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Complete Local SEO Checklist 2026

What Google wants now — the full working checklist I use on client campaigns, in the order I do the work. Print it, tick it off by hand, and re-audit every quarter.

20	222	90
SECTIONS	CHECKS	DAY PLAN INSIDE

Business name: _____

City / service area: _____

Started on: _____ Next quarterly audit: _____

Starting score: _____ / 222 Current score: _____ / 222

01 Local SEO Strategy
02 Google Business Profile
03 Google Maps Ranking
04 Local Keyword Research
05 Local On-Page SEO
06 Local Content SEO
07 Technical Local SEO
08 Website Performance
09 Local Business Schema
10 Reviews & Reputation
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20 Local SEO Business Growth

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Free to use and share with attribution. Full guide: imrankhadim.com/local-seo-checklist/

How to Use This Checklist

Google says local results come down to three things: **relevance, distance and prominence**. You cannot change distance — everything on this list is how you win the other two. Work in order: sections 01–03 set strategy, 04–10 build the foundation, 11–14 build authority, 15–18 cover AI search and measurement, 19–20 turn rankings into revenue.

FAST START — short on time? Do these 5 first:

1. Fix your Google Business Profile — primary category, services, hours, photos (§02)
2. Start a review process that runs after every job (§10)
3. Make your name, address and phone identical everywhere (§11)
4. One proper page per service — city in the title, H1 and first paragraph (§05)
5. Add and validate LocalBusiness schema (§09)

Phase	Days	Sections	Done when
Foundation	1–30	§01, §02, §07, §09, §11	Profile 100% complete, NAP fixed, schema valid, every location page indexed
Visibility	31–60	§03, §04, §05, §06, §10, §14	Service/location pages live, review process running, first geo-grid baseline recorded
Authority & AI	61–90	§12, §13, §15, §16, §18	First local links earned, AI-answer check done, competitor gaps turned into tasks
Ongoing	Monthly	§08, §17, §19, §20	Monthly report read, calls & leads counted, next fixes chosen from data

Weekly habits: GBP post + new real photos · reply to every review within 48 hours · review request sent after every job.
Monthly habits: geo-grid rank check · GBP performance (calls, directions, clicks) · competitor review benchmark.
Quarterly habits: full pass of this checklist · citation audit · AI visibility check (ChatGPT, Gemini, Perplexity, AI Mode) · Core Web Vitals re-test.

Honest notes: Google Posts help clicks and trust, not rankings directly. Photo geotagging is not a strategy. And no one can buy or guarantee a local ranking — Google states this plainly. What follows is the work that actually moves relevance and prominence.

01 Local SEO Strategy

Score ___ / 8

One page owns one intent. Decide what NOT to chase — demand in a city you don't serve is wasted budget.

- [ ] Local search intent
- [ ] Local keyword research
- [ ] SERP analysis
- [ ] Competitor analysis
- [ ] Keyword-to-page mapping
- [ ] Service-area targeting
- [ ] Location-based search demand
- [ ] Conversion-focused SEO

02 Google Business Profile

Score ___ / 12

Primary category is the strongest Map Pack relevance signal. List every service individually — most competitors skip it.

- [ ] GBP optimization
- [ ] Primary & secondary categories
- [ ] Business information accuracy
- [ ] Services & products
- [ ] Business description
- [ ] Opening hours
- [ ] Photos & videos
- [ ] Google Posts
- [ ] Business attributes
- [ ] Appointment links
- [ ] UTM tracking
- [ ] Duplicate listing management

03 Google Maps Ranking

Score ___ / 8

Track a geo-grid, not one rank. #1 at your door and #14 two streets away is normal — work the winnable zones.

- [ ] Relevance optimization
- [ ] Distance & proximity
- [ ] Prominence improvement
- [ ] Local Pack rankings
- [ ] Geo-grid rank tracking
- [ ] Competitor Maps analysis
- [ ] Business category relevance
- [ ] Local brand authority

04 Local Keyword Research

Score ___ / 9

Two pages chasing the same keyword compete with each other, not the market. Map first, write second.

- [ ] Service + city keywords
- [ ] Service + neighborhood keywords
- [ ] Near-me searches
- [ ] High-intent local keywords
- [ ] Long-tail keywords
- [ ] Question-based keywords
- [ ] Competitor keyword gaps
- [ ] Search intent mapping
- [ ] Keyword cannibalization prevention

05 Local On-Page SEO

Score ___ / 12

One H1, service + city in the first 100 words, and a CTA a thumb can reach on mobile.

