

Fake 1-star review — the removal checklist

Sent to anyone who comments REVIEW or LINK. One page. Do the steps in order; the order is the point.

BEFORE YOU TYPE A REPLY

1. **Search your tickets** for the reviewer's name and the review date. No call, no job, no invoice = candidate for removal.
2. **Screenshot the review** with the date visible. Reviews get edited after you report them.
3. **Do not reply yet.** A reply tells Google a real customer interaction happened, and it tells the reviewer you are watching.

REPORT IT (GOOGLE'S OWN FORMS)

1. Report from the listing: Google Business Profile → Reviews → the three dots on the review → **Report review**. Pick the policy that fits: *Spam*, *Off-topic*, or *Conflict of interest* (competitor or ex-employee).
2. Report from Maps as well, from a logged-in personal account: the review → **Flag as inappropriate**.
3. Track it in Google's **Reviews Management Tool**: <https://support.google.com/business/workflow/9945796> → *Check the status of a review I reported* → then *Appeal eligible reviews* once the first report is decided (usually within 3 business days).
4. If the review states something false about a person, use the legal path: <https://support.google.com/legal/answer/3110420> (Google Maps → defamation). Slower, sometimes the only path that works.

AFTER THE DECISION

1. Removed: log the date and the policy that worked. You will need it again.
2. Not removed: now reply, once, in two calm lines: the facts (no record of a job under that name on that date) and the invitation to call the office. No accusations, no names.
3. Bury it: ask the next ten real customers for a review the minute the job is done and paid.

LINK — THE ASK-ON-CLOSE RULE

- Get the short review link once: Google Business Profile → **Ask for reviews** → copy the link.
- The tech sends it in the same message as the receipt, on site, before leaving. Not "later tonight". Reviews asked within ten minutes of payment get written; reviews asked the next day do not.