

[ONE AFTERNOON · NO JARGON]

The Google Business Profile Afternoon Kit

Complete your profile properly in one sitting.
The full method, free. No email wall, nothing held back.



[THE SEVEN STATIONS]

1

Name

2

Category

3

Details

4

Description

5

Photos

6

Reviews

7

Heartbeat

About three hours, tea breaks included.

saltlinestudio.com.au

Saltline Studio · Port Macquarie

Your profile earns the click before your website does.

For local searches, your Google Business Profile is often the first thing a customer sees: the map pin, the reviews, the photos, the call button. And here's the part that should make you glad you opened this: most profiles near you were set up once, half-finished, and abandoned. Google's own guidance is blunt about what wins instead. Complete, accurate, active profiles are easier to match with the searches that matter.

That's the whole opportunity. Not cleverness. Completeness. One honest afternoon, seven stations, and your profile will be working harder than most of your competitors'.

A promise before we start: everything in this kit is the full method, not a teaser. No email was harvested to get it, and nothing is held back for a paid version. If you finish the afternoon and want my eyes on the result, the last page tells you exactly what that costs. That's the whole arrangement.

THE AFTERNOON AT A GLANCE

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 Your name, exactly · 10 min | 5 Eight photos minimum · 30 min |
| 2 The category decision · 15 min | 6 Reviews, the honest way · 30 min |
| 3 Details and attributes · 20 min | 7 The monthly heartbeat · 10 min |
| 4 The description formula · 25 min | |

WHY A SMALL BUSINESS CAN WIN HERE

Google's own help pages state there is no way to request or pay for a better local ranking. None. Ranking comes from relevance, distance and prominence, and prominence is built from reviews and completeness. That levels the field: a sole trader with a complete, active profile outranks a franchise with an abandoned one.

