Grow That Local

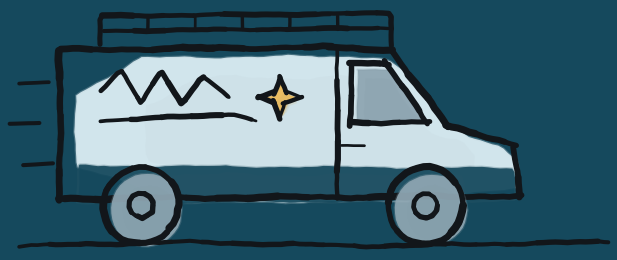
a free guide

What a click costs: Google Ads prices for 70 local trades, 2026

We measured Google's click prices for 922 buyer searches across 70 local trades, in every state and 10 Southeast metro areas. Here's what one click costs each trade, which searches cost most, and where clicks are cheapest.

For owners, trade groups and local press.

- 14 short sections in 5 parts
- 40 things you can do in the next 24 hours
- An example in every section
- Sources for every figure



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Contents

Before you start: how this report works 3

Part 1 **All 70 trades, ranked** 4

1 Every trade, one table 4
2 The priciest trades 8
3 The cheapest trades 9

Part 2 **What makes a click expensive** 10

4 Emergencies cost about twice as much 10
5 Big jobs and repeat customers 10
6 The cheap searches are often do-it-yourselfers 11

Part 3 **Regions, states and cities** 13

7 The West pays most 13
8 Every state 14
9 The Southeast metro areas 17

Part 4 **What it means for owners** 19

10 From a click price to a lead price 19
11 When ads make sense, and when the map comes first 20
12 Four ways to pay less per click 20

Part 5 **How we did it** 22

13 What we collected 22
14 The limits, and how to quote this report 22

Your first 24 hours, in one list 24

Where to go next 25

If you'd rather hand it off 26

Sources 27

GTL estimates 27

Before you start

Every owner who has thought about Google Ads has asked the same question: what will one click cost me? Google sets the price in an auction, and it doesn't publish a list by trade. So we built one.

We took Google's click price estimates for 922 searches people use when they want to hire a local business, across 70 trades, from plumbing and roofing to dog grooming and piano lessons. We covered the whole US, all 50 states and DC, 10 regions and 10 Southeast metro areas. The data is Google Ads keyword data, pulled through DataForSEO, a data company that resells it, in November 2026.

How to read the numbers:

- **Typical click** is the average price of one click across a trade's searches, weighted by how often people make each one. Busy searches count more.
- **Middle search** is the median: half the trade's searches cost more per click, half cost less.
- **Click index** compares a place with the whole US for the same trade. "+10%" means clicks there cost about 10% more than the US. For a state or metro, we take the middle value across all the trades with enough data there.

The headline findings:

- **Plumbing, HVAC and roofing are among the priciest home-service clicks.** The typical click is $38.82 for plumbing, $31.40 for HVAC and $26.18 for roofing. Among home services, only garage doors ($48.42) and foundation repair ($46.89) cost more than plumbing (GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026, docs.dataforseo.com).
- **10 of the 70 trades have a typical click of $20 or more. 18 are under $5.** The middle trade sits at $8.65 (GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026, docs.dataforseo.com).
- **Emergencies cost about twice as much.** "24 hour plumber" costs $83.67 a click, about 2.2 times the typical plumbing click. Every emergency search we measured costs about twice its trade's typical click (GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026, docs.dataforseo.com).
- **The West pays most.** Colorado clicks cost about 26% more than the US for the same trade, the most of any state. Vermont is the cheapest, about 42% below.
- **The Southeast is close to the US average,** about 2% below it. Of the 10 Southeast metro areas, only Nashville costs more than the US. Montgomery is the cheapest, about 36% below.
- **A cheap average can hide a pricey hiring click.** The one-word search "painter" costs $2.13 a click, but "painters near me" costs $14.78 (GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026, docs.dataforseo.com).

Part 1 ranks all 70 trades. Part 2 explains what makes a click expensive. Part 3 covers regions, states and the Southeast metro areas. Part 4 turns the numbers into a plan for an owner. Part 5 explains how we did it and where it falls short.

Two rules we kept while writing it:

- Every click price comes from our own analysis, cited as "GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026." Where we do math on top of it, or give our opinion, we say "GTL estimate" and tell you why.
- Every example is made up to show how to use the numbers. None of them are real businesses.

Reporters, trade groups and bloggers are welcome to quote any figure here. Please credit "GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026" and link to this page.



Part 1

All 70 trades, ranked

1 Every trade, one table

The idea. Here are all 70 trades, sorted from the priciest typical click to the cheapest, for the whole US.

