FREE · ON THE MAP CHECKLIST

The On the Map checklist

Your Google Business Profile on one page. Checked against Google's own help pages on 1 November 2026.

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Set up once

- [ ] **Claimed.** Search your business name. If it says "Own this business?" or "Claim this business", claim it.
- [ ] **Owned by you.** The primary owner is a Google Account the business controls, not an ex-employee or supplier.
- [ ] **Right business type.** Shop front (customers come to you), service area (you go to them, address hidden) or both.
- [ ] **Home address hidden** if customers don't visit you.
- [ ] **Real name only.** Exactly what's on your sign or invoices. No keywords, town names or taglines.
- [ ] **Verified.** Use whichever method Google offers. If you get a postcard, change nothing until it arrives.
- [ ] **Most specific primary category.** Check what the top three competitors use.
- [ ] **Description under 750 characters,** about the business, with no offers or prices.
- [ ] **Services listed** in the words customers use. Prices go in the price field, not the name.
- [ ] **Hours, plus special hours** for the next bank holiday.
- [ ] **Phone you answer, website link with a tracking tag.**
- [ ] **Attributes** filled in honestly, especially accessibility.
- [ ] **Logo, cover photo and 10 real photos.** No stock.
- [ ] **Review link and QR code** added to your job-done message, invoices and email signature.
- [ ] **2-Step Verification on** for the owner account. Ex-staff removed.

Every month (15 minutes)

- [ ] Reply to new reviews. Short, polite, signed with your name.
- [ ] Every customer this month got the review link.
- [ ] Hours, phone and services still right. Any changes from Google (shown in blue)?
- [ ] Two or three new photos.
- [ ] Write down searches, calls, website clicks, directions.
- [ ] One post if you've got something worth saying.

Never

- Offer anything for a review (discounts, freebies, prize draws)
- Only send the review link to happy customers
- Give staff review targets, or ask for reviews that name them
- Review yourself, or ask family or staff to
- Add keywords to your business name
- Pay anyone ringing "from Google". Business Profile is free, and Google never asks for codes over the phone.

Fake and incentivised reviews are banned under Google's rules and UK law (DMCC Act 2024, in force since 6 April 2025).

Want the full step-by-step? *On the Map*, the complete guide with a workbook, review templates and AI prompts, is free at garethrswray.com. **Or have me look:** Run the six-minute search check, or book your free 15-minute call at garethrswray.com.