

7 checks before ChatGPT will name you

A plain-English checklist for UK small businesses.

When someone asks ChatGPT, Perplexity, Gemini or Google's AI for "a good [service] in [town]", the assistant can only name businesses it can find, read and trust.

These seven checks cover the basics you control.

None of them guarantees a mention — nobody can promise that — but each one removes a common reason assistants pass a business over.

Allow about an hour for all seven. Most need no technical help.

Check 1 — Say what you do and where, in plain text

Why it matters: People ask assistants for a service in a place. If your town or area only appears in your logo, a photo or a map pin, text-reading systems can miss it.

What to do:

- Put the service and the town in the main heading of your homepage and each service page (for example "Emergency plumber in Leeds").
- Repeat them naturally in the first paragraph.
- Put your full name, address (or service area) and phone number as text in the footer.

Quick test: Copy the text of your homepage into a blank document. Can a stranger tell what you do and where from the words alone?

☐ **Done**

Check 2 — Make your name, address and phone match everywhere

Why it matters: If your website, Google Business Profile and directories disagree on your phone number or town, people and AI systems get conflicting "facts", and conflicting facts make you a riskier recommendation.

What to do:

- Choose one exact business name, one phone number and one address or service area.
- Use them on your website, Google Business Profile, Bing Places, Facebook/Instagram and your main trade or local directories.
- Update or close old listings showing an old number, an old address or a closed branch.

Quick test: Search your business name plus your old phone number. Anything still showing it needs updating.

☐ **Done**

Check 3 — Let the search crawlers in (GPTBot is not the same as OAI-SearchBot)

Why it matters: AI companies use different crawlers for different jobs. OpenAI documents GPTBot (training) and OAI-SearchBot (ChatGPT search) as independent. OpenAI's help centre says that to be eligible for ChatGPT search results, a site should allow OAI-SearchBot. Anthropic lists ClaudeBot (training), Claude-SearchBot (search) and Claude-User (user requests). Perplexity uses PerplexityBot for its search. Google's AI Overviews and AI Mode use normal Googlebot crawling; Google says the separate Google-Extended token does not affect Search inclusion.

What to do:

- Open yourdomain.co.uk/robots.txt.
- Make sure there is no `Disallow: /` under OAI-SearchBot, Claude-SearchBot, PerplexityBot or Googlebot, and no blanket block under `User-agent: *`.
- Whether you allow training crawlers such as GPTBot or ClaudeBot is your choice. OpenAI says blocking GPTBot does not affect ChatGPT search inclusion.
- After a change, allow about a day: OpenAI and Perplexity both say updates can take around 24 hours to be picked up.

Quick test: Our free check reads your robots.txt for you.

☐ **Done**

Check 4 — Make sure your firewall or CDN is not blocking them anyway

Why it matters: robots.txt is only a request. Many sites are blocked at a different layer: a CDN, a hosting “bot protection” setting or a security plugin returns an error or a challenge page to AI crawlers, even when robots.txt looks open. OpenAI’s help centre says your host or CDN should allow traffic from OpenAI’s published search-bot IP addresses.

What to do:

- If you use Cloudflare or a similar service, look for settings that block AI bots or “bot fight” modes and check what they block.
- Check any WordPress security plugin for bot-blocking rules.
- If someone else manages your site, ask them directly: “Are OAI-SearchBot, PerplexityBot and Claude-SearchBot allowed through the firewall?”

Quick test: Our free check requests your homepage the way AI crawlers do and tells you if it is blocked.

☐ Done

Check 5 — One clear page per service, with short answers to real questions

Why it matters: Assistants answer questions. A page that answers the questions customers actually ask, in short plain sentences, is easier to understand and quote than a long brochure.

What to do:

- Give each main service its own page, with the service and town in the heading.
- Add 4–6 real customer questions as headings, each answered in 2–4 sentences (areas covered, hours, how quickly you can come out, what is included, accreditations).
- Only add FAQ or LocalBusiness schema if it matches what is written on the page.

Quick test: Write down the three questions customers ask you most on the phone. Are the answers on your website, in words?

☐ Done

Check 6 — Get one trusted mention on another website

Why it matters: When assistants search, they often cite pages that are not your own website — directories, trade bodies, local news, review sites, round-up articles. What others say about you adds weight to what you say about yourself.

What to do:

- Pick one: your trade body’s member list, your local chamber of commerce, a respected local directory, or a local news story.
- Make sure the listing has your exact name, town and correct website address.
- Ask happy customers for reviews in the same way every time, and invite them to mention the job and the town. Never write, buy or reward reviews.

Quick test: Ask Perplexity “best [your service] in [your town]” and look at the sources it lists. Are you on any of them? Those sources are your to-do list.

☐ Done

Check 7 — Save five test questions and re-run them every month

Why it matters: AI answers change from day to day and question to question. A single test tells you very little; the same questions asked regularly show you a trend.

What to do:

- Write five questions a customer would really ask, such as “Who is a good [service] in [town]?” or “[Service] near [area] open on Saturdays”.
- Ask each one in ChatGPT, Perplexity and Gemini, in a private or logged-out window where you can.
- Note who is named and which sources are shown. Repeat monthly and compare.
- Treat the results as a baseline, not a ranking.

Quick test: Put the five questions in a note on your phone today.

☐ Done

Next step: Run the free GPT Visibility check. It looks at whether AI crawlers can reach your site, whether your homepage loads for them, and whether your business details, headings and schema are clear. Score out of 100 in seconds: gpt-visibility.vercel.app/check
Want more detail? Read: How to get recommended by ChatGPT (UK guide) — gpt-visibility.vercel.app/guides/how-to-get-recommended-by-chatgpt

No one can guarantee that ChatGPT or any other assistant will name your business. These checks improve the signals you control.
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