



g+

Cheat Sheet

Set up your Google My Business account, ask for reviews, and more.

Introduction

Google is far and away the largest search engine on the internet today, which means that when your potential clients get the inclination to look you up online, they are most likely going to start there. Therefore, arguably the most powerful place to collect reviews of your business is on Google.

This cheat sheet will guide you through the process of creating your Google My Business page, asking for reviews from your past clients, and setting the expectations of your current clients so that they are more likely to write you a 5-Star review at the end of their transaction. It will also cover how to respond to poor reviews.

Use the Table of Contents below to navigate quickly to your topic of choice:

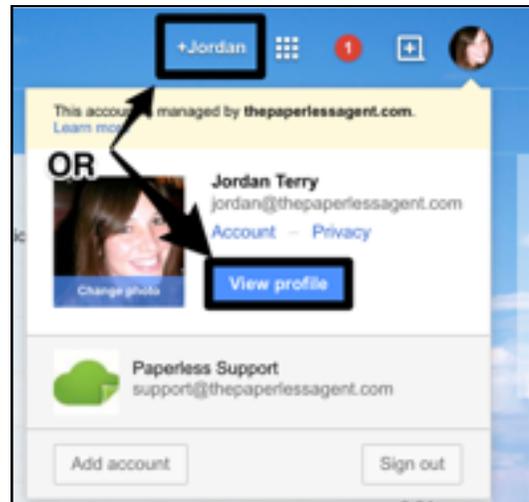
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Google is a large organization, and they frequently change their systems and terminology. If you have any questions, please email us at support@thepaperlessagent.com. We'll be happy to help you!

Create Your Google My Business Account

In much the same way that Facebook requires a personal profile in order to create a business page, the very first thing you need in order to proceed is a Google account. If you use Gmail or have a Google+ or Youtube account then you already have one of these. Log into that account to continue. If you do not have one, or would like to create a new Google account for your business, then please [click here](#) and fill out the appropriate information. Creating a Google account is free!

Once you've signed up for Google and logged in, view your Google Plus profile. The easiest way to do this is to click your name in the top right corner. If you have multiple Google accounts, then you'll need to hit the circular picture at the very top right of your screen and view the profile of the account you want to use to own your business page.

