

Google Business Profile Audit Checklist



50 checks to find what's holding
your local rankings back

Business Info

Visual Content

Reviews

Posts & Content

Citations & Risk

GBP

How to Use This Checklist

This checklist covers 50 of the most important audit checks for your Google Business Profile, across five categories: business information, visual content, reviews and reputation, posts and content, and citations and suspension risk. Each item includes a clear description of what to check and, where relevant, a highlighted note on common errors or compliance risks specific to Google's guidelines.

Work through each section systematically. Tick the box when you have confirmed an item is correctly in place. If you identify a problem, note it separately and prioritise using the severity ratings below. Critical items should be addressed immediately as they carry either suspension risk or are actively suppressing your local rankings. High items should be scheduled as soon as possible. Medium and Low items can be planned into your next review cycle.

This checklist is designed for business owners, marketing managers, and in-house teams carrying out a preliminary review of their Google Business Profile's local SEO health. It covers the most impactful and most commonly overlooked issues, including several that carry genuine suspension risk if unresolved.

Priority Key

Critical	Address immediately. Suspension risk or actively suppressing local rankings.
High	Address as soon as possible. Significant impact on local pack visibility.
Medium	Plan for your next review cycle. Real impact but not immediately urgent.
Low	Nice to have. Incremental improvement with lower effort required.

This checklist covers the most common and impactful Google Business Profile issues. For a complete local SEO investigation — including competitor GBP benchmarking, citation consistency across 50+ UK directories, suspension risk review, website-level local SEO signals, and structured implementation guidance — explore our professional local business SEO audit service at webpulseseo.co.uk.

1

Section 1: Business Information

Name, categories, address, hours, and contact details

1.1 Profile is claimed and verified

Critical

☐

Confirm the listing is verified in your Google Business Profile dashboard. Unverified profiles do not appear in local search results. If not verified, complete verification via postcard, phone, or video.

1.2 Business name matches your real-world trading name exactly

Critical

☐

Your GBP business name should be your actual trading name and nothing else. Do not add keywords, location names, or service descriptors that do not appear on your signage or stationery. Keyword-stuffed names violate Google's guidelines and are a common suspension trigger.

Note: Example: 'Smith Plumbers' is correct. 'Smith Plumbers - Emergency Plumber London' is a violation.

1.3 Primary category is the most specific accurate match available

Critical

☐

Your primary category is the single highest-impact ranking decision in your GBP configuration. Select the most specific category that accurately describes your core business. Use PlePer's GBP category tool to research all available options.

Note: Compare your primary category against the businesses appearing in the local 3-pack for your target queries.

1.4 Secondary categories are fully populated with all relevant options

High

☐

Google allows up to nine secondary categories. These expand the queries your profile is eligible to appear for. Research which secondary categories your top local competitors are using and assess whether any relevant ones are missing from your profile.

1.5 Service area correctly defined (for service area businesses)

High

☐

If you travel to customers rather than receiving them at a premises, define your service area in Business Information > Service Area. Set a realistic geographic area reflecting where you genuinely operate. Overly broad service areas weaken proximity signals.

Note: Service area businesses should also hide their address if customers do not visit the premises.

1.6 Physical address is accurate and consistent with website and directories

High

☐

Verify the address on your GBP matches exactly the address on your website Contact page and on major directory listings. Even small format variations (abbreviated vs full street names, different postcode format) create citation inconsistency.

1.7 Phone number is correct and consistent across all platforms

High

☐

The phone number on your GBP should match exactly the phone number on your website and major directory listings, in the same format. Verify the number is active and monitored.

1.8 Website URL links to the correct page

Medium

☐

For single-location businesses, the website URL should link to the homepage. For multi-location businesses, it should link to a specific location page (e.g., [yoursite.com/coventry/](#)). Verify the URL returns a 200 response and is not a redirect.

Note: Consider adding UTM parameters to track GBP-driven traffic in Google Analytics.

1.9 Business hours are accurate for every day of the week

High

☐

Incorrect business hours are one of the most common sources of negative reviews. Verify opening and closing times are correct for every day, including any differences between weekdays and weekends.

1.10 Special hours set for upcoming public holidays

Medium

☐

Google prompts businesses to add special hours for public holidays. Consistently updating holiday hours signals active profile management. Check for any upcoming UK public holidays and add special hours in advance.

2

Section 2: Visual Content

Photos, videos, logo, and cover image quality

2.1 Minimum of 10 photos uploaded across all categories

High



Google recommends a minimum of 10 photos. In competitive markets, the businesses in the local 3-pack often have 50 or more. Check the photo count on competitor listings appearing above you in local results and use that as your benchmark.

2.2 Photos added across all relevant categories (Exterior, Interior, At Work, Team)

Medium



GBP organises photos into categories. Ensure Exterior, Interior, At Work, and Team photo categories are all populated where applicable. A listing with only product photos and no premises or team imagery is less complete than one with all categories covered.

2.3 At least one new photo added in the past 30 days

High



Photo recency is a signal of active profile management. Check the date of the most recently added photo. If it is more than one month old, add new photos immediately and set a recurring reminder to add photos monthly.