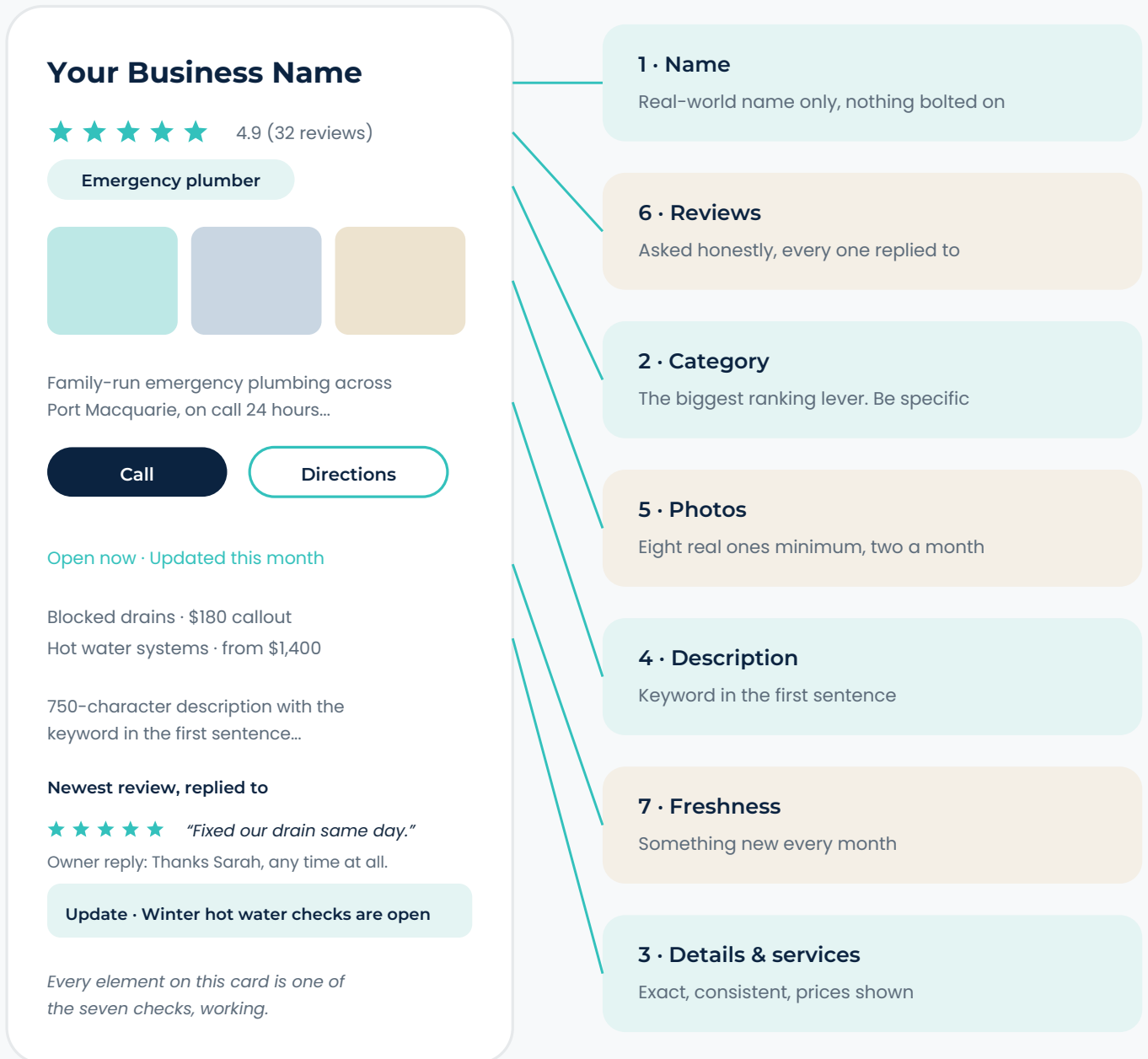
HOW TO RUN THE AFTERNOON

- 1 Open business.google.com on a computer and keep this kit beside it, printed or on your phone.
- 2 Work the stations in order and tick as you go. Nothing needs to be perfect before you move on.
- 3 Finish with the scorecard near the back, and diarise the 15-minute heartbeat before you close the laptop.

This afternoon is your line in the sand.

Anatomy of a winning profile.

This is where the afternoon ends up: every numbered piece below is built by its matching station.



Each numbered chip is a station in this kit. Work them in order and this card becomes yours.

Your Name, Exactly

Your business name on the profile must be your real-world name, exactly as customers know it. Keyword-stuffed names are a suspension risk: the profile equivalent of losing your shopfront overnight.

- ☐ Name matches your signage, website and invoices exactly
- ☐ No suburbs, keywords, phone numbers or taglines bolted on
- ☐ Same spelling and punctuation everywhere you appear online: consistency is a trust signal to Google and the AI assistants

WHERE TO CLICK

Sign in to Google, search your own business name, press Edit profile, then About, then Business name. Type it, press Save.

NOT THIS

Bayside Plumbing | Best Plumber Port Macquarie 24/7

THIS

Bayside Plumbing

THE TRAP

Adding your town or main service to the name is the most common reason small-business profiles get suspended. Google treats the name field as identity, not advertising.

WHILE YOU ARE HERE

Check the profile shows as verified: Google says verified businesses are more likely to appear in results. A video-walkthrough request is normal, not a scam.

YOU ARE DONE WHEN

The name matches your invoice header letter for letter, and the profile shows as verified.

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STATION 2 · 15 MINUTES

The Category Decision

Your primary category is the single biggest ranking lever on the profile, and most owners set it carelessly.

- ☐ Primary category = the thing you most want to be found for. Be specific: "Emergency plumber" beats "Plumber" if that's your bread and butter
- ☐ Add every additional category that genuinely fits, none that don't
- ☐ Check what the top three businesses in your local map pack use (search your service + town, open their profiles). You're not copying, you're learning the category language Google expects in your area

WHERE TO CLICK

Search your business name, press Edit profile, then About, then Business category. Set the primary first, add extras underneath, press Save.

NOT THIS

Primary category: Plumber. Broad must catch more searches, surely.

THIS

Primary category: Emergency plumber. The exact job you want the phone to ring for.

FROM GOOGLE'S OWN PLAYBOOK

Google names three ranking factors: relevance, distance, prominence. You cannot move distance and prominence takes months; category is the heart of relevance.

THE TRAP

Stacking categories that almost fit. A wrong category waters down the right ones and muddies the AI answers that read your profile.

YOU ARE DONE WHEN

Your primary category names the exact job you want more of, and every additional category is one you would happily be booked for tomorrow.

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STATION 3 · 20 MINUTES

Details and Attributes

Complete beats clever. This station is pure box-ticking, and it's where most of the easy ground is gained.

- ☐ Phone, website, hours: exact and current. Consistent hours beat impressive hours
- ☐ Set special hours for every public holiday this year. Google's ranking tips call out special hours by name
- ☐ Service-area business? Hide the address; list your service areas, home town first
- ☐ Switch on every attribute that's true (women-owned, online quotes, wheelchair access). Attributes feed the AI answers about you
- ☐ Add services with real prices where you can: they answer the question every caller asks anyway

WHERE TO CLICK

Press Edit profile: Hours holds opening and special hours, More holds attributes. Services and prices live under Edit services.

GOOGLE'S OWN LIMITS, USE ALL OF THEM

750 characters · description

300 characters · each service

20 service areas maximum

THE FREE AUDIT FROM THE SOURCE

Press Profile Strength in your dashboard: Google itself lists what it thinks is missing. A free audit from the one marker whose opinion counts.