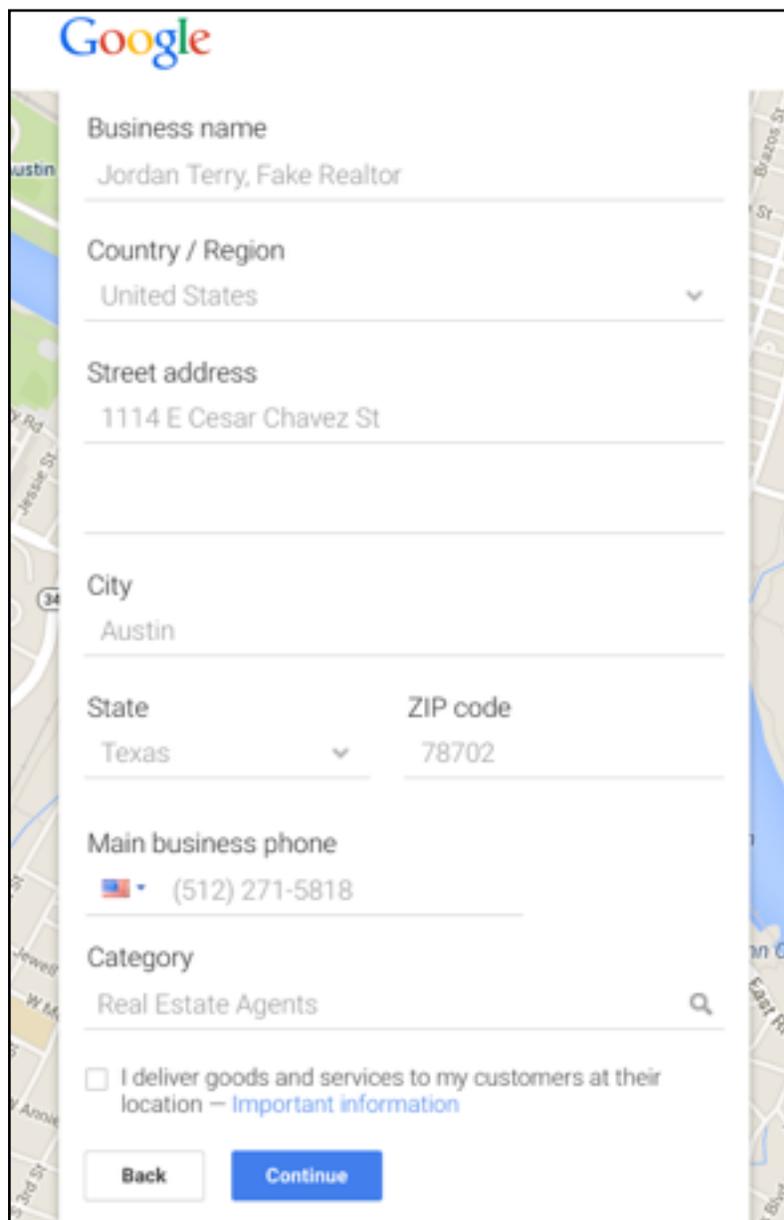


There will be a menu button on the left-hand side of your Google+ page that says “Home.” Click on it to reveal a drop down menu of options. Select “Pages” then the blue button that says “Get Your Page.”

You'll next see a page with three options for your type of business. Here's where it can get a bit confusing. We recommend that you chose “Storefront” as your business type. Many of you reading this will be individual agents at brokerages, and you might not think you qualify as a “Storefront.” However, brand pages do not currently include the ability to collect reviews, and the service area option is more for businesses whose services are limited geographically, such as pizza delivery and taxis. That being said, if you are not currently attached to a brokerage or are thinking about moving brokerages in the near future, then you might consider choosing “Service Area.”

Even though you are choosing “Storefront,” you will not need to use the name of your brokerage in your Google My Business page name. Instead, in the search bar on the left side of your screen, you should search for “Your first name last name, Realtor.” Make sure that you hit Enter or click the magnifying glass icon after you input this search.

Google will supply you with a list of places it thinks match what you're looking for, but of course none of these will match since you're creating a new page! Click the option at the bottom of the list that says "None of these match. Add Your Business."



The screenshot shows the Google Business Profile creation form. The fields are filled with the following information:

- Business name:** Jordan Terry, Fake Realtor
- Country / Region:** United States
- Street address:** 1114 E Cesar Chavez St
- City:** Austin
- State:** Texas
- ZIP code:** 78702
- Main business phone:** (512) 271-5818
- Category:** Real Estate Agents
- I deliver goods and services to my customers at their location – [Important information](#)

At the bottom, there are two buttons: "Back" and "Continue".

A list of information fields will appear, and you should fill these out as accurately as possible. In both the US and Canada, the only category you need to select is "Real Estate Agents." You can use the screenshot to the side for reference.

Note that the street address is the brokerage street address, and the phone number is not a personal cell phone number. You do not need to put your brokerage phone here, but we highly recommend that you refrain from using your cell phone number since scammers often crawl these business pages, and you'll likely get an increase in spam calls. You can sign up for a [free Google Voice number here](#), or get a ton more

features specifically for real estate

usage with [BetterVoice by clicking on this link](#). Both of these options provide you with a new number that redirects to your regular phone.

Leave unchecked the box next to "I deliver goods and services to my customers at their location." This is because, for your safety, you should always meet your clients at your office or another public space first. Hit "Continue" when you've filled in all fields.

On the next page, review your business information and check the box confirming that you are authorized to manage the business. Click “Continue.”

