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## THE GOOGLE REVIEW KIT

# How to ask for Google reviews without breaking the rules.

A plug-and-play template and quick-reference guide for local businesses. Stay compliant with Google's review policy, protect your rankings, and still grow an honest review base.

### WHY THIS MATTERS

Google has tightened enforcement of its review policy. Businesses caught breaking the rules can have reviews removed, ratings unpublished, or their Business Profile restricted — wiping out years of social proof overnight. The good news: you **can** still ask for reviews. You just need to do it properly.

## The 4 Rules You Can't Break

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- 1 No incentives. Ever.**

You can't offer discounts, freebies, prize draws, or any perk in exchange for a review — even for honest ones. Google's policy bans incentives regardless of sentiment.
  - 2 No cherry-picking.**

You must ask everyone, not just the happy customers. Only asking satisfied customers (known as "review gating") is explicitly prohibited.
  - 3 No pressure on the spot.**

Don't ask for reviews while you're with the customer or they're on your premises. Send the request afterwards — by email or SMS. And never tell them what to write.
  - 4 No naming staff.**

You can't ask customers to mention a specific team member. This is one of the most common violations — reviews naming staff can be removed.
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## The Email Template

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Send this to every customer within 24–48 hours of completing a job or service. Not just the ones you think will leave a 5-star.

### EMAIL

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**Subject:** A quick favour, [{First Name}](#) ?

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Hi [{First Name}](#) ,

Thanks again for choosing [{Business Name}](#) — it was great working with you.

If you have a minute, we'd really appreciate an honest review of your experience on Google. Reviews genuinely help other local people decide who to trust, and we read every single one.

👉 **Leave a Google review:** [{Your Google Review Link}](#)

A few things to keep in mind when writing your review:

- Please share your **genuine experience** — good, bad, or in between. We want real feedback.
- There's **no reward or discount** for leaving a review — Google doesn't allow that, and we wouldn't want to influence what you say.
- Please **don't mention specific staff members by name** — Google's policy doesn't allow it, and reviews naming staff can be removed.
- You don't need to mention any specific product or service — just write about your experience in your own words.

Whether you've got five stars or constructive feedback for us, we want to hear it.

Thanks so much,

[{Your Name}](#)

[{Business Name}](#)

## The SMS / Text Message Template

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For the fastest response rate, send an SMS the same day as the service.

### SMS

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Hi [{First Name}](#) , thanks for choosing [{Business Name}](#) ! If you have a minute, we'd love an honest review of your experience — good, bad, or anything in between. Here's the link: [{Review Link}](#) . Cheers!



## Do's and Don'ts for Your Team

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Print this out and stick it in the staff room. Make sure everyone asking for reviews is on the same page.

### DO

- ✓ Ask every customer, not just the happy ones
- ✓ Send requests by email or SMS after the job is done
- ✓ Ask for **honest** reviews, good or bad
- ✓ Keep it short and friendly
- ✓ Include a direct link to your Google Business Profile
- ✓ Reward your team internally for generating reviews (this is allowed)
- ✓ Respond to every review — positive and negative

### DON'T

- ✗ Offer discounts, freebies, or prize draws for reviews
- ✗ Ask only your best customers
- ✗ Pressure customers to leave a review while you're on site
- ✗ Tell them what to say or mention a specific service
- ✗ Ask them to name a team member
- ✗ Review-gate with a pre-screening survey
- ✗ Post reviews from your own accounts or staff accounts

## Pro Tips to Get More (Legit) Reviews

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### 1. Send the request within 24 hours

The experience is still fresh and you're far more likely to get a response. A week later, your customer has moved on.

### 2. Make the link frictionless

Use your Google Business Profile short link (find it in your profile settings). One tap should take them straight to the review screen — no logging in, no hunting around.

### 3. Automate it

Most decent booking or CRM platforms can auto-send a review request after a job is marked complete. Set it once and every customer gets the same ask, at the same time — which also protects you from the "cherry-picking" rule.

### 4. Reward your team, not your customers

Google explicitly allows internal incentives. Run a monthly competition for the team member who generates the most genuine reviews. Don't offer anything to the customer.

## 5. Respond to every review

Especially the negative ones — professionally. Future customers are reading your responses as much as the reviews themselves. A well-handled 3-star review often sells better than a generic 5-star.

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### Jelly

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