



06

FREE GUIDE

Get found on Google and in AI search

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The plan

1. Spend 20 minutes today fixing your Google Business Profile with the checklist below.
2. Ask one happy customer for a review this week. In your profile's editing panel, look for **Ask for reviews** to get the link.
3. Block 15 minutes on the same morning every week to reply to reviews, ask for new ones and post one update.

Try this now: fix your Google Business Profile in 20 minutes

Your Google Business Profile is the box on the right of Google (or on Google Maps) when someone searches your business name. It's also the listing that shows up when they search "plumber near me". Go to **google.com/business**, sign in with the Google account that manages your listing, and work down this list.

Never claimed your listing? Start there. Google makes you prove you run the business, and it picks how. Often that's a short video showing your signage, your premises or your work vehicle. Sometimes it's a phone call, an email or a postcard in the mail. It can take a few days, so work through the list while you wait.

- ☐ Business name is your real name, exactly as it appears on your sign. No extra words like "Best Plumber Surrey".
- ☐ Main category is the one thing you most want to be found for.
- ☐ Opening hours are right, and holiday hours are set for the next holiday.
- ☐ Phone number rings a person or a system that answers.
- ☐ Website link works and goes to your real site.
- ☐ Service area or address is correct.
- ☐ At least five recent photos of your real work, premises or team.
- ☐ Every review from the last three months has a reply.
- ☐ The description says what you do, who for and where, in plain words.

For that last one, open **chatgpt.com** or **claude.ai**, paste this in and fill the brackets:

COPY THIS

Here is the current description on my Google Business Profile: [paste, or write "none"]. My business is [name], a [type of business] in [city]. We serve [areas]. Our main services are [list]. What customers tell us they like: [notes, or "skip"]. Things we don't do: [list]. Write a new description under 700 characters. The first sentence says what we do and where. Use plain words a customer would search for. No links, no prices, no special offers, no claims I haven't given you (no "best", no "award-winning", no years in business unless I gave them). Canadian spelling.

Check every fact before it goes on your profile. Google allows 750 characters, won't accept links or promotions in this box, and tells you if you run over.

1. Start here if you've never used AI

You don't need any AI experience. Most of this kit is housekeeping on your Google listing, and AI writes the words.

ChatGPT, Claude and Gemini are AI chatbots. A chatbot is a website or phone app where you type a message and it writes an answer back in a few seconds. OpenAI makes ChatGPT, Anthropic makes Claude, Google makes Gemini. All three have free plans, and every prompt here works in any of them.

A prompt is the message you type. Copy one of the ready-made ones here, swap the parts in [square brackets] for your own details, and send.

AI search is people asking a chatbot instead of scrolling links. Someone types "who's a good dentist in Langley that takes new patients?" into ChatGPT or Gemini, or reads the AI summary at the top of Google. This kit is about making sure those tools have the right facts about you.

It can be wrong while sounding sure. A chatbot might say you open Sundays when you don't. Read everything it writes before it goes anywhere.

Keep private details out. When you paste a review or a customer message into a chatbot, take the customer's name out first. It doesn't need to know who they are to help you reply.

Words you'll see

Word	What it means
Google Business Profile	Your free listing on Google Search and Google Maps. It used to be called Google My Business.

Word	What it means
The map results	The short list of businesses with a map that Google shows for searches like "electrician near me".
AI Overview	The AI-written summary that sometimes appears at the top of Google results.
AI Mode	A Google search mode where you have a back-and-forth conversation instead of a list of links.
Category	The label Google files your business under, such as "Dentist" or "Roofing contractor".
NAP	Name, address, phone. It should be written the same way everywhere online.
Review link	A web address that opens Google's review form for your business, ready to send to customers.
Structured data	Hidden labels in your website's code that tell search engines your name, address, hours and services in a form a machine can read.
llms.txt	A plain-text summary file some websites publish for AI tools to read. Optional, and not every tool uses it.
Service page	One page on your website about one service you offer.

2. How people find a local business now, and what it takes

When someone needs a local business, they usually search Google and look at the map results, open Google Maps, ask a chatbot, or ask a friend. The first three read from roughly the same places: your Google Business Profile, your reviews, your website, and whatever else is written about you online.

So you don't need a separate plan for each one. Get the basics right in those places and you've covered all three.

Here's the real effort, so you can plan for it:

- **Setup, once:** two to four hours, spread over a couple of weeks. That covers fixing the profile, writing a services list, asking for your first reviews and checking your website.
- **Upkeep:** about 15 minutes a week. Reply to reviews, post an update, add a photo, check your hours.

