

Google Business Profile checklist.

Everything on your Google listing that customers see before they call you, in the order I would fix it. Tick the boxes as you go. Updated October 2026.

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Before you start

1. Get the basics right

2. Make it look like a real, open business

3. Keep it alive

4. The ten-minute monthly check

5. Traps that cost businesses their listing

Before you start

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Search your business name on Google, on your phone, the way a customer would. What you see is your listing. Google moves its menus around from time to time, so if a step below looks different on your screen, use the search box inside your profile and look for the setting by name.

None of this costs money. It costs an afternoon, and most of it you only do once.

1. Get the basics right

☐ **Claim and verify the profile.**

If you see 'Claim this business' or 'Own this business?' on your listing, follow the steps. Until it is verified you do not control what people see.

☐ **Use your real business name.**

The name on your sign, your invoices and your website. Adding keywords or a city to the name ('Joe's Plumbing | Best Plumber in Calgary') goes against Google's guidelines and can get a profile suspended.

☐ **Pick the most specific main category.**

'Italian restaurant' beats 'Restaurant'. Add secondary categories only for things you genuinely do, not everything you can think of.

☐ **Set your address or your service area.**

If customers come to you, show the address. If you travel to them, you can hide the address and list the areas you serve instead.

☐ **Add one phone number that gets answered and a website link that works on a phone.**

Click your own link on your phone before you move on.

☐ **Set your hours, including holidays.**

Wrong hours are the quickest way to a one-star review. Add special hours before every long weekend.

2. Make it look like a real, open business

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☐ **Write the description.**

You get 750 characters. Say what you do, where you do it and what makes you different, the way you would explain it to a new neighbour. Keep links and phone numbers out of it.

☐ **List your services and products.**

One plain line each. Add prices if you are comfortable with that.

☐ **Add real photos.**

Your logo, a cover photo, the outside of the building so people recognise it, the inside, your team and your finished work. Real photos beat stock images every time.

☐ **Tick the attributes that are true.**

Accessibility, online appointments, payment types and so on. Skip anything that is not accurate.

☐ **Add your booking or appointment link, if you take bookings.**

3. Keep it alive

☐ **Post an update now and then.**

A special, a bit of news, a before and after. Short is fine.

☐ **Reply to every review.**

Good and bad. The Review Request Scripts guide has wording for each.

☐ **Check your messages and calls from the profile.**

A customer who messages you on Google and hears nothing goes to the next listing.

☐ **Add a few new photos every month.**

Finished jobs, new stock, the team.

4. The ten-minute monthly check

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Put it in your calendar. Search your business on your phone and in Maps, then look at the following.

- ☐ **Hours, phone and website are still right.**
- ☐ **New reviews are replied to.**
- ☐ **New photos from customers are fine.**
Report any that are not.
- ☐ **Nobody has suggested a wrong edit.**
Anyone can suggest changes to a listing, and sometimes they get accepted. Check your address, phone and hours.

5. Traps that cost businesses their listing

- 1 Duplicate listings.**
Search for your old address and your old name. A second listing splits your reviews and confuses customers. Report duplicates to Google.
- 2 Different details in different places.**
Your name, address and phone should match on your website, Facebook and any directories.
- 3 A fake or borrowed address.**
Virtual offices, mailbox stores and friends' houses are a fast way to get suspended.
- 4 Buying or swapping reviews.**
Google removes them, and it can penalise the listing. It is also not who you are.
- 5 Handing over the keys.**
Whoever builds your website or runs your marketing should be added as a manager on your profile. You stay the owner.

This guide is general information based on Google's published guidelines at the time of writing. Google changes its rules and menus, so check your profile as the page is something that is different. This is not a business plan, call for sales.

Not sure where you stand?

Run the free business audit. It takes about a minute and the score is free:

jaredsdigitalagency.com/audit

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