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A LATELY DIGITAL GUIDE

Review *Replies*

The 48-hour response checklist

A two-minute reply routine for every Google review, plus the asking rules that keep your profile safe.



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GOOGLE BUSINESS PROFILE SERIES

✳ WHY REPLIES MATTER

The first *seven days*

New Google reviews are most at risk in their first week. A 2026 study tracked 4.9 million reviews every day to see when they disappeared.[1]

1.95%

Gone in a week

Share of new reviews deleted within seven days of posting.[1]

4.73%

Negative reviews

Deleted by day seven, against 1.69% of positive reviews. Filters remove both kinds.[1]

1.5%

Five stars, with a reply

Deleted in days 3 to 7 when the owner replied within two days. Without a reply: 2.4%.[1]

AN ASSOCIATION ONLY

YOUR REPLY WINDOW — **MOST DELETIONS HAPPEN HERE**

Day 0	Day 2	Days 3 to 7	Day 8
Review posted	Reply by now	Filter window	Safer ground
Your alert arrives. Read it the same day.	The 48-hour mark from the study.[1]	Positive reviews are usually removed on day 6 or 7.[2]	Risk drops to about a tenth.[2]

Who loses most

New positive reviews deleted in the first week, by sector.[1]

- **Home services:** 3.9%
- **Healthcare:** 2.6%
- **Hospitality:** 0.75%
- US profiles lost 2.1% against 1.2% in Europe.[1]

✳ EVERY REVIEW, EVERY TIME

The *reply* checklist

Run through this for each new review. Most replies take two minutes.

- [ ] **Reply within 48 hours**
  Turn on review notifications in your Google Business Profile so each new review reaches your phone or inbox.
  Why: five-star reviews with a reply inside two days were deleted less often.[1]

- [ ] **Use their first name**
  Copy it from the review. It shows a person read it.

- [ ] **Mention one detail they shared**
  The service, the product or the person who helped them. Future customers read this part.

- [ ] **Keep it to two to four sentences**
  Thank them, add the detail and close warmly. Skip the long paragraph.

- [ ] **Leave out discounts and promo codes**
  Save offers for your website and emails.
  Why: Google bans offering discounts or free goods in exchange for reviews.[3]

- [ ] **Answer negative reviews too**
  Own the problem in one line and give a phone number or email to sort it out offline.

- [ ] **Read it once before posting**
  Check the name spelling and the tone. Everyone who reads the review sees your reply.

COPY AND ADAPT

Reply wording by *rating*

Swap in the name and one detail. Change a few words each time so replies never read as copied.

FIVE STARS

"Thank you, [Name]! We loved working on your [service], and we're so glad [detail they mentioned] made a difference. See you next time."

WARM AND SHORT

THREE OR FOUR STARS

"Thanks for the feedback, [Name]. We're glad you liked [the good part]. You're right about [the issue], and we're fixing it. Call us at [number] anytime."

THANK, THEN OWN IT

ONE OR TWO STARS

"[Name], we're sorry your [service] fell short. That isn't the experience we want for anyone. Please call [owner name] at [number] so we can make it right."

TAKE IT OFFLINE

Pro tip

Save these three replies in your phone's notes app. A reply from the parking lot counts.

- Reply as a person: sign with your first name.
- Never argue facts in public. Move the details to a call.
- Stay polite even when the review is unfair. The next customer is reading.
- If a review breaks Google's rules, report it from your profile and still reply.

ASKING FOR REVIEWS

A steady *trickle* beats a flood

Reviews posted on spike days were deleted more often.[1] Ask after each job instead, and stay inside Google's rules.

DO

✓ Ask after every job
Send your review link the same day the work wraps up.

✓ Ask every customer
Happy or not. Picking only the happy ones breaks Google's rules.[3]

✓ Keep the ask short
One line of thanks and the link. Let them write their own words.

✓ Make it a habit
Build the ask into your invoice or follow-up email so it goes out every time.

DON'T

× Offer a reward
No discounts, gifts or free services in exchange for a review.[3]

× Email your whole list at once
A one-day blast creates the spike filters watch for.[1]

× Tell customers what to write
Asking for specific content is against the policy.[3]

× Set staff review quotas
Google added rules in April 2026 against staff targets and reviews that name staff.[3,4]

EVERY MONDAY

Your *weekly* review check

Ten minutes a week tells you when reviews go missing. Without a count, a deleted review is easy to miss.

01
Count
Write down your total review count from your profile.

→

02
Compare
Last week's total plus new reviews should match. A gap means deletions.

→

03
Catch up
Reply to anything still unanswered.

→

04
Steady asks
Check every finished job got a review link.

YOUR REVIEW TRACKER

FILL IN EVERY MONDAY

WEEK OF	TOTAL REVIEWS	NEW THIS WEEK	MISSING (GAP)	REPLIED IN 48 HRS	NOTES



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NEXT STEP

Keep the reviews you *earn*

On a discovery call, we look at your Google Business Profile together and build a review routine that fits your week.

BOOK A DISCOVERY CALL

latelydigital.com/contact

SOURCES

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3. Google, "Prohibited & restricted content," Maps user contributed content policy, support.google.com.
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