How to read it. "Priciest search" is the trade's most expensive search with at least 50 searches a month, and "Its click" is that search's price. Trades marked "(interest)" mix people researching with people hiring, so their prices reflect banks and insurers bidding as much as local businesses.

Rank	Trade	Typical click ($)	Middle search ($)	Priciest search	Its click ($)
1	Insurance agent (interest)	101.96	47.06	auto insurance quotes	209.08
2	Garage doors	48.42	40.92	garage door opener repair	56.00
3	Foundation repair	46.89	44.57	house leveling	65.42
4	Plumbing	38.82	33.66	24 hour plumber	83.67
5	HVAC	31.40	25.02	emergency hvac	64.54
6	Bathroom remodeling	29.58	31.15	bathroom remodel	37.46
7	Roofing	26.18	27.13	new roof	61.60
8	Dryer vent cleaning	21.03	15.47	dryer vent repair	22.59
9	Gutters	20.35	18.09	leaf guard gutters	37.92
10	Electrician	20.32	14.60	emergency electrician	41.02
11	Septic service	19.45	17.37	grease trap cleaning	25.21
12	Crawl space waterproofing	16.98	31.01	basement leak repair	56.81
13	Pool service	15.79	15.78	pool heater repair	24.05
14	Flooring	15.32	18.84	carpet installation	32.66
15	Tree service	15.14	15.80	emergency tree removal	36.79
16	Med spa (interest)	14.78	7.54	semaglutide	31.22
17	Roof cleaning	14.38	7.46	roof cleaning near me	18.97
18	Stairlifts	13.37	14.73	stair lift installation	26.31
19	Sunrooms	13.32	10.31	sunroom builders	23.02
20	Tutoring	12.96	17.72	chemistry tutor	39.30
21	Appliance repair	12.47	12.86	stove repair	14.83
22	Well drilling	12.36	11.06	well repair	22.42
23	House cleaning	11.97	11.41	move out cleaning	19.01
24	Chimney sweep	11.46	12.95	chimney leak	21.98
25	Wildlife removal	10.77	19.95	rodent control	26.06
26	Deck building	10.43	16.37	deck contractor	25.10

Rank	Trade	Typical click ($)	Middle search ($)	Priciest search	Its click ($)
27	Water softeners	10.34	7.54	water softener repair	39.81
28	Tile installation	10.06	11.95	shower tile installation	21.02
29	Irrigation repair	9.87	9.23	backflow testing	22.25
30	Mortgage broker (interest)	9.79	29.20	home equity loan	62.51
31	Fencing	9.51	4.92	fence installation	17.62
32	Window cleaning	9.35	10.13	gutter and window cleaning	12.79
33	Asphalt sealcoating	9.34	8.78	parking lot striping	17.49
34	Spray foam insulation	8.79	5.95	insulation removal	27.45
35	Carpet cleaning	8.78	7.71	carpet cleaners near me	13.11
36	Handyman	8.52	9.65	home repair	20.72
37	Excavation	8.06	6.33	grading contractor	15.89
38	Epoxy floor coating	8.05	7.01	epoxy flooring near me	17.53
39	Generator installation	7.83	6.84	generator installation	19.66
40	Landscaping and lawn care	7.71	8.38	french drain installation	16.44
41	Kitchen remodeling	7.39	11.10	kitchen contractor	24.87
42	Land clearing	7.02	9.18	tree clearing	16.97
43	Pet sitting	7.01	7.01	dog walker near me	13.62
44	Radon mitigation	6.85	7.69	radon remediation	17.00
45	Automatic gates	6.68	7.80	automatic gate repair	30.93
46	Stump grinding	6.64	11.45	stump removal near me	15.76
47	Music lessons	6.42	6.02	music school	18.90
48	Interior design	6.13	7.95	commercial interior design	14.24
49	Painting	5.92	11.29	interior painting	17.38
50	Event planning	5.92	4.66	corporate event planner	21.42
51	Piano lessons	5.66	5.46	online piano lessons	7.79

Rank	Trade	Typical click ($)	Middle search ($)	Priciest search	Its click ($)
52	Mobile welding	5.20	6.09	gate welding	11.86
53	Pressure washing	4.99	2.97	power washing services	13.09
54	Catering	4.93	4.62	corporate catering	17.61
55	Wedding photography	4.72	4.59	bridal portraits	9.87
56	Hydraulic repair	4.60	5.84	mobile hydraulic repair	8.74
57	Family photography	3.28	3.10	headshot photographer	8.30
58	Party rentals	3.17	3.12	tent rental	3.67
59	Dog grooming	3.14	3.11	puppy grooming	3.93
60	Auto detailing	3.10	3.38	ceramic coating	6.54
61	Martial arts	2.96	3.35	karate classes	4.71
62	Personal training (interest)	2.87	8.63	online personal trainer	16.21
63	Boat docks	2.63	6.69	dock construction	54.74
64	Lash and brow	1.88	1.73	eyebrow waxing	3.56
65	Realtor (interest)	1.85	8.37	sell my house	162.26
66	Pole barns	1.34	1.92	post frame building	4.48
67	Hair stylist	1.30	1.19	hair extensions	2.94
68	Shed building	1.30	1.44	shed installation	4.16
69	Massage	1.27	2.06	mobile massage	3.21
70	Barber	1.21	1.08	taper fade	4.16

Source: GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026 (docs.dataforseo.com). Each trade has 8 to 28 priced searches; the six trades with their own guides have 22 to 28.

