How to Get Your Business on Yelp

A short, free guide to getting a business listed on Yelp. November 2026

What this is

Yelp is a review site with a free listing for local businesses. Its "top 10" pages rank the best businesses in one category for one town. Those pages also show up in Google search results, which is the main reason a listing is worth the time.

How a business gets on the list

1. **Get listed (it's free).** Go to business.yelp.com and search for the business. If it is already listed, claim it so you can manage the account. If it is not, select Add to Yelp for free. Search first: anyone can create a listing for a business, so a customer may already have made one.
2. **Verify it.** Choose the verification method Yelp offers and complete it. A business that travels to its customers (a service-area business) can leave the street address out.
3. **Pick the right category.** Choose the category that matches the main service. The category decides which top 10 page the business can appear on. For example, Auto Detailing is a different list from Car Wash.
4. **Fill out the whole profile.** Add hours, services, photos and the website.
5. **Let the reviews come on their own.** Do not ask for them. Yelp is stricter than Google on this (see the next section).

Reviews: what Yelp allows

- **Do not ask for reviews.** Yelp's guidelines tell businesses not to ask customers, friends, family or email subscribers to review them, in person, by email or by text, and not to offer anything in return. Its software filters reviews that look prompted, and a pattern of asking can lower the listing's ranking or bring a consumer alert on the page.
- **Do not reuse a Google review request email for Yelp.** Asking works on Google. It does not work on Yelp.
- **Do** give good service, keep the profile complete and answer reviews politely. Check Yelp's current guidelines before putting up any sign, sticker or link that mentions Yelp.
- **Some reviews are hidden.** Yelp hides reviews based on signals about the reviewer. A burst of reviews from brand-new accounts may not count.
- **One practitioner's observation, not a Yelp rule:** a steady trickle of reviews seems to work better than a burst, and reviewers who name the services in their own words help the listing. A business cannot control either one.

What this means in practice

- In a small town there may be only a handful of businesses in a category on Yelp. A listing in the right category with a few good reviews may reach the top 10 page. People have reported reaching number one in their town with as few as two reviews. That comes from a forum, so treat it as a possibility, not a promise.
- The entries at the top marked Sponsored are paid Yelp Ads, not the ranked list. Ads are optional.
- In rural Ontario, Yelp gets far less use than Google, so a Google Business Profile matters more for local customers. Yelp is still worth about 15 minutes, because its top 10 pages appear in Google search results.

Want a second set of eyes on your Yelp listing? Call or email Christopher.

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