

# Printable Instructions: Claiming your Google My Business FREE Listing

[https://support.google.com/business/answer/6300665?hl=en&ref\\_topic=6300675](https://support.google.com/business/answer/6300665?hl=en&ref_topic=6300675)

## Sign up and verify your business

# Welcome to Google My Business

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## What is Google My Business?

Google My Business is a free tool that lets you manage how your local business appears across Google products, like Maps and Search. If you run a business that serves customers at a particular location, or you serve customers within a designated service area, Google My Business can help people find you. Verified businesses on Google are twice as likely to be considered reputable by users.

Imagine yourself in the shoes of a potential customer. This customer is three blocks from your storefront and looking for exactly what you do best in the neighborhood—maybe they've seen your sign or heard about your business from a friend. If they search for your services on Google, what will they find?

Maintaining your business presence on Google My Business can help customers discover the products and services you provide, contact you, and find your location.

And it's all free.

[Sign up now](#)

Now let's look at how local search results fit into the landscape of online marketing.

# Your crash course in online marketing

There are a number of ways to manage the way your business appears online:

- *Search engine optimization, or SEO*, refers to how results appear when someone uses a search engine like Google. We call these organic search results. You can't pay to change how and where organic search results appear: they're determined by a number of factors, like how relevant they are to the original search. [Learn how to improve your SEO](#).
- *Search engine marketing, or SEM*, refers to ads you buy to appear near search results—it's what you can do with Google's online advertising program, Google Ads. When you're ready to advertise your business, we suggest that you get started with the easy-to-use [Smart campaigns in Google Ads](#).
- Google My Business helps you maintain *local results*, which appear in a [number of ways in Maps and Search](#). These results are tailored to particular geographic areas and help users find nearby businesses. [Learn how Google ranks local results](#).

To recap: SEO, SEM, and management of local results are all ways to improve your online presence. Now, let's take a closer look at local results and what you can do with Google My Business.

## What you can do with Google My Business

You can think about the benefits of Google My Business in three categories.

1. *Maintain accurate information about your business online*
  - Tell Google your hours, website, phone number, and location (a street address, service area, or place marker, depending on your business)
  - Use the [mobile app](#) to stay up-to-date with your online presence wherever you are
2. *Interact with customers*
  - Post photos of your business and its products and services
  - Collect and respond to reviews from customers
3. *Attract new customers*
  - Improve how your business appears online so new customers can find you
  - Point customers to your website
  - When you're ready, consider using location-based ads with [Smart campaigns in Google Ads](#) to reach an even larger audience

Is Google My Business for you?

Let's find out.

What kind of business do you manage?

I manage a storefront or service-area business.

I manage an online-only business.

# Get started

We'll start by signing up.

<https://support.google.com/business/answer/6300717?hl=en>

## Sign up and verify your business

# Sign up and review your business information

[Next: Verify your business](#)

## Sign up for Google My Business

Note: There might be a listing for an old business at the same location where you're registering a new business. Do not attempt to claim it. Instead, suggest an edit to have it marked as closed. Then, proceed with creating a new Google My Business listing for your business.

1. On your computer, sign in to [Google My Business](#).
2. Sign in to your Google Account, or create one. Then, click Next.
  - Sign up with your business email domain since this account will be for your chain. Enter the name of your business or chain. You can also select your chain from the suggestions that appear as you type (if applicable).
3. Enter your business' or chain's address. You may also be asked to position a marker on the location of your chain's branch on a map. If your business doesn't have a physical location but works in a service area, you can [list the area instead](#). Then, click Next.
4. Choose if you want your business location to appear on Google Maps.
  - If you serve customers at your business address:
    1. Enter your [business address](#).
    2. Click Next.

Tip: If you also serve customers outside your business address, you'll have the option to list your service areas as well.
  - If you don't serve customers at your business address:
    1. Enter your [business address](#).
    2. At the bottom, click I deliver goods and services to my customers > Next.

