# Getting Google Reviews & Avoiding Violations

## Advice From Google-Bot

Google reviews have become an increasingly important factor in maintaining a positive brand reputation. Landing multiple great Google reviews can significantly increase your brand reach and overall brand loyalty.

Though it's tempting to take shortcuts to get as many reviews as you can, you should know that Google and its bots weren't born yesterday. Google has violation criteria in place to make sure you're getting all those great reviews because you're doing something right – not because you're trying to cheat the system.

## Getting and Keeping Google Reviews

The good news is that getting positive Google reviews without being penalized by Google is easier than you may think. Here are some tips and tricks to getting (and keeping) positive Google reviews for your business:

### Discourage Anonymous Reviews

So, you got an awesome review. However, the user profile of your reviewer is blank, or has no other activity other than this one review. This is common when a user is trying to leave an anonymous review.

Unfortunately, Google prefers reviewers to have a Google account, and to be active on it. Therefore, if your reviewer appears to have fallen off the Google planet after reviewing your business, Google sees this as a potentially bogus review, and will likely delete it.

### Don't Generate Fake Reviews

Fake reviews are easy to spot, by both customers and Google. If the reviewer appears biased, or obviously works for your company, this can cause your customers to distrust any reviews you may have genuinely obtained. In addition, Google will delete these reviews.

So, there's really no point in wasting time having your employees review your business. That's what your happy customers are for.

### Don't Offer Incentives for Reviews

This is actually quite common, but Google can often detect these types of reviews. The reviewers Google profile, in this case, is often bare, and/or there is little activity on their account.

In cases where an agency is hired to write reviews for a business, the reviews will typically come from the same IP address, which is another significant flag.

### Don't Harass Customers for Reviews

We get it. You want reviews, and you know the only way to get them is to ask for them. But asking daily, or even weekly is bound to drive your customers insane.

Plus, if you ask for reviews too often, and your customers try to submit a review too soon after their previous review, Google may delete one or both of the reviews.

### You Can Flag Innapropriate Reviews

Did you receive a review that doesn't make any sense? Flagging reviews is not a solution to negative reviews, but if you've received a bogus review, or one that appears to obviously be spam, you should check Google's review policies, and flag any eligible reviews.

Tip: Find out how to flag inappropriate reviews, here.

### Make it Easy for Customers to Review You

You may have several customers that would gladly leave you a review if they had the time, or the patience to create an account and leave a review.

For those who are less tech savvy than others, it may take some handholding to get them to leave a review, even if they are one of your best customers.

One way to assist your customers in the process is to create a link that you can share with your customers.

### Follow Google's Suggestions for Getting Reviews.

Google suggests reminding your customers to leave reviews, and letting them know how easy and fast it is to do from anywhere, and on any device. They also encourage responding to reviews, to show your customers that you are listening to them, and care about their feedback.

Before requesting reviews, it is recommended that you verify your business, as only verified businesses can respond to reviews.

### Read Google's Review Policies

If you aren't sure what's acceptable when it comes to Google reviews, be sure to read the policies before directing customers to your review page.

More specifically, you'll want to pay attention to the section labeled "Prohibited and Restricted Content."

### Respond to Negative & Positive Reviews

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### Putting It All Together

When in doubt, use common sense. If it feels like you're getting reviews in a way that Google wouldn't approve of, don't do it. Don't hire an agency to submit multiple reviews for you, and don't have your employees write fake reviews. It's not worth the wasted time.

Instead, focus on making your customers ridiculously loyal to your brand, and the reviews will come. Show your customers you're listening, and you care about their experience with your brand.


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