- **Website pages:** this is the slow part. A good service page takes an hour or two to write and check, even with AI doing the first draft. If your website is a pain to edit, this is where most owners get stuck.

What this kit can't promise. Nobody controls where Google ranks you or what a chatbot says. Distance from the customer matters, so does how many competitors are nearby and how long you've been listed, and you can't change any of that. What you can control is whether the information out there is right and current. Anyone who promises "first place on Google" is guessing or selling.

3. The Google Business Profile audit

What it does: checks every part of your profile, deeper than the 20-minute version.

When to use it: once now, then every three months, and whenever something changes (new hours, new service, a move).

Sign in at google.com/business. Once you're signed in, searching your business name on Google shows an editing panel above your listing. Google moves its menus around a lot, so look for **Edit profile** and go through each part.

Part	What good looks like	Common mistake
Name	Your real business name, nothing added	Adding the city or service to the name. It breaks Google's rules and can get the listing suspended.
Main category	The closest single match for what you do	Picking something broad like "Contractor" when "Roofing contractor" exists
Extra categories	A few that cover your other real services	Adding categories for things you rarely do
Services	Every service listed, each with a short description	Leaving it empty, or listing only the main one
Hours	Correct, with holiday hours set ahead of time	Hours that were right three years ago
Phone	A number that gets answered	An old cell number, or one that goes to a full voicemail box
Website	Your homepage, or the page for that location	A dead link, or a link to Facebook
Service area	The towns and cities you really cover	A huge area you won't actually drive to

Part	What good looks like	Common mistake
Description	Plain, specific, under the limit	"We pride ourselves on quality service"
Photos	Recent and real: work, place, people	Only a logo, or stock photos
Reviews	Every one answered	Replying only to the bad ones

If you go to your customers: you can hide your home address and show a service area instead. Google's help page on service-area businesses has the rules.

Questions and answers: Google wound down the questions-and-answers section on profiles in late 2025 and switched off the tools businesses used to manage it. Questions about you now tend to get answered from what Google already knows: your website, your profile and your reviews. So put the answers to your common questions on your website (section 10), where you control them.

What to check: search your name on your phone the way a customer would. Then search your main service plus your city and see what the top profiles have that yours doesn't.

4. Write your services list

What it does: turns your rough list of services into short, plain descriptions for your Google profile and your website.

When to use it: when the services section on Google is empty, or just lists names with no detail.

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I run [business name], a [type of business] in [city]. Here are the services we offer, with my rough notes on each: [list each service, one per line, with a few words about it]. For each service, write a description of 200 to 300 characters for my Google Business Profile. Say what the service is, who it's for and what the customer gets, in plain words a customer would search for. No prices, no "best" or "top", no claims I haven't made. If one of my notes is unclear, ask me before you write it. Then list any services customers might search for that sound like mine but that I didn't list, so I can decide whether to add them.

What to check: every description matches what you really do. That last part of the prompt is the useful bit. It often turns up the words customers use that you don't: you say "hardscaping", they search "patio install". Use their words where they're true, and only add a service if you really offer it.

5. A month of Google posts from one paragraph

What it does: gives you four short posts for your Google profile. Posts show on your listing and tell Google, and customers, that somebody is minding the shop.

When to use it: once a month. It takes about as long as a coffee.

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Here's a paragraph about my business and what's happening this month: [for example: we're a bike shop in Kelowna, spring tune-ups are starting, we've added a second mechanic, and people keep asking whether we fix e-bikes (we do)]. Write four Google Business Profile posts from it, one for each week. Each post: under 80 words, one clear fact or tip, and one plain next step (call, book, visit). Different angle each week. No emoji, no hashtags, no exclamation marks, no prices or discounts unless I gave them. Canadian spelling.

To post, look for **Add update** in your profile's editing panel, and add your own photo to each one. Older posts slide down and eventually stop showing, which is why one a week beats four in one go.

What to check: no dates or offers you haven't confirmed. If a post mentions a seasonal service, make sure you're still doing it the week it goes up.

6. Review requests: templates and when to send them

What it does: gets you more honest reviews by asking at the right moment, with a message that's easy to act on.

When to use it: after every finished job, visit or order where the customer seemed happy. Same day or next day is best, while they still remember you.

First, get your review link. In your profile's editing panel, look for **Ask for reviews**. Google gives you a link and a QR code that open the review form directly. Can't see it? Search your business name while signed in and look for a reviews or share option. Save the link in a note on your phone.

