

Make Booking Actually Work

A stranger on a phone should reach a confirmed appointment in under 90 seconds.

TIME	COST	DIFFICULTY	AUDIT SIGNAL
1–2 hours	Free	Easy	booking_path_functional

WHAT WE MEASURED

We attempted to book with you the way a customer would, and recorded where it worked and where it broke.

WHY IT MATTERS

The most common failure we find isn't a missing booking system. It's a booking link that **404s, points to a dead old site, or points to a scheduling tool you stopped paying for.**

It's invisible from your own account, because you're logged in and you know the workarounds. Your customer isn't and doesn't.

FIX IT YOURSELF

1 Run the five-minute self-audit first

Do this before changing anything.

Open an **incognito window on your phone, on cellular data** (not your office wifi). Google your own business. Tap every button on your profile. Try to book as if you were a stranger who has never heard of you.

Whatever breaks is what's costing you money. Write it down.

2 Add a booking link to your Google Business Profile

Free, and it's where the traffic already is.

1. Open your Business Profile (search your business while signed in, or business.google.com).
2. Choose the **Booking** transaction type → **Add link**.
3. Paste your booking page URL.
4. Save.

Some scheduling providers are Google providers and populate this automatically. If yours is, the link appears without you doing anything — but **still test it**, because stale provider links are a leading cause of dead booking buttons.

3 Pick a booking tool with a real free tier

Square Appointments — free plan, \$0/month. The strongest free option for trades and services. Includes a hosted online booking site, unlimited calendars, custom scheduling, and — importantly — **text and email appointment reminders**. Single location. Processing on the free plan is 2.6% + 15¢ in person, 3.3% + 30¢ online. You can also **require a card on file or a deposit at booking**, which is the free tier's most valuable feature.

Calendly — free plan, \$0. Simple and clean, but know the limits: **one event type, one calendar**, and the free tier has **no payment collection and no automated SMS reminders**. Fine for "book a free 30-minute estimate." Not enough if you have no-show risk.

Cal.com — open-source alternative with a genuinely free individual tier and unlimited event types.

Google Calendar Appointment Schedules — free with a personal Google account. Not a full booking system, but zero cost and native.

(Verify current limits at each provider before relying on them — free tiers change.)

4 Make the page pass the customer test

A booking path is functional only if a stranger can complete it in 90 seconds without talking to anyone. That means:

- Works on **mobile**, loads in under ~3 seconds, no pinch-zooming
- **No account creation**. Name, phone, email — nothing else
- Shows **real availability**, in the customer's time zone — not "request a time and we'll get back to you"
- Availability is **accurate** and synced to your actual calendar
- **Immediate confirmation** on screen *and* by email or text within seconds
- The confirmation contains date, time, address, what to expect, price or range, and how to reschedule
- **Reminders** at 24 hours and ~2 hours before
- A **self-service reschedule/cancel link** in the confirmation — this alone cuts no-shows and eliminates most inbound calls
- **Service and price legible before booking** — "Drain clearing, \$149, ~1 hour," not "Appointment"
- A **service-area check up front** if you're geographically limited
- A **visible phone number** as fallback

5 Add a quote path for people who don't fit the form

Not every job can be booked from a dropdown. Give those people a fast path:

- **Click-to-text with "send us a photo."** For trades this converts better than any form — a homeowner would far rather photograph the leak than describe it.
- **A short form** — Google Forms, Tally, or Jotform, all free. Ask for: name, phone, ZIP, one line of description, photos, preferred timing. **Nothing else**. Every extra required field costs you leads.
- **Google Business Profile messaging** — free, in-profile chat.

6 Re-test monthly

Put it in your calendar. Booking paths break silently after plugin updates, plan changes, and calendar re-syncs. A five-minute check on the first of the month catches it before your customers do.

CHECK YOUR WORK

- ☐ You've completed the incognito mobile self-audit.
- ☐ Your GBP booking link works and points to a live page.
- ☐ Real availability is shown, accurate to your calendar.
- ☐ Confirmation arrives within seconds, with a reschedule link.
- ☐ Reminders go out before the appointment.
- ☐ There's a visible phone fallback.
- ☐ A monthly re-test is in your calendar.

COMMON MISTAKES

- **A 'Book Now' button that leads to a contact form.** That's a lead form, not a booking path — and customers treat it that way.
- **No available slots showing** because of an expired availability window or a stale sync.
- **A form that submits with no confirmation.** The customer assumes it failed and calls a competitor.
- **A perfect booking system nobody monitors.** Worse than a phone number — it consumed the customer's intent and gave nothing back.

This fix is free. You can earn and keep any Agenarys Seal tier — including Platinum — without paying Agenarys anything beyond the audit itself. If you would rather have help doing it, we sell that. We never sell passage.

SOURCES & FURTHER READING

Google — Add booking links: support.google.com/business/answer/6218037

Square Appointments pricing: squareup.com/us/en/appointments/pricing

Calendly pricing: calendly.com/pricing