- [ ] Title tags
- [ ] Meta descriptions
- [ ] H1–H6 structure
- [ ] Location-based URLs
- [ ] Internal linking
- [ ] Image alt text
- [ ] Breadcrumbs
- [ ] Local entity optimization
- [ ] Service page optimization
- [ ] Location page optimization
- [ ] NAP consistency
- [ ] Conversion-focused CTAs

06 Local Content SEO

Score ___ / 12

Publish what only you can: a real job, a named neighbourhood, a real photo. AI quotes first-hand content.

- [ ] Service pages
- [ ] Location landing pages
- [ ] Neighborhood-specific content
- [ ] Local FAQs
- [ ] Local case studies
- [ ] First-hand experience
- [ ] Expert insights
- [ ] Original research
- [ ] Content freshness
- [ ] Content pruning
- [ ] Content decay monitoring
- [ ] Topical authority

07 Technical Local SEO

Score ___ / 14

Check every location page is actually indexed in Search Console. Never assume it.

- [ ] Crawlability
- [ ] Indexability
- [ ] Robots.txt
- [ ] XML sitemaps
- [ ] Canonical tags
- [ ] Redirects
- [ ] Status codes
- [ ] JavaScript SEO
- [ ] Duplicate content
- [ ] Orphan pages
- [ ] Crawl depth
- [ ] Site architecture
- [ ] HTTPS
- [ ] Location page indexation

08 Website Performance

Score ___ / 11

Pass on mobile: LCP under 2.5s, INP under 200ms, CLS under 0.1 — measured on a real phone.

- [ ] Core Web Vitals
- [ ] LCP
- [ ] INP
- [ ] CLS
- [ ] Mobile page speed
- [ ] Image optimization
- [ ] JavaScript optimization
- [ ] Caching
- [ ] CDN
- [ ] Server performance
- [ ] Mobile usability

09 Local Business Schema

Score ___ / 12

Schema must match the visible page exactly. Never add self-serving review markup to your own business.

- [ ] LocalBusiness schema
- [ ] Organization schema
- [ ] Service schema
- [ ] PostalAddress properties
- [ ] OpeningHoursSpecification
- [ ] GeoCoordinates
- [ ] AreaServed
- [ ] SameAs properties
- [ ] BreadcrumbList schema
- [ ] Review markup eligibility
- [ ] Schema validation
- [ ] Structured data accuracy

10 Reviews & Reputation

Score ___ / 10

A process, not a hope: a review link after every finished job, every reply within 48 hours, never bought.

- [ ] Google review acquisition
- [ ] Review response management
- [ ] Personalized review replies
- [ ] Negative review handling
- [ ] Customer feedback monitoring
- [ ] Review sentiment analysis
- [ ] Competitor review analysis
- [ ] Review policy compliance
- [ ] Genuine customer testimonials
- [ ] Reputation monitoring

11 Local Citations & NAP

Score ___ / 10

One canonical NAP format, matched character-for-character everywhere. 40 accurate beats 200 messy.

- [ ] Name, Address & Phone consistency
- [ ] Business directory listings
- [ ] Industry-specific citations
- [ ] Local directory submissions
- [ ] Chamber of Commerce listings
- [ ] Citation audits
- [ ] Duplicate listing cleanup
- [ ] Incorrect business information correction
- [ ] Country-specific directories
- [ ] Citation quality assessment

12 Local Link Building

Score ___ / 11

Start with unlinked brand mentions and reclamation — results before any outreach campaign.

- [ ] Local backlinks
- [ ] Industry-relevant backlinks
- [ ] Community partnerships
- [ ] Local sponsorships
- [ ] Chamber of Commerce links
- [ ] Local media mentions
- [ ] Digital PR
- [ ] Competitor backlink gaps
- [ ] Unlinked brand mentions
- [ ] Link reclamation
- [ ] Local resource page links

13 Local Competitor Analysis

Score ___ / 10

Analyse who Google actually shows in the Map Pack. Their gaps are your next quarter's work list.

- [ ] Google Maps competitors
- [ ] Local Pack analysis
- [ ] Competitor GBP categories
- [ ] Competitor review profiles
- [ ] Competitor keyword gaps
- [ ] Competitor backlink gaps
- [ ] Citation gap analysis
- [ ] Competitor content analysis
- [ ] Local ranking comparisons
- [ ] Market opportunity research

14 Multi-Location SEO

Score ___ / 10

Each location earns its page with its own photos, reviews and detail — or it doesn't get one.

- [ ] Individual location pages
- [ ] Unique location content
- [ ] Location-specific contact details
- [ ] Eligible GBP profiles
- [ ] Service-area optimization
- [ ] Store locator optimization
- [ ] Location-based internal linking
- [ ] Multi-location schema
- [ ] Duplicate page prevention
- [ ] Local landing page indexation

15 AEO (Answer Engine Optimization)

Score ___ / 10

Answer every key question in the first two sentences under its heading. That is what AI lifts.