2.4 Cover photo is current, high quality, and representative of the business

High



The cover photo is the primary image displayed on the GBP panel in many search contexts. It should be the single most compelling, well-composed image of your business. Replace any outdated or low-quality cover photo.

2.5 Business logo is uploaded in the correct format

Medium



Upload your current business logo under the Identity photo category. The logo should be the current brand version at an appropriate resolution. A missing or outdated logo is a profile completeness gap.

2.6 All photos are authentic (not stock imagery)

Medium



Google's algorithms increasingly identify and deprioritise stock photos. All images should be genuine photographs of your actual business, premises, team, and work. Replace any stock imagery with authentic photos.

2.7 Customer-added photos reviewed for any outdated or misleading images

Low



Customers can add photos to your profile that you cannot remove unless they violate Google's photo policies. Review all customer-added photos regularly. Flag any that are genuinely policy-violating via the GBP dashboard.

2.8 Photo quality is consistently high (well-lit, in focus, professionally composed)

Medium



Poor quality, blurry, or poorly lit photos undermine the trust signals your profile creates. Review all current photos and replace any that do not meet a reasonable quality standard.

2.9 Virtual tour added (where relevant to business type)

Low



For businesses where the interior environment influences the customer decision (restaurants, gyms, salons, showrooms, dental practices), a virtual tour adds a significant engagement signal and differentiates the listing. If not present and relevant, consider commissioning one.

2.10 Video content uploaded to the profile (where available)

Low



GBP supports video uploads up to 30 seconds. Videos of your premises, team, or work in progress add engagement signals and increase the richness of the profile. Check whether this feature is available for your business type.

3

Section 3: Reviews and Reputation

Volume, velocity, sentiment, responses, and compliance

High

3.1 Review count benchmarked against local 3-pack competitors☐

Search Google Maps for your primary target queries and compare your total review count against the three businesses appearing in the local 3-pack. If there is a significant gap, a sustained review acquisition strategy is needed.

High

3.2 At least one new review received in the past 30 days☐

Consistent review velocity signals an active, engaged business to Google. If the most recent review is older than 30 days, review your post-service customer communication process and implement a systematic review request strategy.

High

3.3 Average star rating is 4.0 or above☐

Your overall star rating is visible in the local pack and directly affects click-through rate. A rating below 4.0 is a significant CTR disadvantage. Investigate the service delivery issues driving negative feedback and address them at the source.

High

3.4 Response rate for all reviews is above 90%☐

Respond to every review, both positive and negative. Google's documentation indicates that businesses that respond to reviews are considered more reputable. Aim to respond within 48 hours of a review being posted.

High

3.5 Responses to negative reviews are professional and constructive☐

Read through all responses to negative reviews. A defensive, dismissive, or aggressive response causes more reputational damage than the negative review itself. All negative review responses should be empathetic, professional, and offer a resolution pathway.

Medium

3.6 No patterns of recurring complaints in negative reviews identified☐

Read through all negative reviews systematically looking for recurring themes. Patterns (specific service issues, waiting times, communication failures) reveal genuine operational problems that, if resolved, will improve both the business and the review profile.

Critical

3.7 Review request process is compliant with Google's policies☐

Asking satisfied customers for an honest review is encouraged. What is not permitted: offering incentives for reviews, asking only customers you expect will leave positive reviews (review gating), or using services that generate fake reviews. Confirm your process is compliant.

Note: Policy violations carry a significant risk of review removal or profile suspension.

High

3.8 No fake or suspicious reviews are present on the profile☐

Review your profile for reviews that appear inauthentic: newly created accounts, very generic language, multiple reviews posted within a short timeframe, or reviews from profiles with no other review history. Report suspicious reviews via the GBP dashboard.

Medium

3.9 Review keyword content audited for service and location relevance☐

Reviews that naturally mention your services and location (e.g., 'boiler repair in Coventry', 'best Italian restaurant Birmingham') contribute to relevance signals. Audit whether your current reviews include relevant keyword content.

Note: You cannot ask customers to include specific keywords, but ensuring your review request prompts them to describe their experiences in detail encourages more descriptive responses.

Medium

3.10 Positive review response quality is personalised, not copy-paste☐

Generic responses ('Thank you for your review!') are less effective than personalised responses that acknowledge specific details from the review. Audit the quality of existing positive review responses and improve the template used.

4

Section 4: Posts, Q&A, and Content

GBP posts, Q&A management, services, and products

4.1 Google Post published in the past 7 days

High



Standard Google Posts (Updates) expire after 7 days. A profile with no recent posts is missing an active engagement signal. Set a weekly reminder to publish a new post. Even a brief update, promotional offer, or piece of useful advice is sufficient.

4.2 Post content includes a clear call-to-action button

Medium



Google Posts support CTA buttons including Book, Call, Visit Website, and Learn More. Posts with a CTA button generate more engagement than posts without one. Review existing posts and ensure all new posts include a relevant CTA.

