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How to appear in near me searches when you have a local business

Google Search & Indexing

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How to appear in near me searches when you have a local business

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When someone types “near me”, or a service plus their area, Google decides using three ideas it publishes itself: **relevance** (the business matches what is searched for), **distance** (how close it is to the person) and **prominence** (how well known and well reviewed it is). Distance you cannot control. The other two, largely, you can. Nobody can promise a position: what you can do is remove whatever depends on you.

What to do, in order of effect

1. **Have a complete, verified Google Business Profile.** It is the piece that puts the business on the map. The exact name (the one on the door, with no words added to “rank better”), the most specific main category available, address, phone, opening hours and website address. The steps are in **being found on Google**.

2. **Write the name, address and phone number the same way everywhere.** On the site, in the profile, on social media and in any business listing. Small differences (“Street” in one place and “St.” in another, an old phone number) make Google doubt which is the real one.

3. **Say on the site what you do and where.** One page per main service, with the name of the area you serve written as normal text, not only inside an image. “Electrician” is vague; “home electrician in your area” is what the person types.

4. **Put contact details and a map in plain view.** A contact page with the address as text (not an image), a phone number that can be tapped on a phone, and an embedded map. It is also what people look for before they get in touch.

5. **Ask real customers for reviews and answer all of them.** Prominence is built here. See **how to ask for reviews and answer the bad ones**.

6 **Keep the profile alive.** Genuine photos, opening hours updated for special periods, a post now and then. A forgotten profile loses to a cared-for one.

The commonest profile problems

What you see	What it usually is
The profile does not appear, or asks for verification	Verification is not finished. Google offers methods depending on the business and the address (for example a code sent by post, or a video recording). Complete the method the profile itself proposes; there is no shortcut.
There are two profiles for the same business	One was created by you and another by a customer or by Google. Claim the existing one rather than creating another, and ask for the duplicate to be merged or removed through the profile's report-a-problem option.
The profile was suspended	Nearly always because the details break the rules: a name with marketing words, an address that is not a place where you serve customers, or categories that do not match. Correct them and ask for a review.
The map marker is in the wrong place	Drag it to the exact spot. If the street has no formal number, write a landmark in the description.
The business is mobile, or works at customers' homes	Use the service-area option and hide the address if you do not receive customers on site.

! **Do not use a false address, and do not put the area name inside the business name.**
It is the shortest road to a suspended profile, and getting it back takes time. Anyone promising you first place "near me" within days is selling something they do not control.

Use the searches that already reach you.
In Search Console, under Performance, you see which words bring people to the site. If your area shows in them you are on the right road; if not, the pages need to say it. The walkthrough is in **getting your site into Search Console**.

NEED A HAND?

Does the site fail to open when people click from the profile, or did the address change and you need the right redirect? Tell us the address and we will see what the server returns.

Open a support ticket →

SEE ALSO

- Being found on Google: profile, Search Console and the basics
- Reviews and reputation
- Finding the words customers type
- Hosting plans and what each includes

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