteSpeed Cache for WordPress](#).

3

Test one at a time. A badly done CSS optimisation can show the page unstyled for an instant. Change one thing, look at the site on a phone and measure.

The usual mistakes

Mistake	Consequence
Preloading many files	They all compete for the same connection and what really matters arrives later.
Putting lazy loading on the top image	It delays the biggest visible thing. See Lazy loading images and videos .
Preloading a file the page ends up not using	The browser warns in the console and the request was wasted.

Measure before and after. If the LCP number does not improve, undo it. See [Measuring your site speed](#) and [How to fix a slow LCP](#).

Does your site take long to show the top of the page and you do not know why? Open a ticket with the address.

[Open a support ticket](#)

SEE ALSO

[How to fix a slow LCP, the Largest Contentful Paint](#)

[Lazy loading images and videos: what to defer and what never to](#)

[Measuring your site speed: which tools, and what the numbers mean](#)

[Image optimisation and WebP](#)



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