4.3 Offer posts used for seasonal promotions and key commercial periods

Medium



Offer posts (with expiry dates and optional promo codes) are the highest-engagement post type for most business types. Plan Offer posts around seasonal events, local promotions, and key trading periods relevant to your business.

4.4 All unanswered questions in the Q&A; section have been responded to

High



Search your GBP listing on Google Maps and review the Q&A; section. Any unanswered question is a missed opportunity and may be answered incorrectly by other users. Answer all outstanding questions from the business account.

4.5 Frequently asked questions proactively seeded in Q&A;

Medium



Business owners can post and answer their own questions on the Q&A; section. Seed at least 5 to 10 commonly asked questions covering pricing, availability, parking, service process, and any other queries that regularly come up with potential customers.

Note: Q&A; content that naturally includes service and location keywords contributes to relevance signals.

4.6 Services or products list is fully populated and accurate

High



For service businesses, populate the Services section with all key services and descriptions. For retail businesses, populate the Products section. A complete services or products list increases the specificity of your relevance signals.

4.7 Service descriptions include relevant keywords naturally

Medium



Each service listed should have a description that accurately describes what is included and naturally includes relevant terms. This is keyword-relevant content within your GBP profile that contributes to relevance matching.

4.8 Menu is current and accurate (hospitality businesses only)

High



For restaurants, cafes, and bars, verify that the menu on your GBP profile matches your current menu. An outdated menu creates a poor customer experience and potentially misleads customers about pricing or availability.

4.9 Business description is complete and written for the customer

Medium



The business description (up to 750 characters) should clearly describe what you do, who you serve, and what makes you the right choice. It should read naturally, include relevant service and location terms, and be kept up to date.

4.10 Event posts used for upcoming events or promotions (where applicable)

Low



If your business hosts or participates in events relevant to your customers, use Event posts on GBP. Events with a defined start and end date remain visible in search results throughout the event period.

5

Section 5: Citations, Risk, and Competitor Benchmarking

NAP consistency, suspension risk, duplicates, and competitor gaps

5.1 NAP (Name, Address, Phone) consistent across all major directories

High

- ☐
- Your business Name, Address, and Phone number should be identical across Google Business Profile, Bing Places, Yell, Facebook, Trustpilot, Thomson Local, and all other major directory listings. Use BrightLocal or Moz Local to audit consistency.

Note: Even small format differences (Ltd vs Limited, abbreviated vs full street names) create inconsistency that weakens local entity

5.2 No duplicate GBP listings exist for the same business

High

- ☐
- Search Google Maps for your business name and phone number to check for any duplicate listings. Duplicates split your ranking signals rather than consolidating them. Claim and merge any duplicates via the GBP dashboard.

5.3 Profile is listed on Bing Places for Business

Medium

- ☐
- Bing Places is the second most important local business platform after GBP. Verify your business is listed with consistent NAP information. Bing Places listings can be imported directly from GBP data.

5.4 Profile is listed and accurate on Apple Maps Connect

Medium

- ☐
- Apple Maps is used by all iOS and macOS users. Claim and verify your Apple Maps listing via Apple Maps Connect and verify NAP consistency with your GBP.

5.5 Business is listed on major industry-specific directories

Medium

- ☐
- Beyond general directories, identify the two or three most authoritative industry-specific directories in your sector (e.g., Checkatrade for tradespeople, NHS Choices for healthcare, TripAdvisor for hospitality) and verify your listing is present and accurate.

5.6 No keyword stuffing present in business name, categories, or description

Critical

- ☐
- Review all profile fields for any language added primarily to influence rankings rather than to accurately describe the business. Keywords in the business name, inaccurate categories, and keyword-stuffed descriptions all violate Google's guidelines and risk suspension.

5.7 Business address is a genuine business location (not virtual office or mailbox)

Critical

- ☐
- GBP requires the listed address to be a location where genuine business activity takes place or where customers can visit. Virtual offices, co-working spaces used only for mail, and PO boxes are not permitted as GBP addresses.

Note: Verify this is correctly configured, particularly if the address has changed since the profile was first created.

5.8 Profile suspension status confirmed as active and visible

Critical

- ☐
- Verify that the profile is appearing in Google Maps and local search results for your business name. If the profile is visible in the GBP dashboard but not appearing in Maps, the listing may have been soft-suspended and requires reverification.

5.9 Profile benchmarked against the local 3-pack for top 3 target queries

High

- ☐
- Search your three most important local queries on Google Maps. For each business in the local 3-pack, note their category configuration, review count, photo count, and post activity. Identify the specific gaps between their profiles and yours.

5.10 UTM tracking added to GBP website link for analytics measurement

Low

- ☐
- Add UTM parameters to the website URL in your GBP profile (e.g., ?utm_source=google&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=gbp) to track GBP-driven traffic separately in Google Analytics. This gives you clear data on your profile's contribution to website visits and enquiries.

Found issues in this checklist?

Web Pulse SEO's local business SEO audit covers every check in this guide and goes significantly deeper — competitor GBP benchmarking, citation consistency across 50+ directories, suspension risk review, and multi-location management. webpulseseo.co.uk/product/local-business-seo-audit/

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