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Before you publish your website: a ten-point launch checklist

Website Content & Design

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Before you publish your website: a ten-point launch checklist

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The short answer: the day the site goes live is the worst day to find out the form does not work. These ten checks take an hour and catch almost everything that usually goes wrong the first time. Do them with the site already at its final address, and take a backup first.

The ten

	Check	How
1	**The address and the padlock**	The site opens on https, with no warnings. See **SSL certificate**.
2	**The two forms of the address**	With and without www lead to the same place: **The canonical tag**.
3	**The phone**	Open every main page, on mobile data.
4	**The forms**	Send a test message and see whether it arrives: **A contact form that actually reaches your inbox**.
5	**Contacts and links**	Press every button and link. None should give an error.
6	**Titles and descriptions**	Each page with its own title. See **Being found on Google**.
7	**Visible to Google**	In WordPress, the “Discourage search engines from indexing this site” option must be **off**. Leaving it on is the most common mistake: **Why your site does not show on Google**.
8	**The legal pages**	Privacy, and terms if you sell: **Legal pages**.

	Check	How
9	**Statistics**	On from day one: **Google Analytics**.
10	**The backup**	A copy of the site as it is, before launch: **Your own backup**.

On the day, and after

1. **Switch the domain** to the site only when everything above is right: **Pointing your domain to us**.
2. **Ask a friend** to open the site and tell you what they saw, on a different device.
3. **The following week,** see the pages people opened and those that gave errors: **Crawl errors in Search Console**.

Do not announce before testing.
A bad first impression (a form that fails, a page that errors) costs more to fix than an hour of checks. If the site comes from elsewhere, see also **The checklist for the first day after moving a site**.

NEED A HAND?

Want a second opinion before you publish? Open a ticket with the test address.

Open a support ticket →

SEE ALSO

- **Why your site does not show on Google: a checklist** →
- **After moving a site: the checklist for the first day** →
- **Legal pages for any website: privacy, terms and cookies, and which ones you need** →
- **A 30-minute monthly routine to keep your website healthy** →

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