# Google Business Profile: set up, verify and keep it right

This is the card we work from when we set up or take over a Google Business Profile, the listing with the map pin, the hours, the reviews and the phone number. Every rule on it is Google's own, from its Business Profile help pages and guidelines, opened on 10 November 2026. Google says businesses with complete and accurate information "are more likely to show up in local search results", and that "there's no way to request or pay for a better local ranking on Google", so the work is getting every field right, then keeping it right.

**Author**
Jordan Gilbert, Founder · VerySEOly

**Edition**
v1.0 · November 2026

**Audience**
UK businesses that meet their customers in person.

## 01 Check the business can have a profile

- [ ] Customers visit you at a physical location, or you travel to them. Google's guidelines are for a business that "either has a physical location that customers can visit, or travels to customers where they are".
- [ ] The address is one you work from. A virtual office, a postal address you rent but do not operate from, "isn't eligible for a Business Profile", and "PO boxes or mailboxes located at remote locations aren't acceptable".
- [ ] One profile per location: "Do not create more than one page for each location of your business."

## 02 Set it up

Search for the business on Google Maps first. If a profile exists that nobody manages, claim it ("Claim this business"); if someone else owns it, request ownership from them; if there is none, add it at business.google.com/add. Then fill in:

- [ ] **Name:** the business's real-world name, "as used consistently on your shopfront, website, stationery and as known to customers". No slogans, towns or extra keywords.
- [ ] **Primary category:** the most specific one that fits. Google says to "use as few categories as possible" and to choose ones that complete "this business IS a", not "HAS a".
- [ ] **Address or service area:** if customers do not come to you, remove the address and set a service area instead: up to 20 cities, postcodes or other areas, no more than "about two hours of driving time" away.
- [ ] **Phone:** a number "under the direct control of the business".
- [ ] **Website:** one that "represents your individual business location".
- [ ] **Hours:** your "regular customer-facing hours of operation".
- [ ] **Description:** no more than 750 characters, with no URLs or HTML, about the business "instead of details about promotions, prices or sales".

## 03 Verify it

- [ ] Use the method Google offers: phone or text, email, a recorded video, a live video call or a postcard. Google says verification methods "are automatically determined by Google and can't be changed".

© 2026 VerySEOly · veryseoly.com · hello@veryseoly.com

- [ ] For a video, be ready to show where you are (your sign, the street), your equipment or products, and that you manage the place (keys, a staff-only room). A recording is one unbroken take of "at least 30 seconds", with no ID numbers or other people's faces in it; a live call works only within your opening hours.
- [ ] Waiting for a postcard? Leave the name, address and category alone until the code is in.
- [ ] Allow up to five working days for Google's review.

## 04 Keep it right

- [ ] **Two owners.** Keep the primary owner on an account the business controls, never a former employee's, and add a second owner or manager: a profile "can have multiple owners but only one primary owner".
- [ ] **Hours that match the door.** Set special hours ahead of bank holidays. Closed for seven days or more in a row? Mark the business temporarily closed instead.
- [ ] **Moving or renaming.** Google says that if you move to a new address "you must verify your business again"; a new name or category can also bring a new verification.
- [ ] **Photos** of the premises, the work and the people, added through the year. An exterior photo "helps customers recognise your business when they visit".
- [ ] **Reviews.** Ask every customer the same way, with your review link or a QR code, and reply to each one: Google asks for replies that are "clear, helpful and polite".
- [ ] **Once a month,** note the calls, website clicks, direction requests and search terms on the profile's performance page.

## 05 What gets a profile suspended

Google says breaking its guidelines "could result in the suspension of your Business Profile". Avoid:

- [ ] Slogans, towns or keywords added to the business name.
- [ ] An address you do not work from, or a second profile for the same place.
- [ ] Reviews paid for, or traded for a discount or a freebie: Google's content policy prohibits incentives "such as payment, discounts, free goods and/or services".
- [ ] Asking only the happy customers: the same policy prohibits businesses that "selectively solicit positive reviews from customers".

> If you would rather we did it, our local SEO and Google Business Profile service is quoted to your business: veryseoly.com/google-business-profile-optimisation

### Sources

All opened on 10 November 2026. Google Business Profile Help, at support.google.com/business:

- Guidelines for representing your business on Google
- Add or claim your Business Profile
- Verify your business on Google
- Verify your business with a video recording
- Edit your Business Profile
- Manage your business category
- Manage your service areas for service-area and hybrid businesses
- Manage your Business Profile owners and managers
- How to set special hours
- Tips to get more reviews
- Understand your Business Profile performance and insights
- Tips to improve your local ranking on Google
- Prohibited and restricted content, Maps user contributed content policy