

Why Customers Can't Find You on Google — A 10-Minute Audit

Find out exactly why the right customers in your area are finding your competitors when they search Google — even when your work is better and your prices are fair.

What this audit shows you: The specific alignment issues between your Google Business Profile, your business name, and your website that are keeping you invisible for the local searches that should be sending you work.

- Plumbers
- HVAC Techs
- Electricians
- Handymen
- Roofers
- Landscapers
- Painters
- All Home Services

You've been doing this work for years. You're good at it. Your customers refer their neighbors. But when someone in your area pulls out their phone and searches for what you do — you're not showing up. Or you're showing up for the wrong jobs while competitors somehow get all the calls you actually want.

This isn't a reputation problem or a reviews problem. In most cases, it's an **alignment problem** — the connection between your Google Business Profile, your business name, and your website isn't telling Google what you actually do and where you do it. So Google shows someone else.

This audit checks the five specific places that alignment breaks down. Work through each checkpoint with your Google Business Profile open. Check every item that currently applies to your business. Your unchecked boxes are your visibility gaps — and they're fixable.

Have your Google Business Profile dashboard open before you start — you can find it by searching "my business" in Google while logged into your Google account. The audit takes about 10 minutes.

1 Your GBP Category Matches the Jobs You Actually Want

Here's something most home service business owners don't know: when you set up your Google Business Profile, the category you chose tells Google exactly which searches to show you for. Choose the wrong one — or a category that's too generic — and Google has no reason to show you when a customer searches for the specific service they need.

The way customers actually search matters here. They don't just type "plumber." They type "emergency plumber near me" or "water heater replacement Springfield" or "HVAC repair tonight." They don't type "contractor" — they type "roof leak repair" or "fence installation [city]." The more specific your GBP category matches those searches, the more often Google shows you for them.

PLUMBERS

"Emergency plumber near me" - "Water heater replacement [city]" - "Burst pipe repair tonight"

HVAC

"AC repair near me" - "Furnace not working [city]" - "HVAC tune-up [city]"

ELECTRICIANS

"Electrician near me" - "Panel upgrade [city]" - "Outlet not working [city]"

HANDYMEN

"Handyman near me" - "Handyman [city]" - "Small home repairs [city]"

CHECK EVERY ITEM THAT CURRENTLY APPLIES:

- My primary GBP category names my specific trade — not just "Contractor" or "Home Improvement"
- My primary category matches the type of job I most want to get called for
- I have at least one secondary category covering a related service I want to be found for
- My categories don't include services I no longer offer or don't want to be called about

The "General Contractor" trap: Many tradespeople list "General Contractor" as their GBP category because it seems to cover everything. It actually works against you — Google sees it as a generic signal and doesn't know which specific service searches to show you for. If you're a plumber, list "Plumber." If you're an electrician, list "Electrician." Specific wins over general every time.

2 Your Website Backs Up What Your GBP Says

Google doesn't just look at your Business Profile in isolation. It visits your website and checks whether the two are telling the same story. If your GBP says "Plumber" but your website homepage leads with general handyman services — or if your GBP says you do HVAC but your landing page buries it under a long list of everything you've ever done — Google sees a disconnect and hedges.

When Google hedges, it shows you less. For everyone. That disconnect is silently suppressing your rankings across every search you should be winning.

Open your website homepage right now. What's the first service a visitor sees? Is it the same service your GBP primary category describes? If someone landed on your homepage from a Google search for your main service, would they immediately know they're in the right place?

CHECK EVERY ITEM THAT CURRENTLY APPLIES:

- My website homepage leads with my primary trade or service — visible without scrolling
- My website page title includes my trade and my city (check the browser tab — it should say something like "Plumber Springfield | [Your Business Name]")
- The main service on my homepage matches the primary category on my GBP
- My website doesn't list so many services that it's unclear what I actually specialize in

3 Your City Is Woven Into Your Online Presence

When a homeowner needs a plumber, they don't just search "plumber." They search "plumber near me" or "plumber Springfield" or "emergency plumber [their neighborhood]." Google prioritizes businesses that have clearly signaled where they operate — and the strongest signals are your business name, your page titles, and your GBP description.

This is the single most overlooked ranking factor for home service businesses. "Springfield Plumbing & Drain" has a built-in local ranking advantage over "Mike's Plumbing" for Springfield plumbing searches — before Google reads another word. That advantage is free. You just have to set it up.