THE TRAP

Hours that lie. A profile that says open when the door is shut reads as untrustworthy, to the customer outside and to the machine measuring consistency.

YOU ARE DONE WHEN

A stranger could work out what you do, where you do it, and roughly what it costs, without ringing you once.

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The Description Formula

You get 750 characters. The order that works: who you are and where, what you do (main keyword naturally in the first sentence), who you serve, what makes you different, and how to take the next step.

- ☐ Main keyword appears naturally in the first sentence
- ☐ Written like you'd say it across a table. No jargon, no "solutions"
- ☐ Passes the read-aloud test

FILL-IN TEMPLATE

"[Business name] is a [what you are] in [town] helping [who you serve] with [main service]. [One sentence on your difference: years, speciality, guarantee, approach]. [One sentence listing your 2-3 core services]. [How to start: call, quote, visit]."

WHERE TO CLICK

Press Edit profile, then About, then Business description. Paste your finished description, read it aloud once more, press Save.

NOT THIS

We are a leading provider of quality plumbing solutions for all your needs.

THIS

Bayside Plumbing is an emergency plumber in Port Macquarie, on call 24 hours.

THE TRAP

AI assistants read descriptions aloud now: brochure sentences get skipped, human ones get quoted.

YOU ARE DONE WHEN

You can read it aloud without stumbling, and the first sentence names your service and your town.

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STATION 5 · 30 MINUTES

Eight Photos Minimum

Real, recent photos are the fastest trust you can buy for free, and stock images fool nobody.

- ☐ Your logo, and a cover photo that actually looks like your business
- ☐ Your face. People buy from people, and it's the one photo competitors are too shy to add
- ☐ Three or more of your actual work, premises or products
- ☐ One or two local-proof shots: the van, the street, the town
- ☐ Diarise two fresh photos a month. A profile that hasn't changed in months looks closed

WHERE TO CLICK

Search your business name and press Add photo. Your logo and cover photo live under Edit profile, then Photos.

Your logo

Cover photo

Your face

The work

The work

The work

The van

The street

FROM GOOGLE'S OWN PLAYBOOK

Google's help pages state that businesses with photos receive more requests for driving directions and more clicks through to their websites than businesses without them. Phone photos are fine: well-lit and honest beats professional and generic.

YOU ARE DONE WHEN

Eight real photos are live, your face is one of them, and two more are diarised for next month.

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6 Reviews, the Honest Way

Reviews are the growth engine, and there's a right way to ask that keeps you inside both Google's rules and Australian consumer law: ask everyone or no one, never pay or reward, never ask only the happy ones, and never write them yourself. AI-written reviews are explicitly against Google's policy.

- ☐ Grab your review link or the official QR code (dashboard, "Ask for reviews"): Google provides both, free. Save the link in your phone
- ☐ Ask at the natural high point: job done, client happy, invoice paid
- ☐ Reply to every review within a few days: short, personal, never promotional. Mention the service naturally; replies are indexed too

FILL-IN TEMPLATE

The ask that works, word for word: "It was a pleasure working with you. If you have two minutes, an honest Google review helps a small business like mine more than you'd believe. Here's the link."

THE TIP THAT SURPRISES EVERYONE

Straight from Google's review tip sheet: a mix of positive and negative feedback often feels MORE trustworthy to customers. One imperfect review with a calm, helpful reply sells harder than a perfect wall of five stars. Stop dreading the 4-star; reply well to it instead.

YOU ARE DONE WHEN

The review link lives in your phone, the last three happy customers have received it, and no review is sitting unanswered.

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STATION 7 · 10 MINUTES TO SET UP

The 15-Minute Monthly Heartbeat

A profile that updates monthly outranks a bigger competitor that set-and-forgot theirs. The maintenance is 15 minutes a month, which is three hours a year: the best hourly rate in marketing.

- ☐ One post a month minimum (a new article, an offer, a finished job)
- ☐ Two fresh photos
- ☐ Reply to any new reviews
- ☐ Put a recurring 15-minute appointment in your calendar right now, or this page was decoration

WHERE TO CLICK

Search your business name: Add update posts, Add photo uploads, and Read reviews is where you reply. All three sit on the same panel.

THE 15 MINUTES, SPLIT

● 5 minutes · one post

● 5 minutes · two photos

● 5 minutes · review replies

WHY IT COMPOUNDS

Google's third ranking factor, prominence, is built from reviews and activity over months. A big competitor can outspend you; they cannot out-consistent you. Twelve heartbeats a year is how a small business compounds past a lazy franchise.

THE TRAP

Setting the reminder and snoozing it. The heartbeat works because it is boring: the same 15 minutes, the same three jobs, every month, busy or quiet.

YOU ARE DONE WHEN

The recurring appointment exists, next month's slot has a date, and this month's heartbeat is already done. You just did it.