Example (sample numbers). A made-up garage door company sees its trade near the top of the table. Before signing up for ads, they check what one booked opener repair is worth to them, because each click there is priced like a plumbing click.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Find your trade in the table. Write down its typical click.
- [ ] Write down its priciest search. Is that a job you want?
- [ ] If your trade has its own guide, open it from "Where to go next."

2 The priciest trades

The idea. The top of the list is a mix of two kinds of trade. Insurance agent (interest) is first by far, at $101.96 a click, because national insurers bid on the same searches as local agents (GTL estimate; price from GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026 (docs.dataforseo.com)). Then come the urgent and big-ticket home services: garage doors, foundation repair, plumbing, HVAC, bathroom remodeling and roofing.

Among home services, the priciest single searches are emergencies and big repairs. "24 hour plumber" (plumbing) costs $83.67, "emergency plumber" $78.70 and "house leveling" (foundation repair) $65.42 (GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026, docs.dataforseo.com).

Search	Trade	Click ($)	US searches a month
24 hour plumber	Plumbing	83.67	9,900
emergency plumber	Plumbing	78.70	90,500
house leveling	Foundation repair	65.42	1,600
emergency hvac	HVAC	64.54	2,400
new roof	Roofing	61.60	4,400
foundation repair near me	Foundation repair	59.56	60,500
repipe house	Plumbing	57.78	1,000
foundation repair	Foundation repair	57.54	60,500
basement leak repair	Crawl space waterproofing	56.81	1,900
ac tune up	HVAC	56.39	12,100

Home-service trades only, searches with at least 50 a month. Source: GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026 (docs.dataforseo.com).

Example (sample numbers). A made-up foundation repair company pays about $55 a click. One signed job is worth $8,000, so 40 clicks for one job still pays. A made-up handyman paying $9 a click on $200 jobs can't afford 40 clicks per job.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Work out what one booked job is worth to you, after costs.
- [ ] Divide it by your trade's typical click. That's how many clicks one job can pay for.
- [ ] If that number is under 20, read Part 4 before spending on ads.

3 The cheapest trades

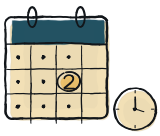
The idea. The cheapest clicks are personal services and kit-style building trades. Barbers ($1.21), massage ($1.27) and hair stylists ($1.30) all cost under $2 a click, and so do shed builders ($1.30) and pole barn builders ($1.34) (GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026, docs.dataforseo.com). Many people searching for a shed or a pole barn are shopping for a kit (GTL estimate).

Cheap clicks don't make ads easy for these trades. A haircut or a massage is a small sale, and many people search for a style or a price, not a booking (GTL estimate). The map results and reviews matter more when each customer brings in less.

Example (sample numbers). A made-up barbershop pays $1.20 a click. At 7 in 100 clicks booking a chair, each new customer costs about $17 in clicks, about the price of one cut. It pays only if they come back.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] If your trade is near the bottom, compare your click price with one visit's price.
- [ ] Count how often a new customer comes back in a year.
- [ ] Put your effort into your Google profile and reviews first (section 11).



Part 2

What makes a click expensive

4 Emergencies cost about twice as much

The idea. We checked every emergency search in our lists, the ones with "emergency" or "24 hour" in them. Each costs between 2.0 and 2.4 times its trade's typical click (GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026, docs.dataforseo.com). Someone with a burst pipe or a tree on the house hires the first business that answers, so advertisers pay to be first (GTL estimate).

Search	Trade	Click ($)	Times the trade's typical click
emergency tree removal	Tree service	36.79	2.4
24 hour plumber	Plumbing	83.67	2.2
emergency hvac	HVAC	64.54	2.1
emergency plumber	Plumbing	78.70	2.0
emergency electrician	Electrician	41.02	2.0
emergency roof repair	Roofing	52.04	2.0

Source: GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026 (docs.dataforseo.com).

Example (sample numbers). A made-up electrician has no one on call at night. They stop bidding on "emergency electrician" and move that budget to daytime repair searches, which cost half as much per click.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Find your trade's emergency search, if it has one.
- [ ] Decide honestly whether you answer at night and on weekends.
- [ ] If you don't, leave emergency searches out of your ads.