If your business name doesn't include your city, that's fixable in other ways — but your city needs to appear prominently throughout your GBP description, your page titles, and your website content.

CHECK EVERY ITEM THAT CURRENTLY APPLIES:

- My business name includes my city or service area
- My GBP description mentions my city and the surrounding areas I serve
- My website page title includes my city alongside my trade (e.g., "HVAC Repair Springfield")
- My service area is correctly set up in my GBP — covering all the zip codes and neighborhoods I actually work in

Solo operators who include their city in their business name consistently outrank equally-qualified competitors who don't — especially for the "near me" and "[city]" searches that high-intent customers make when they need someone now.

4 Your GBP Profile Is Complete — Not Just Claimed

Most home service business owners claim their GBP when they first hear about it, fill in the basics, and then never touch it again. Google tracks profile completeness and engagement as a ranking signal. A half-finished profile with no photos, a one-line description, and no services listed will rank below a complete profile from a competitor — even if your reviews are better.

Completeness isn't just about filling in boxes. The services section especially matters for tradespeople. "Plumbing" as a service tells Google almost nothing. "Water heater installation," "Drain cleaning," "Toilet repair," "Leak detection" — those tell Google exactly which job-specific searches to show you for.

CHECK EVERY ITEM THAT CURRENTLY APPLIES:

- My GBP has at least 5 photos — including photos of my work, my truck or van, and ideally me on the job
- My services section lists specific jobs I do — not just my trade name (e.g., "drain cleaning" not just "plumbing")
- My GBP description is fully written out — at least 3-4 sentences explaining what I do, where I work, and what kind of jobs I handle
- I've responded to my most recent reviews — both positive and any negative ones
- My phone number, hours, and website link are current and accurate

5 The Real Test — Do You Actually Show Up?

Everything in this audit leads to this moment. This is the check that tells you in plain terms whether your alignment is working or not — in real time, right now.

Open a private or incognito browser window. Don't use your regular browser — it remembers your history and will skew the results to show your own site. In the incognito window, search for exactly what a customer needing your service right now would type: "**[your trade] near me**" or "**[your trade] [your city]**." Be specific to the job type you most want to get called for.

You're looking for two things: whether you appear in the map pack — the three businesses shown at the top with the map next to them — and whether you appear anywhere on page one of the regular results below it.

RECORD YOUR BASELINE — YOU'LL NEED THIS LATER

SEARCH TERM YOU USED

Write the exact search you ran

MAP PACK POSITION

1-3 in the pack - "Not shown" if absent

CHECK WHAT YOU FIND:

- I appear in the map pack (top 3 listings with the map) for my target trade + city search
- I appear somewhere on page 1 of organic results for my target search
- My GBP listing clearly shows my trade — not just my business name
- Clicking my listing takes a customer to a page that immediately confirms my trade and city

If you're not in the map pack for your target search, that's not a luck problem or a reviews problem. It's an alignment problem — and it's the kind that responds to the right fixes within 7 to 10 days. Save the baseline numbers you just wrote down. That's your starting point.

Reading Your Score

Count the total number of boxes you checked across all 5 checkpoints. There are 21 items total.

17–21

Strong Foundation

Your alignment is solid. Focus on review consistency and keeping your profile active to keep climbing.

10–16

Calls Being Missed

Real alignment gaps are costing you work. The fixes are specific and will produce measurable ranking movement within a week.

0–9

Largely Invisible

Customers searching for exactly what you do are not finding you. This is completely fixable — but it needs to happen now.

Every unchecked box is a customer who searched for your trade in your area — and called someone else because you didn't show up.

THE NEXT STEP

Now You Know What's Broken. Here's the System to Fix It in 7 Days.

The Local Lead Breakthrough™ is a complete, step-by-step system that walks you through fixing every alignment issue this audit uncovered — starting with your GBP categories and ending with a 7-day tracking plan that shows you measurable ranking movement before the phone starts ringing more.

- The exact GBP category strategy for home service businesses — what to choose and why it matters
- The Service-to-Search Connection — aligning your website and GBP so Google stops second-guessing you
- The City Name Strategy — the most overlooked local ranking advantage for solo operators
- A 7-day daily tracking plan that shows ranking movement within a week — proof before the calls arrive
- What to expect in competitive markets — realistic timelines and how to measure progress

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Instant access. No monthly fees. No complicated software. Just the fixes.