Most times, the next page will only show one option: verify your business by postcard. In some cases, a lucky few will be able to verify their business by phone. However, if this option isn't displayed on this page, you will only be able to use the postcard method, which takes 1-2 weeks to arrive. Click on the paper airplane icon to review your business information and select “Send Postcard.” Click “Continue” on the next page, which reminds you that you only have 30 days from the day of submission to verify your business using the code on the postcard. If you don't see your postcard within that timeframe, you will need to request another. [Instructions for doing so are here.](#)

Google will then redirect you to your new Google My Business account, and direct you to fill out your profile. To look the most professional, choose a high-quality headshot of yourself, a high-resolution version of your logo (which can be your brokerage's), and images of your listings or clients, if possible. Include your hours of operation and website address, as well.

The last step of this process is to verify your business, which again can take up to 2 weeks. You must verify your business to start receiving and responding to online reviews.

Finally, these instructions assume that you were working on a computer, but Google My Business also has a mobile app. You can download it from the App Store on Apple devices and from the Google Play Store on Androids.

Instructions to Give Your Clients for Writing a Review

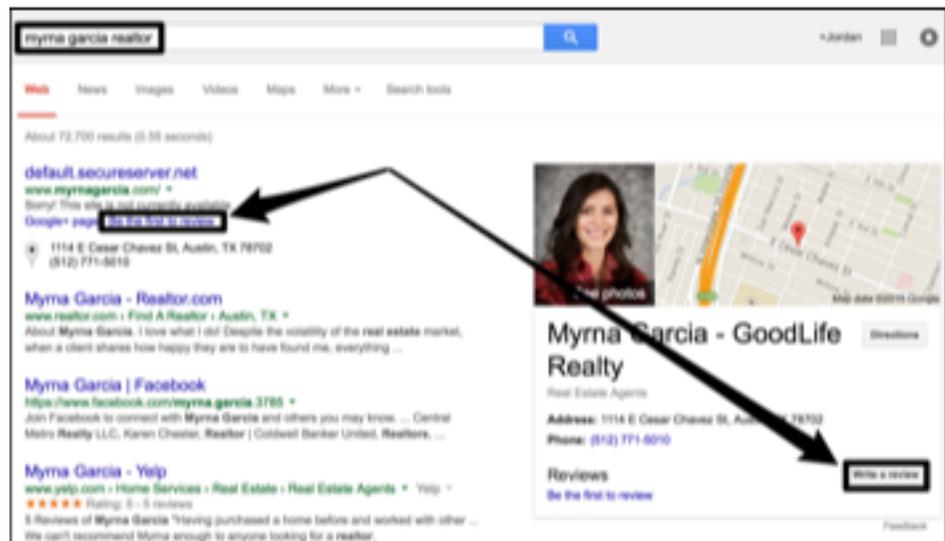
Once your Google My Business account is set up and verified, you'll be able to receive reviews. The most direct way for your clients to get to your page and write you a review is to use Google Local. These are the steps for writing a review on Google:

1. Go to <https://plus.google.com/local/>
2. Sign in with your Google account
3. Search for the business name you wish to review
4. Click the pencil icon above the profile picture
5. Select 5 stars out of 5
6. Write a description of their experience
7. Click Publish

When you send your client instructions on writing a review for you specifically, however, you should complete steps one and three for them. After you search, you'll be able to copy the web address that leads directly to your search results and send that to them instead. The web address will look something like this: <https://plus.google.com/local/Austin%2C%20TX/s/myrna%20garcia>.

An easy way to make long, unattractive web addresses like the one above is to use a service like bit.ly or goo.gl to create what's called a short link. Short links will make your email request for a review look much more professional and — most importantly — much easier.

Alternatively, you can simply search for your business name in Google. If the process was completed correctly, you should see a preview of your Google My Business page in the right-hand side of the search results page. The links to use to write a review are pointed out in this screenshot.



You can use the email template below for asking for reviews:

<p>Hi [Name],</p> <p>Congratulations on the sale/purchase of your home!</p> <p>You really made the difference in helping me achieve my goals of giving you a 5-star experience.</p> <p>Without your help in letting me know what you wanted during the entire process, it would not have been possible.</p> <p>But there's one more step necessary to confirm the 5-star experience I strive to provide you with... your review of us working together!</p> <p>By authoring this review, you're doing me a HUGE favor, and I want you to know how much I appreciate you for it. You can rate your 5-star experience and write your quick review here (it should only take a few moments).</p> <p>[link here]</p> <p>Thanks again!</p> <p>[Signature]</p> <p>P.S. If there's anything I can do to help you get situated, please let me know.</p> <p>P.P.S. If you feel as though I fell short of a 5-star experience, please tell me now by simply replying to this email.</p>
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We wrote this template to be applicable for any reviewing platform, but please feel free to include additional instructions after the short link. It would be a good idea, for example, to point out the pencil icon or to remind your clients of a particular memorable moment of your time together for them to include in their review. You can also include links to multiple review platforms to encourage your clients to spread the good word!