Text message template:

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Hi [first name], it's [your name] from [business]. Thanks for having us out today. If you have a minute, a Google review helps other people in [city] find us: [review link]. No worries if not. Reply STOP to opt out.

Email template:

COPY THIS

Subject: Thanks from [business]

Hi [first name],

Thanks for choosing us for [job or visit]. If you were happy with it, would you leave a short review on Google? It takes about a minute and it's the main way new customers in [area] find us: [review link]

If something wasn't right, reply to this email and I'll sort it out.

[Your name] [Business name] · [phone] · [business address] Don't want emails like this? Reply "unsubscribe" and we'll stop.

The rules:

- **Ask everyone you'd normally ask, not only the ones you know will give five stars.** Google's rules forbid picking out happy customers to ask, and forbid giving anything in return for a review (a discount, a draw entry, a free coffee).
- **Never write reviews yourself, or ask staff, friends or family to.** Google removes them, and Canada's Competition Bureau can treat fake reviews as misleading advertising under the Competition Act.
- **Say who you are and give a way to opt out.** A review request is likely a commercial message under CASL, Canada's anti-spam law. Someone who bought from you gives you implied consent for two years after the purchase, but the message still needs your business name, contact details and a way to stop. If you send a lot of these, check the details with a professional.

What to check: tap the review link yourself on your phone before you send it to anyone.

7. Reply to reviews: three tones

What it does: gives you a calm, specific reply for a great review, a so-so one and a bad one.

When to use it: every week, for every new review. People deciding whether to call you read your replies as closely as the reviews.

For a 5-star review:

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Here's a 5-star review of my business: [paste, reviewer's name removed]. Write a reply of two or three sentences that thanks them and mentions one specific thing they said. Don't sound like a template. No "we appreciate your feedback", no emoji. Sign off as [your first name].

For a 3-star review:

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Here's a 3-star review: [paste, name removed]. They liked [what they liked] and weren't happy about [what they weren't]. Here's what happened on our side: [your notes]. Write a reply under 80 words that thanks them for the fair review, owns the part that was our fault in one sentence, says what we've changed if anything [fill in, or "nothing yet"], and invites them to get in touch at [phone or email]. Don't make excuses.

For a 1-star review:

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Here's a 1-star review: [paste, name removed]. Here's what actually happened on our side: [your notes]. Write a public reply under 80 words that stays calm, doesn't argue about details, doesn't share any private information about the customer or their job, and offers to talk directly at [phone or email]. Write it for the future customers who'll read it, not for the reviewer.

What to check: the reply mustn't confirm anything private, like what treatment someone had, what's wrong with their house or what they paid. Health clinics especially: don't even confirm the person is a patient.

8. How AI search picks businesses to mention

What it does: explains where chatbots and Google's AI summary get their information, so you know what to work on.

When to use it: read it once. The rest of the kit follows from it.

Ask ChatGPT, Gemini or Google's AI Overview to recommend a local business and it usually searches the web in the background, then writes a short answer from what it finds. Nobody publishes the exact method, and it changes often. The material they read is clear enough: business listings (Google's own

profile data, in Google's case), review sites, your website, directories, and local news or community pages that mention you.

Google says there's no special trick for its AI features. Its advice is the same as for normal search: useful pages, written for people, that its crawler can read.

Five things that help, all in your control:

1. **A complete, accurate Google Business Profile.** Google's tools read it directly, and other chatbots often find the same facts through search.
2. **Reviews that describe the work.** "Fixed our furnace the same day in Mission" tells a tool what you do and where. You can't tell people what to write, but asking soon after the job tends to get more detail.
3. **A website that states the facts plainly, in text.** Services, areas you cover, hours, phone number, answers to common questions. As words on the page, not only inside pictures or a PDF.
4. **Structured data on your website.** Hidden labels that spell out your name, address, phone, hours and services for machines. Google has a guide for this called LocalBusiness structured data. A web person can usually add it in under an hour.
5. **The same name, address and phone everywhere.** Google, Bing, Apple Maps, Facebook, trade directories, your own site. When they disagree, the tools can't tell which is right and may leave you out.

About llms.txt: it's a short plain-text summary of your business for AI tools. Cheap to add, but it's a proposal, not a standard. A Google spokesperson has called it speculative, and there's no public sign that Google's AI features use it. Do the five things above first.

9. Check what ChatGPT and Gemini say about you

What it does: shows you what customers see when they ask a chatbot about you or your trade, and turns that into a to-do list.

When to use it: once now, then monthly. Start a fresh chat each time.

Run these in ChatGPT and in Gemini (**gemini.google.com**). If there's a search or web button, turn it on so it looks at today's web.

