

Get Your Business on Google Maps - Do It Yourself Guide

Sovba AI Solutions - Client guide Time needed: about 30 minutes, plus a verification wait (0 to 5 days). No technical skills needed. If you get stuck, we can do it with you: contact@sovba.com

Why you should do this today

When someone searches "**african hair braiding las vegas**" or "**african restaurant near me**", Google shows a map with 3 local businesses BEFORE anything else. That card shows photos, hours, reviews, a Call button and your website.

It is free, and for a local business it often brings more clients than anything else. If you are not on it, your competitors are.

Step 1 - Prepare (5 minutes)

Have this ready before you start:

- ☐ Your **Google account** (Gmail). Use YOUR OWN account, it makes you the owner of your listing forever.
- ☐ Your **business name**, exactly as your clients know it. Do NOT add extra words like "best braids Las Vegas" - Google suspends listings that do this.
- ☐ Your **address** (or, if you work from home, the cities you serve - your home address will stay hidden)
- ☐ Your **phone number** and **opening hours**
- ☐ Your **website address**
- ☐ 10 to 15 **photos** from your phone: your storefront, the inside, and your best work (hairstyles or dishes). Real photos only.

Step 2 - Create your listing (10 minutes)

1. On your phone or computer, go to business.google.com and sign in with your Gmail
2. Type your business name:
 - If Google already suggests your business, tap it and choose **Claim this business** (Google may have created it automatically)

- If nothing appears, choose **Add your business**
- 3. Choose your **category**. This matters a lot:
 - Braiding salon: choose **Hair braiding salon** (if not available: Hair salon)
 - Restaurant: choose **African restaurant** (or your country's cuisine if it exists, like Senegalese restaurant)
- 4. **Location:**
 - You have a shop: enter the address
 - You work from home or travel to clients: answer **No** to "Do you have a location customers can visit", then list the areas you serve (example: Las Vegas, Henderson, North Las Vegas). Your home address stays private.
- 5. Enter your **phone number** and **website**

Step 3 - Verify your business (Google requires it)

Google needs proof that the business is really yours. It will offer ONE of these:

- **Video:** film your storefront, your sign, and your equipment with your phone (most common for salons)
- **Postcard** mailed to your address with a code (takes about 5 days)
- **Phone call or SMS** with a code

Follow exactly what the screen asks. Your listing becomes visible to everyone once verified. If the wait takes a few days, that is normal.

Step 4 - Complete your profile (10 minutes, do not skip)

A complete profile appears higher on Google than an empty one. In your dashboard, fill in:

- ☐ **Hours** (including Sunday)
- ☐ **Description:** who you are, your specialties, and mention "**Français / English spoken**"
- ☐ **Services and prices** (salon) or **Menu** (restaurant) - copy them from your website
- ☐ **Attributes:** check what applies to you (Black-owned, Women-owned, By appointment...)
- ☐ **Photos:** upload your 10-15 photos
- ☐ **Booking link:** if you use online booking, add your booking page link

Step 5 - Reviews: your growth engine (ongoing)

Reviews are the number 1 reason a client picks you instead of a competitor.

1. In your Google Business dashboard, tap **Ask for reviews**. Google gives you a short link.

2. Save that link in your phone notes.
3. After each happy client, send this text (copy it):

"Thank you for your visit! It would help us a lot if you left a quick Google review: [your link]"

4. **Reply to every review** with 2 kind lines. Never argue with a negative review, stay calm and factual.
5. Aim for 2-3 new reviews per month. That beats almost every competitor around you.

Every month (5 minutes)

- ☐ Add 2-3 fresh photos of your recent work
- ☐ Update holiday hours
- ☐ Reply to new reviews

Common problems

Problem	What to do
"This business already has an owner"	Someone claimed it before (old owner?). Use the "Request access" button, the current owner has 3 days to answer
Listing suspended	Usually the name contains extra keywords or the address does not match. Fix the info and use the reinstatement form. Never create a second listing
Video verification refused	Film again showing: the street and your sign, the inside, your equipment, and a business document

Want us to handle it?

Sovba can set this up with you, keep your profile fresh every month (photos, posts, review replies), and connect it with your website and AI receptionist. Ask us about the **Care plan: contact@sovba.com - sovba.com**