

The Google Business Profile Checklist for UK Businesses

The free, 30-minute setup that decides whether you show up in the map

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Your Google Business Profile is the single highest-leverage thing you own online, and it costs nothing. It is the listing that shows up in the map with your name, your reviews and a call button, at the exact moment someone nearby is ready to buy. Get it right and you appear. Leave it half-built, the way most businesses do, and the customer goes to whoever set theirs up properly.

This is the checklist I work through for every client. Print it, open your profile, and tick off what you have. Anything unticked is a reason a customer is contacting someone else.

Why this one thing matters most

Google weighs three things when it decides who ranks locally: your Business Profile, your website, and your reputation off your own site. Of the three, the profile is the biggest single factor, and it is the only one that is free and entirely in your hands. Most businesses touch it once when they start and never again. That is the gap you are about to close.

Part 1: The setup essentials

- **Claim and verify the profile.** Unverified listings barely show. If you have never verified, start the process today, it can take a few days.
 - **Business name is your real trading name only.** No stuffing it with "Emergency 24hr Locksmith London". Google penalises that, and it looks like spam to customers too.
 - **Phone number is the one you actually answer.** And the same number that appears on your website and everywhere else online.
 - **Website link points to your real site,** not a Facebook page.
 - **Service area set correctly.** If you travel to customers, set the areas you cover and hide your address. If customers come to you, use the address. Pick one, do not do both.
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Part 2: Categories and services (where most businesses lose)

- **Primary category is exact.** "Locksmith", not "Security service". "Physiotherapist", not "Health service". Google matches your category to the search, so the wrong one makes you invisible for the jobs you want.
 - **Add every relevant secondary category** that genuinely applies, no more.
 - **List every service you offer,** each named the way customers search: "emergency lockout", "sports massage", "boiler replacement", "blocked drain". The words matter.
 - **Write a short description for each service** using those same plain words.
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Part 3: Photos (the trust signal)

- [] **Add real photos of real work.** Before and afters, your premises, your team. Profiles with photos get far more enquiries than profiles without.
 - [] **Add a photo of you or the team.** This is a trust business, whatever you do. A face converts.
 - [] **Keep adding a few every month.** A profile that gets fresh photos looks alive to Google and to customers.
 - [] **No stock photos.** Customers spot them instantly and it kills trust.
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Part 4: Reviews (the compounding engine)

- [] **Ask every happy customer for a review,** every time, the day the job is done. A simple "would you mind leaving a quick Google review, here is the link" works.
 - [] **Reply to every review.** Not just the five-stars. A calm, professional reply to a one-star often converts the next reader better than the praise does.
 - [] **Aim for a steady trickle,** a few a month, not a burst then silence. Google reads the steady flow as a live, trusted business.
 - [] **Never buy fake reviews.** Google is good at spotting them and the penalty is brutal.
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Part 5: The ongoing habit (5 minutes a week)

- [] **Post a short update every week or two** with a call-to-action button. A recent job, an offer, a seasonal reminder. It signals activity.
 - [] **Answer questions in the Q&A section** before a competitor or a bot does.
 - [] **Keep your hours accurate,** including bank holidays and 24/7 if you cover emergencies. Hours tell Google when to show you.
 - [] **Check the profile once a month** for "suggested edits" from the public, which can quietly change your details to something wrong.
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The five mistakes I see most

1. **Treating the profile as done.** It is a living asset. The businesses who win keep feeding it.
 2. **Wrong primary category.** The fastest way to rank for nothing.
 3. **Ignoring reviews,** good and bad. Every unreplied review is a wasted trust signal.
 4. **No photos, or stock photos.** Either one costs you enquiries.
 5. **Both an address and a service area,** which confuses Google about where you actually work.
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What "done right" looks like

A business with a fully optimised profile shows up in the local map for the services it offers, in the areas it covers, with a stack of recent reviews replied to, real photos of real work, and a post from the last fortnight. When someone nearby searches at the moment they need you, you are the obvious choice. That is the whole game, and the profile is free.

What to do next

Work this checklist top to bottom. Most of it is a single afternoon, and the weekly habit is five minutes. It is genuinely the highest-return half-day of marketing any local business can do, and it costs nothing but the time.

If you would rather have the profile rebuilt properly, the schema deployed, and a unique page written for every area you cover, all done in 30 days by someone who does only this, that is what I do. It is priced per business and the first month is refund-backed.

Book a 15-minute call and I will tell you, straight, what your profile is missing: consentleads.uk, or reply to the email this came with.

No pressure, no hard sell. Just an honest read on where you stand.

Sal, Consent Leads. Local and enterprise SEO for UK businesses. Operated from the United Kingdom.

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