Test 1, your name:

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What can you tell me about [business name] in [city]? Include services, hours, location, phone number and what customers say. Tell me where you found each fact.

If it comes back with "I can't find that business", that's your answer, not a glitch. It means the places listed in section 8 don't say enough about you yet.

Test 2, your trade:

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I'm in [neighbourhood or city] and I need a [type of business, for example "physiotherapist who does direct billing"]. Who would you recommend, and why?

Then paste both answers into a new chat with this:

COPY THIS

I own [business name]. Below are two answers an AI assistant gave about my business and my trade. Here are the true facts about my business: [name, address, phone, hours, services, areas served]. 1. List every fact in the answers that is wrong or out of date, and where the assistant said it found it. 2. List anything true about my business that is missing. 3. If my business wasn't recommended in the second answer, compare what was said about the businesses that were, and tell me what they seem to have that I don't (for example more reviews mentioning the service, a page about that service, listings in more places). 4. Turn this into a short to-do list, easiest first. Don't guess at facts about my business.

What to check: one bad answer isn't a crisis; chatbots answer differently on different days. Look for what comes up every time, like a wrong phone number or an old address, and trace it back. The fix is nearly always correcting the source (an old directory listing, a forgotten page on your site). Arguing with the chatbot won't change what it reads.

10. Your website's 10-point local check

What it does: makes sure your website gives Google and the chatbots the facts they need.

When to use it: once now, and whenever your website changes.

Open your site on your phone and go down this list. Only point 9 involves code, and whoever built your site can answer it.

#	Check	How to tell
1	Name, address and phone are on every page	Usually in the footer. Written exactly as on your Google profile.
2	The phone number is tappable on a phone	Tap it. Your phone should offer to call.
3	The homepage says what you do and where in the first screen	Would a stranger get it in five seconds?
4	Each main service has its own page	One page for "drain cleaning", another for "water heaters", not one page listing everything
5	The areas you serve are written out	A sentence or a list of towns, in text
6	Hours are on the site and match Google	Including any holiday hours
7	Common questions are answered	A short questions page, or a section on each service page
8	Text is real text, not pictures of text	Try to select a word with your finger or mouse. If you can't, search engines may struggle too.
9	Structured data is present	Ask your web person first. Or search for Google's Rich Results Test and paste in your homepage's web address (the URL).
10	The site loads quickly on a phone	Try it on mobile data, not Wi-Fi. If you're waiting, so is everyone else.

What to check: if you can only fix three things this month, make it points 1, 3 and 4.

11. Write a service page for one city you serve

What it does: drafts a page about one service in one area, so someone searching "roof repair Chilliwack" lands on a page about exactly that.

When to use it: for each town where you do regular work. Start with the one that brings in the most.

One warning. Google treats near-identical pages with only the town name swapped as spam; it calls them doorway pages. One real page per real area is fine. Twenty copies with different town names will hurt you. Give the prompt genuine local detail every time.

COPY THIS

Write a web page for [business name] about [service] in [city or area]. Use only the facts I give you here: What the service is and what's included: [notes] What's different about doing this work in [area]: [for example: older homes with cedar shakes, clay soil, long winters, strata rules, parking] Jobs we've done there, with no customer names: [two or three short examples, or "skip"] Questions customers in this area ask: [list] How to book: [phone, form, hours] Structure: a headline that says the service and the area, a short opening, a section on what's included, a section on local conditions, a short questions section, and a closing line with how to book. 400 to 700 words. Plain language, Canadian spelling. No prices, no years in business, no awards, no review counts, no guarantees unless I gave them. Put [?] wherever you need a fact I haven't given.

What to check: every [?] is filled in or taken out, and nothing is invented. Read it out loud. If it could be about any town, add more local detail or don't publish it. Then link to it from your main services page so people and search engines can find it.

12. Photos: what to post and how often

What it does: keeps your profile looking alive and shows customers what they'll get.

When to use it: one or two new photos a week, as part of the weekly routine.

What to post:

- **Finished work.** For most trades and services, this is the one that matters. Before and after, if the customer agrees.
- **Your place.** The outside so people recognise it when they pull up, plus the entrance and the counter or waiting area.
- **Your team at work,** with their permission.
- **Products or dishes,** if you're a shop or restaurant.

Skip: stock photos, AI-generated pictures of work you didn't do, and customers' faces, addresses or licence plates unless they've said yes.

Daylight is enough. You don't need to edit anything.