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You can't seed answers anymore. You feed the machine instead.

Google removed the public Q&A section from Business Profiles (phased out from late 2025). In its place, Google's AI now answers questions about your business automatically, drawing from your profile, posts, reviews and website. Everything in this kit, the complete details, priced services, active posts, review replies, and clear FAQs on your website, is exactly what those AI answers are built from. Finish the afternoon and you've done the feeding.

ALSO NEW

You can now manage your profile by talking to the Gemini web app: ask it to update hours, add a post or draft a reply, and it edits the profile for you. Google's help pages carry a dedicated guide. Handy when the monthly heartbeat lands on a busy week.

THE VERIFIED VISIBILITY LIST

Every method below is published by Google itself as a way to improve local visibility. Nothing here is folklore, and each one maps to a station you have just finished.

- Complete, accurate business info Stations 1 to 4
- A verified profile Station 1
- Hours kept current, special hours included Station 3
- Photos and videos on the profile Station 5
- Responding to reviews Station 6
- More reviews and positive ratings Stations 6 and 7

Source: Google's published local-ranking and profile guidance, checked July 2026.

THE FREE TOOLS, ALL OF THEM

- business.google.com
- Profile Strength · free audit
- Ask for reviews · link + QR

[SCORE YOURSELF OUT OF 100]

Marked like a test. Sound familiar?

Tick what is true today: every tick is ten points. Be honest, the score is for you, and the free Found Score on my website marks the same way.

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Exact real-world name | ☐ Description done, keyword in first sentence |
| ☐ Right primary category | ☐ Eight or more real photos |
| ☐ Details complete and consistent | ☐ Review link saved and being used |
| ☐ Every true attribute switched on | ☐ Every review replied to |
| ☐ Services added, priced where possible | ☐ Monthly heartbeat in the calendar |

Under 70? You know your afternoon's work.

Over 90? You're ahead of nearly every profile in your postcode.

WHAT YOUR SCORE MEANS

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| UNDER 50 | Start tonight with Stations 1 and 2. The biggest gains are the earliest ones. |
| 50 TO 70 | One honest afternoon closes the gap. That is exactly what this kit is for. |
| 70 TO 90 | You are ahead of most. The heartbeat is what keeps you there. |
| 90 PLUS | Maintain the heartbeat and consider the two-minute Found Score for the rest of your online presence. |

Every problem here has an official fix. Use it, don't panic.

Five things that go wrong with profiles, and the path Google itself provides for each. Bookmark this page; the day you need it, you will not feel like searching.

Your profile gets suspended

Do not create a second profile; that makes it worse. Fix whatever broke the rules first (usually a keyword-stuffed name), then appeal once through Google's official form: search "fix suspended Google Business Profile" and follow the help page. Appeals with evidence, like photos of your signage and an invoice, are the ones that succeed.

A review is fake or unfair

You cannot delete reviews and arguing publicly never wins. Open the review, press the three dots, press Report review, and reply once, calmly, for the humans reading over your shoulder.

Someone demands money to remove a bad review

That is extortion and Google has a dedicated report form for it: search "report review extortion Google". Report it, never pay it.

A review has gone missing

New reviews can take days to appear, and reviews from brand-new Google accounts sometimes never show. Tell customers to use their everyday Google account, then give it a week before worrying.

There are two listings for your business

Duplicates split your reviews and confuse the machine. In Google Maps, open the duplicate, press Suggest an edit, then mark it as a duplicate. If someone else controls your real listing, open it and press Own this business to request it back.

[IF YOU WANT MY EYES ON IT]

This kit is yours free, no strings.

If you never contact me, it has still done its job.

Small businesses make the towns people want to visit. Helping yours get found is why Saltline exists.

The Found Report

\$550 AUD flat

Your Google Business Profile audited alongside everything else you own online: your website page by page, your socials, your speed, and live tests of whether ChatGPT and Gemini name you when locals ask who to call. A score out of 100 and a fix for every finding, delivered in five business days. Do the easy fixes yourself, and hand the website pages straight to your developer (or give them a crack yourself if you're on a website builder like Wix or Squarespace).

saltlinestudio.com.au/service-conversion-audit

Organic Growth Partnership

\$1,200 AUD / month

The monthly heartbeat handled for you, forever, alongside the articles, keywords and search work. Your profile becomes my 15 minutes instead of yours. Six-month foundation, then month to month.

saltlinestudio.com.au/service-organic-growth

The Found Score

Free • 2 minutes

The two-minute self-check of how findable your whole business is, in classic search and AI answers. Ten questions, a score out of 100, a fix list. No email required, like everything on this page.

saltlinestudio.com.au/seo-checker

Either way: finish the afternoon. The profile you complete today is quietly working next month while your competitors' half-finished ones sleep.



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Every tide leaves a mark. Make yours.