- [ ] Question-based content
- [ ] Direct answers
- [ ] Answer-first formatting
- [ ] Local FAQs
- [ ] Featured snippet opportunities
- [ ] Conversational search queries
- [ ] Entity clarity
- [ ] Structured information
- [ ] Evidence-backed claims
- [ ] Voice search optimization

16 GEO & AI Search

Score ___ / 12

Quarterly: ask ChatGPT, Gemini, Perplexity and AI Mode your customers' questions. Note if you're named — and if it's true.

- [ ] Google AI Overviews
- [ ] Google AI Mode
- [ ] ChatGPT search visibility
- [ ] Gemini visibility
- [ ] Perplexity visibility
- [ ] Bing & Copilot visibility
- [ ] Brand mention monitoring
- [ ] AI citation opportunities
- [ ] Entity consistency
- [ ] Authoritative local references
- [ ] Retrieval-friendly content
- [ ] AI crawler accessibility

17 Local SEO Analytics

Score ___ / 13

Five-minute monthly report: calls, directions, clicks, geo-grid movement, review velocity, qualified leads.

- [ ] Google Search Console
- [ ] Google Analytics 4
- [ ] Google Business Profile performance
- [ ] Local keyword rankings
- [ ] Google Maps visibility
- [ ] Calls & website clicks
- [ ] Direction requests
- [ ] Qualified leads
- [ ] Organic conversions
- [ ] Landing page performance
- [ ] UTM tracking
- [ ] Brand vs non-brand queries
- [ ] Monthly reporting

18 SEO Testing & Automation

Score ___ / 13

Automate the watching (crawls, indexation, citation changes), never the judgement. Test one variable at a time.

- [ ] Title tag testing
- [ ] Meta description testing
- [ ] Content optimization
- [ ] Internal-link testing
- [ ] Schema validation
- [ ] Automated website crawls
- [ ] Local rank tracking
- [ ] Geo-grid monitoring
- [ ] Citation monitoring
- [ ] Indexation monitoring
- [ ] GSC API integration
- [ ] GA4 reporting automation
- [ ] AI-assisted SEO analysis

19 Local Conversion Optimization

Score ___ / 12

Call button visible without scrolling, form asking the minimum, every lead source tracked.

- [ ] Click-to-call buttons
- [ ] Quote request forms
- [ ] Appointment booking
- [ ] Clear service descriptions
- [ ] Customer testimonials
- [ ] Trust signals
- [ ] Real project photos
- [ ] Case studies
- [ ] Mobile-friendly CTAs
- [ ] Form optimization
- [ ] Call tracking
- [ ] Lead attribution

20 Local SEO Business Growth

Score ___ / 13

Know your cost per lead, your most profitable service and location, and a customer's yearly value.

- [ ] Qualified local leads
- [ ] Phone call conversions
- [ ] Appointment bookings
- [ ] Organic revenue
- [ ] Google Maps leads
- [ ] Cost per acquisition
- [ ] Organic conversion rate
- [ ] Customer lifetime value
- [ ] Return on SEO investment
- [ ] Location-level performance
- [ ] Service-level profitability
- [ ] Client reporting
- [ ] Customer retention

Your Scorecard

§	Section	Score
01	Local SEO Strategy	___ / 8
02	Google Business Profile	___ / 12
03	Google Maps Ranking	___ / 8

04	Local Keyword Research	___ / 9
05	Local On-Page SEO	___ / 12
06	Local Content SEO	___ / 12
07	Technical Local SEO	___ / 14
08	Website Performance	___ / 11
09	Local Business Schema	___ / 12
10	Reviews & Reputation	___ / 10
11	Local Citations & NAP	___ / 10
12	Local Link Building	___ / 11
13	Local Competitor Analysis	___ / 10
14	Multi-Location SEO	___ / 10
15	AEO (Answer Engine Optimization)	___ / 10
16	GEO & AI Search	___ / 12
17	Local SEO Analytics	___ / 13
18	SEO Testing & Automation	___ / 13
19	Local Conversion Optimization	___ / 12
20	Local SEO Business Growth	___ / 13
	TOTAL	**___ / 222**

Below 120: foundations are leaking — finish §01–§11 before anything advanced.
120–180: solid base — the gaps are in authority, AI search and conversion (§12–§20).
180+: you are ahead of most local competitors — switch to the monthly cadence and defend it.

The Ultimate Local SEO Goal

It is not a ranking. It is this: when someone near you needs what you sell, Google — and the AI answering on Google's behalf — names you, trusts you, and makes it one tap to call you.

Want a second pair of eyes on your score? Get a **free SEO audit** — I check the sections that matter most for your market and tell you honestly what I would fix first, even if the answer is "do it yourself".

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