What to check: ask before posting a photo from a customer's home or business. "Mind if I post a photo of the finished deck? No address or names" is plenty. Under BC's privacy law (PIPA) and the federal one (PIPEDA), photos that identify people can be personal information, so when in doubt, keep people out of the frame.

13. The other maps: Bing and Apple

What it does: gets you listed on the two other big map services, which some chatbots and phones read from.

When to use it: once, after your Google profile is in good shape. Check them again every few months.

Bing Places for Business (at bingplaces.com) is Microsoft's version. It's free, and it has had an option to import your details from your Google profile, which saves typing.

Apple Business (at business.apple.com) controls how you appear in Apple Maps, the default map on iPhones. It's free. It replaced Apple Business Connect in April 2026, so older guides show a different sign-in page.

What to check: fill this in. Search for yourself on each one and write what it says. Anything that doesn't match your Google profile word for word, fix it.

Where	Name	Address	Phone	Hours	Matches Google?
Google					(this is the one to match)
Bing					
Apple Maps					
Facebook					
Yelp					

Then check any directories for your trade, like a trade association listing. Fix the ones that already list you. You don't need to sign up for new ones.

14. The 15-minute weekly routine

What it does: keeps everything above working without turning it into a second job.

When to use it: same day, same time, every week. Put it in your calendar.

Minutes	Task	Where
0 to 5	Reply to every new review (section 7 prompts)	Google profile
5 to 7	Send review requests for this week's finished jobs (section 6)	Your phone or email

Minutes	Task	Where
7 to 10	Post this week's update (section 5) with a photo	Google profile
10 to 12	Add one or two new photos (section 12)	Google profile
12 to 14	Check hours for the next two weeks, especially holidays	Google profile, website
14 to 15	Note anything customers asked this week that your website doesn't answer	A note on your phone

Once a month, add 30 minutes: write next month's posts (section 5), run the chatbot check (section 9), and turn one question from your notes into an answer on your website.

Once a quarter, add an hour: the full audit (section 3), the website check (section 10), and one new service or area page if you have real material for it (section 11).

15. Worked example

This is a made-up business, written to show how the pieces fit together. It isn't a customer.

A plumbing company in Surrey, 6 staff

The owner searches "plumber Surrey" and he's nowhere. His main category is "Contractor" and his services section is empty. He switches the category to "Plumber", writes eleven service descriptions with the section 4 prompt, and clears the backlog of review replies over two evenings. His office manager sends the section 6 text at the end of each job day. When he runs the section 9 check, ChatGPT quotes an old phone number. He traces it to a directory listing he'd forgotten about and fixes it there.

None of that is clever. It's two evenings of catch-up, then 15 minutes a week.

16. When it goes wrong: troubleshooting

What happened	What to do
My profile got suspended	Usually a rule break: extra words in the name, a virtual office address, or a service area drawn too wide. Fix it, then request reinstatement from the profile manager.

What happened	What to do
Google shows hours or a name I didn't set	Anyone can suggest edits to a listing. Open Edit profile , look for suggested edits or updates from Google, put the right details back, and check again in a week.
A review is fake or abusive	Report it from your profile. Reply calmly anyway while you wait for Google to look at it.
A chatbot says something wrong about me	Ask it for its sources, find where the wrong fact came from, and correct it there. Check again next month.
A chatbot doesn't mention me at all	Work through section 8. Changes can take months to show up.
I don't have time for the weekly routine	Do only the first two rows: reply to reviews and ask for new ones. Those count most.

17. Printable weekly checklist

- ☐ Every new review has a reply
- ☐ Review requests sent for this week's finished jobs
- ☐ One Google post published, with a real photo
- ☐ One or two new photos added
- ☐ Hours checked for the next two weeks
- ☐ Customer questions noted for the website

Monthly:

- ☐ Next month's four posts written and checked
- ☐ ChatGPT and Gemini checked, wrong facts traced to their source
- ☐ One new question answered on the website

Every three months:

- ☐ Full profile audit (section 3)
- ☐ Website 10-point check (section 10)
- ☐ Bing, Apple, Facebook and Yelp still match Google

For more prompts you can use around the business, see [30 copy-paste prompts](#). If the real problem is your phone rather than your listing, see [the AI receptionist guide](#).

If you'd rather hand it over: this is the kind of work Joe does at Droom. Every website he builds comes with the Google Business Profile set up and structured data and an llms.txt file built in, so the website side of sections 8 and 10 is done from day one. He also sets up review requests that go out after each job. If the problem is unanswered calls rather than the listing, he sets up an AI receptionist, missed-call text-back and replies to website enquiries. [Book a quick call](#) and he'll tell you honestly whether it's worth it for your business.