What to Do If You Don't Have Any Reviews Yet

There's two reasons you might not yet have any online reviews:

1. You've been practicing real estate for a while, but have just not solicited any reviews from your past or current clients yet.
2. You're a new agent with little to no experience.

If you are a part of the first group, then the solution your online review deficit is easy. You've sold real estate before, which means that you have past clients. Simply reach out to those people and ask them to review you honestly. Consider this an opportunity to connect with your network!

A subset of this group is those of you who have reviews on other platforms but not Google. In this case, reach out specifically to those past clients who have given you 5-star reviews elsewhere, and say this: "I'm currently working on building my online presence on Google. Would you be so kind as to duplicate your past review on Google?"

New agents will need a different plan of attack. Initially, your biggest resource for online credibility is your family, friends, and colleagues. While they cannot speak to your work from a client's perspective, they can attest to your work ethic, personality, trustworthiness, and other such qualities. In their review, have them talk about such things as how they know you and for how long. If they can recount any anecdotes that demonstrate your character, have them include those as well.

How to Respond to Negative Online Reviews

Online reviews, according to a recent study, are trusted **just as much as or even more than** a personal recommendation. This means that each and every review has a lot of weight in how your business appears to prospective clients. To prevent your online presence from becoming the product of a one-sided conversation, you must make it a priority to respond to the reviews you receive — especially the negative ones.

On Google My Business, the steps to respond to a review from your computer are as follows, but please note that you will need to have already verified your business in order to see these options:

1. Log into your Google My Business account
2. Select the Reviews tab and find the option “Manage Reviews”
3. Under “Reviews from Google Users,” click “View and Reply” on the review you wish to address
4. Write a response and hit “Submit”

You can also respond to online reviews from your mobile app. In the app, select the three bar menu in the top corner, then hit “Reviews.” Touch “Respond Now” to reply to the reviewer. With each method, your reply will show as authored by your business and will be public.

Positive reviews should receive at least a “Thank you,” and optimally will include some personal touch that shows your client that you remember and value them. But what do you say when you receive a negative review? The first thing to remember is that bad reviews are inevitable. Mistakes happen, and people who are upset will naturally be more aggressive and vocal about their displeasure.

The second thing to remember is for whose benefit you are responding to the negative review. Certainly, a hopeful outcome would be that you mitigate the damaged relationship between you and the negative reviewer, and a proven process for that is discussed in more detail below. But you’re really aiming to please your **future clients**. Think about it: everyone knows that upset people are prone to overreacting. If your potential clients look up your reviews online and see that you’ve apologized and attempted to resolve the issue had by a negative reviewer, they be more likely to disregard the opinion of that reviewer.

Therefore, as you reply to a negative review, follow the steps below:

1. Respond publicly so that future clients and reviewers can see your responsiveness and attitude to serve all customers. Check out the template below for a starting point.
2. Thank the reviewer for taking the time to review your service
3. Theoretically, the reviewer will be a past client, so you will most likely have their phone number. Use whatever contact information you have on that person to reach out to him or her privately to get more feedback and to potentially resolve conflict.
4. Ask the reviewer to consider updating their review to show follow-up steps taken
5. Follow up publicly on the review to let future readers know the outcome

Hi [Name],

Thank you so much for providing your review.

Your review is especially important to me because whenever someone has a bad experience (or a less than 5-star one), I like learn as much as possible to prevent it from happening again.

If you're open to it, I'd like to have a quick chat to see if there's anything I can do to right the situation for you. Thanks!

Your Name

Phone and Email