

The home-service Google reviews checklist

From Optimizer (optimizer.com). Free to use.
Written for locksmiths, garage door pros, plumbers, HVAC techs, electricians and movers.
Everything here follows Google's own review rules.



45

checks to tick, one box each



8

sections, each with its own card below



7

official sources linked at the end



/45

your score. Tick as you go

WHAT IS INSIDE

45 checks across 8 sections

1 Read your review graph

5

2 Get your official review link

5

3 Ask every customer, the same way

5

4 Ask at the right moment

8

5 Make sure you never do these

7

6 Reply to every review

6

7 Fake or unfair reviews

5

8 Keep the graph climbing

4

Number of checks in each section.

QUICK WINS

Start with these 3

- 1

Get the official link: in your Business Profile, select Read reviews, then Get more reviews, then Copy. It opens the review box for your business directly.
From section 2, Get your official review link

- 2

Ask every customer: easy jobs and tough ones. Google doesn't allow businesses to "selectively solicit positive reviews".
From section 3, Ask every customer, the same way

- 3

Reply to every review, good or bad. Your profile has to be verified first. Then: Business Profile, Read reviews, Reply.
From section 6, Reply to every review

THE CHECKLIST

1 5 CHECKS Read your review graph

- How to check:** open Google Maps, find your business, tap Reviews and sort by Newest. Look at the dates, not just the stars.

- Flat line:** you're not asking. Make the ask part of closing every job, not something you remember on a good day.

- Burst, then zero:** it looks bought. Google's policy lists "unusual volumes or patterns" of reviews as a sign of rating manipulation. Ask as you go, not in one big push.

- Slow trickle:** you're asking, but it's too much work for the customer. Text your review link right after every job so it's one tap.

- Steady climb:** this is the goal. New reviews every month from real jobs, and a reply on each one.

2 5 CHECKS Get your official review link

- Get the official link:** in your Business Profile, select Read reviews, then Get more reviews, then Copy. It opens the review box for your business directly.

- Google only lets you make the review QR code from a computer browser, not a phone. Do it once on a laptop and save the image for invoices and leave-behind cards.

- Test the link on your own phone before you send it to anyone.

- Save the link where every tech can paste it in two taps: a text shortcut on their phone, or the "job done" message in your scheduling app.

- Customers need to be signed in to a Google Account to leave a review. They can make one with any email address, not just Gmail.

3 5 CHECKS Ask every customer, the same way

- Ask every customer:** easy jobs and tough ones. Google doesn't allow businesses to "selectively solicit positive reviews".

- No review gating. Don't use a "Happy? Review us on Google. Not happy? Call us first" message, or a survey that only sends happy customers to Google. Fix problems by phone, and still send everyone the same review link.

- Ask for an honest review. Don't ask for 5 stars, and don't tell customers what to write.

- Don't ask customers to mention your tech by name. Google's policy lists asking for reviews that identify a staff member as not allowed.

- No review quotas for your crew. Google's policy also lists asking staff to get a certain number of reviews. Reward good work, not review counts.

4 8 CHECKS Ask at the right moment

- Ask in person once the job is clearly done, then text the link so they can leave the review later, on their own time.

- Locksmith:** once they're back inside, or the new locks work with their keys.

- Garage door:** after you run the door up and down with them watching.

- Plumber:** once the water's back on and the drain runs clear.

- HVAC:** once they can feel the right air coming out of the vents.

- Electrician:** after the power's back on and you've shown them what you fixed.

- Movers:** after the last item is in place and they've done their walk-through.

- Send the text the same day, from your business number, to the number they gave you for the job. One friendly reminder a few days later is plenty. Then stop.

5 7 CHECKS Make sure you never do these

- No incentives:** no discounts, gift cards, free service, raffle entries or anything else in exchange for a review, or for changing or removing a bad one. Google calls this fake engagement.

- No buying reviews, from anyone, in any form. Walk away from anyone who promises you a set number of reviews.

- No reviews from yourself, your staff, family or friends. Google treats that as a conflict of interest. One person posting from several accounts is also fake engagement.

- No review stations. Don't hand customers your phone or tablet to review you on the spot, and don't wait over them while they write. Google says not to require or pressure customers to review while you're there.

- Never post reviews on a competitor's profile.

- US businesses:** the FTC's rule on consumer reviews, in effect since October 21, 2024, also bans fake reviews, paying for positive reviews, and using threats or intimidation to stop or remove bad ones.

- What breaking Google's rules can cost: removed reviews, a pause on new reviews, your existing reviews hidden for a while, or a warning on your profile that fake reviews were removed.

6 6 CHECKS Reply to every review

- Reply to every review, good or bad. Your profile has to be verified first. Then: Business Profile, Read reviews, Reply.

- Make it specific:** name the job ("Glad we got that AC cooling again before the weekend"), instead of pasting the same thank-you everywhere.

- Keep it short, and don't use replies to push deals or promotions.

- Bad review:** stay calm, apologize where it's fair, explain what you can and can't do, and offer to sort it out by phone. Never share the customer's private details or argue in public.

- Google checks replies before they post. It usually takes up to 10 minutes, but it can take up to 30 days.

- The customer is notified when you reply and can still update their review.

7 5 CHECKS Fake or unfair reviews

- Report a review only if it breaks Google's rules (for example spam, a fake experience, profanity or a conflict of interest). Google doesn't remove reviews just because you disagree with them.

- How to report:** Business Profile, Read reviews, Report next to the review, pick the reason, Send report. Google's check usually takes several days.

- Track your reports in Google's Reviews Management Tool. If a report is turned down, you get one appeal.

- Someone threatening bad reviews unless you pay? Don't pay. Google's report page links to a separate way to report review extortion.

- While you wait, reply calmly. If you have no record of the customer, say so politely and invite them to call you.

8 4 CHECKS Keep the graph climbing

- Check your newest reviews once a week. Put it on the calendar.

- Keep your Services list complete. When someone reviews a service business, Google may ask them to pick the service you did, and it shows in the review.

- Share a great review:** in Google Maps, select More, then Share review, to get a link for your website or socials.

- Look at your graph again in a month. You want the steady climb.

READ MORE

Sources

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- Tips to get more reviews:**
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- FTC Consumer Reviews and Testimonials Rule, questions and answers:**
<https://www.ftc.gov/business-guidance/resources/consumer-reviews-testimonials-rule-questions-answers>

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