

The Google Business Profile (GBP) Verification Checklist

Local SEO Guide – 2026 Edition

Abstract

Objective: This guide provides a step-by-step roadmap to claiming, verifying, and optimizing your Google Business Profile. Following this checklist ensures your business appears correctly in Google Maps and Local Search results.

1 Phase 1: Preparation & Data Consistency

Before interacting with Google, ensure your business data is ready. Inconsistencies here are the #1 cause of verification delays.

- ☐ **Determine your NAP (Name, Address, Phone):** Ensure this exactly matches what is on your website and business license.
- ☐ **Create a dedicated Google Account:** Do not use a personal Gmail if possible. Use a business email (e.g., info@yourbusiness.com) for ownership.
- ☐ **Prepare Verification Documents:** Have your business license, utility bill, or tax letter ready. Google's 2026 fraud filters are strict; you may need to upload these instantly.
- ☐ **High-Quality Images:** Have a logo, cover photo, and 3-5 interior/exterior photos ready on your phone/computer.

2 Phase 2: Claiming & Creation

Target Keyword: how to verify google business profile

- ☐ Go to **google.com/business** or search for your business name in Google Maps.
- ☐ Select **"Manage now"** or **"Claim this business"**.
- ☐ **Enter Business Name:** Type it exactly as it appears on your signage.
- ☐ **Choose Business Category:** Be specific. (e.g., "HVAC Contractor" rather than just "Contractor").
- ☐ **Add Location:**
 - If you have a storefront: Enter the address.
 - If you are a Service Area Business (SAB): Hide the address and select the cities you serve.
- ☐ **Add Contact Details:** Input your website URL and primary phone number.

3 Phase 3: The Verification Process

Google has moved heavily toward **Video Verification** in 2025-2026. Be prepared for this specific method.

Method A: Video Verification (Most Common)

- ☐ **Plan your route:** You will need to record one continuous video (under 2 minutes).
- ☐ **Start Outside:** Capture the street sign and your building number.
- ☐ **Walk Inside:** Unlock the door (key usage is proof of access).
- ☐ **Show Operations:** Film your payment terminal, business license on the wall, or specialized equipment.
- ☐ **Upload immediately:** Do not edit the video. Upload it directly through the verification tool.

Method B: Postcard/Phone/Email (Legacy)

- ☐ If offered **Phone/Text:** Select "Text" for an instant code. Enter it immediately.
- ☐ If offered **Postcard:** It will arrive in 5-14 days. Do not edit your profile name or address while waiting, or the code will be invalidated.

4 Phase 4: Optimization (2026 Standards)

Target Keyword: local seo checklist 2026

Once verified, do not leave the profile blank. A complete profile ranks higher.

- ☐ **Complete the "Info" Tab:** Fill out every available field, including amenities, accessibility, and crowd attributes.
- ☐ **Add Products/Services:** List your core offerings with descriptions and prices (if applicable).
- ☐ **Turn on Chat/Messages:** Enable the messaging feature but ensure you have notifications on to reply within 24 hours.
- ☐ **Upload Photos:** Add the photos prepared in Phase 1. Add "Team" photos to build trust.
- ☐ **Post an Update:** Create your first "Update" post welcoming new customers.
- ☐ **Q&A Seed:** Ask and answer 3 common questions yourself (e.g., "Do you offer parking?", "Do you take insurance?").

Verified but not visible?

A verified profile is just the start. Your Google profile needs to sync perfectly with your website for maximum SEO impact.

Need help connecting this to a website? We do it for you.