

The Plumber's Google Cheat Sheet: *What Actually Matters* (And What's a Waste of Time)

You don't need to become a marketing expert. You just need to know which 20% of Google actually drives 80% of your calls—and stop wasting time on the rest.

Here's the truth: Google has dozens of tools, settings, and features. Most of them don't matter for a plumbing business. This sheet tells you what to focus on, what to ignore, and what you actually need to get calls coming in.

✔ WHAT ACTUALLY MATTERS

-  **Your Google Business Profile**
The #1 free thing that controls whether you show up in map results. Must be complete, verified, and updated.
-  **Google Reviews**
More reviews = higher map ranking. 10+ recent reviews is the minimum. Respond to every single one.
-  **Local Keywords on Your Website**
"Plumber in [your city]" needs to appear naturally on your homepage and service pages. Not stuffed—just present.
-  **A Mobile-Friendly Website**
80%+ of plumbing searches happen on phones. If your site is hard to read on mobile, you're losing calls.
-  **A Clickable Phone Number**
Sounds obvious. You'd be shocked how many plumber sites make it hard to call. One tap. That's it.
-  **Google Search Console (free)**
Shows you what people actually search to find your site. 10 minutes a month. Worth it.
-  **Local Services Ads (if budget allows)**
Pay per lead—not per click. Shows "Google Guaranteed" badge. High trust, high conversion for plumbers.

🚫 WHAT'S A WASTE OF YOUR TIME

-  **Chasing a Perfect "SEO Score"**
Tools like Moz or SEMrush give you scores. Those numbers don't equal more calls. Don't obsess over them.
-  **Keyword Stuffing**
Writing "plumber plumbing plumber services" 40 times. Google penalizes this. Write for humans, not robots.
-  **Buying Backlinks**
Paying some stranger to put your website link on 500 random sites. Doesn't work. Can hurt you.
-  **Obsessing Over National Rankings**
You don't need to rank #1 in the US. You need to rank in your city. Completely different game.
-  **Posting Daily on Google Business**
Once or twice a week if you want. But it's low-impact. Reviews and accurate info matter far more.
-  **Fancy Website Animations**
Slow down your site. Hurt your ranking. Customers don't care. They want to find your number fast.
-  **Any Report You Can't Understand**
If your marketing person sends a report full of jargon and no calls-booked data? That's a red flag. Ask for plain English.

QUICK REFERENCE

📋 SEO VS. GOOGLE ADS AT A GLANCE

	SEO	GOOGLE ADS
RESULTS	4-9 months	Days to weeks
COST	Time + management fee	Ad spend + management
WHEN IT STOPS	Rankings stick around	Leads stop immediately
BEST FOR	Long-term growth	Leads right now
CONTROL	Google decides ranking	You control everything
REAL TALK	Start before you need it	Setup matters more than budget

🎯 YOUR 5-STEP GOOGLE STARTING POINT

- 1 Claim & complete your Google Business Profile**
google.com/business — fill out every single field. Add photos. Verify it.
- 2 Get to 10+ Google reviews**
Text your best 10 customers a direct link to your review page. This week. Do it.
- 3 Make sure your website loads fast on mobile**
Test it at pagespeed.web.dev — aim for 70+ on mobile. Under 3 seconds to load.
- 4 Add your city + services to your homepage**
"Serving [city] and surrounding areas" with a list of what you actually do.
- 5 Set up call tracking before running any ads**
You need to know which clicks turn into calls. Otherwise you're flying blind.

💡 3 THINGS EVERY PLUMBER SHOULD KNOW ABOUT GOOGLE

The Map Pack is everything.

Those top 3 businesses that show up with a map when someone searches "plumber near me"? They get 3x more calls than everyone else on the page. Getting into the Map Pack is the single highest-leverage thing you can do.

Speed beats perfection.

When a pipe bursts, the homeowner calls whoever shows up first and looks legitimate. A good Google presence that's live today beats a perfect one you're still working on next month.

Your budget isn't the problem.

Most plumbers who say Google Ads "don't work" had campaigns set up wrong—too broad, wrong keywords, no negative terms. \$1,000/month done right beats \$3,000/month done wrong. Every time.