3. List your service areas, then click Next.
5. Search for and select a business category. You can also choose a more specific category as appropriate. Then, click Next.
6. Enter a phone number or website URL for your chain, and click Finish.  
Tip: You'll also have the option to create a [free website](#) based on your information. It's recommended that you provide the individual phone number or store page for each location, rather than a single centralized call center.
7. Select a verification option.
  - To verify later, click Verify later > Later. If you're not authorized to manage the Business Profile for the chain, find the person in your organization who's authorized and continue the process.

## Review your business information

No matter what you see, confirm that your business information is correct. It's important that when you verify your business information, everything is ready to appear to customers across Google.

To edit incorrect information, follow these steps:

1. Click Later.
2. If you manage more than one location, open the Menu  and click Manage locations. Then, select the location you want to edit.
3. Click Info from the menu on the left side of the screen.
4. Click Edit  next to each section you'd like to change and enter your business information.

Now that you've either claimed or created your listing, it's time to [verify your business](#). After you verify, your business information will be eligible to appear across Google.

## Sign up and verify your business

# Verify your business

[Manage your business](#)

## Begin verification

Verification helps ensure the accuracy of your business information across Google. Verified businesses are twice as likely to be considered reputable by users.<sup>1</sup>

Verification also protects you from anyone who might otherwise pose as a representative of your business. Until you've completed verification, you won't be able to edit the business information that appears on Google products.

For most businesses, verification means requesting, receiving, and reading a verification postcard from Google.

Tip: Some business owners may be able to verify through other methods like phone call, text, email, or Google Search Console. If you see any of these options, follow the directions on the page to verify your business, and skip the instructions in this guide. [Learn more about verification.](#)

If you've continued to verification directly after signing up, you'll see Mail in the top left corner of the page, over the map where your business is pinned.

1. If your business information is correct, click Mail. Make sure *not* to click Verify later below.
2. Enter the name of the person the verification postcard should be mailed to. (This is optional—you can leave it blank if you'd like.) We'll send it to the address you provided for your business.
3. Click Send postcard.

You may have signed up for Google My Business, then stopped before beginning the verification process. In that case:

1. Sign in at [google.com/business](https://google.com/business). Your Google My Business dashboard will appear.
2. Find the red banner at the top of the page, and click the Verify now button to the right.
3. You'll see Mail in the top left corner of the page, over the map where your business is pinned. Confirm that your business information is correct, then click Mail. Make sure *not* to click Verify later below.
4. Enter the name of the person the verification postcard should be mailed to. (This is optional—you can leave it blank if you'd like.) We'll send it to the address you provided for your business.
5. Click Send postcard.

## [Manage your business](#)

## Wait for your postcard

In a few weeks (depending on where you're located), you'll receive a postcard from Google at your business address. The postcard will include a *unique verification code*, which you'll enter in Google My Business to confirm that your business is located at the listed address.

While you're waiting for your postcard, you can start laying the groundwork for success online:

- Visit your website as if you were a customer who found it on Google. Take this chance to spruce up your site or update any old information.
- Take pictures of your business and the products and services it provides, which will make great additions to your Google My Business listing. You can even take customers inside your space with [Business View](#).

## [Manage your business](#)

# Complete verification

Once you receive your verification postcard, return to [google.com/business](https://google.com/business). Sign in and click Verify location from the menu (or click the Verify now button). Then follow the instructions to enter the verification code from your postcard.

Congratulations: you're now verified and ready to edit your business information, respond to reviews, and add photos!

It may take a few weeks for your business information to appear across Google. Once your information is live, check out your listing. Just search for your business name and city in Google Search or Maps and see what appears.

If you don't like what you see, make sure to read the next guide in this series to find out how to improve your listing. Keep in mind that search results vary for a number of reasons, and what you see may not be the same as what someone else sees. [Learn how Google ranks local results](#).

If you have more questions about verifying your listing, visit the [Google My Business community](#).

Thirsty for more? Check out the next guide in our series to learn how to improve your business information online.