5 Big jobs and repeat customers

The idea. Outside emergencies, clicks cost most where one customer is worth most. Garage doors, foundation repair, bathroom remodeling and roofing are large one-off jobs. Plumbing and HVAC add repeat visits and maintenance plans. That's the GTL estimate behind the top of the table: businesses bid what a customer is worth to them.

It shows inside trades too. "ac tune up" costs $56.39 a click, more than "ac repair" at $43.88, because a tune-up customer often joins a maintenance plan (GTL estimate; prices from GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026 (docs.dataforseo.com)).

Example (sample numbers). A made-up pest control company sells a $40 monthly plan. A customer who stays two years is worth $960, so the company can pay far more per click than a one-off $150 treatment would allow.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Write down what one customer is worth over a year, not one job.
- [ ] Use the free customer value calculator to check it.
- [ ] Compare that number with your trade's typical click.

6 The cheap searches are often do-it-yourselfers

The idea. In most trades, the cheapest searches are people buying a product or looking up how to do it: "shingle roof" ($2.40), "hedge trimming" ($0.72), "ductless mini split" ($4.55) and "frozen pipes" ($4.41) (GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026, docs.dataforseo.com). Few businesses bid on them because few of those clicks hire anyone (GTL estimate).

That makes a trade's typical click misleading when one cheap, busy search drags it down. The six trades with their own guides show it best. Compare the typical click with the click on the main "near me" hiring search:

Trade	Typical click ($)	Main "near me" search	Its click ($)
Roofing	26.18	roofer near me	27.11
Landscaping	7.71	landscapers near me	11.43
Plumbing	38.82	plumber near me	41.07
HVAC	31.40	hvac near me	26.88
House cleaning	11.97	maid service near me	11.65
Painting	5.92	painters near me	14.78

Source: GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026 (docs.dataforseo.com).

Painting has the widest gap: "painter" gets about 550,000 searches a month at $2.13, and many of those people want an artist or a class, not a house painter (GTL estimate, prices from GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026 (docs.dataforseo.com)).

Example (sample numbers). A made-up painter is told "clicks in your trade cost $6." They plan with the "painters near me" price instead, about $15, and their budget lands where they expected.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Plan your budget with your main "near me" search, not your trade's average.
- [ ] Check that price for your town in Google Keyword Planner.
- [ ] List the do-it-yourself words you'll block (section 12).



Part 3

Regions, states and cities

7 The West pays most

The idea. By region, the Mountain West has the priciest clicks, about 16% above the US for the same trade, then the Gulf Coast and Florida. New England and the Great Lakes are the cheapest of the lower 48, about 13% below.

Region	Click index vs the US	Trades pricier there than the US
Mountain West	+16%	52 of 69
Gulf Coast and Florida	+10%	50 of 70
Desert Southwest	+4%	42 of 68
Pacific West	0%	34 of 70
Southeast and Upper South	-2%	31 of 70
Great Plains	-10%	20 of 70
Mid-Atlantic	-12%	16 of 70
Great Lakes and Upper Midwest	-13%	15 of 70
New England	-13%	22 of 70
Alaska and Hawaii	-40%	8 of 62

Regions are groups of states. Alaska and Hawaii have few searches, so treat their row as rough. Source: GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026 (docs.dataforseo.com).

Growth is the likeliest reason. The priciest regions hold many fast-growing cities, where new businesses and new homes bring more advertisers into the same auctions (GTL estimate).

Example (sample numbers). A made-up HVAC company is choosing between two new towns, one in Colorado and one in Kansas. Clicks in Kansas cost about a quarter less for the same searches, so they open there first.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Find your region. Are clicks above or below the US?
- [ ] Find your state in section 8.
- [ ] If you're in the Southeast, find your metro area in section 9.

8 Every state

The idea. Colorado has the priciest clicks of any state, +26% against the US for the same trade. Arizona, Utah and Florida follow. Vermont is the cheapest, at -42%. Small states sit at the bottom partly because Google leaves many of their small searches unpriced, so fewer trades count there.

Rank	State	Click index vs the US	Trades pricier than the US
1	Colorado	+26%	57 of 68
2	Arizona	+19%	46 of 68
3	Utah	+16%	43 of 67
4	Florida	+13%	52 of 70
5	District of Columbia	+6%	31 of 52
6	Texas	+5%	43 of 70
7	Georgia	+4%	41 of 70
8	Virginia	+3%	37 of 70
9	Maryland	+2%	39 of 70
10	California	-1%	33 of 70
11	North Carolina	-1%	31 of 70
12	Tennessee	-1%	33 of 70
13	Washington	-1%	32 of 70
14	Oregon	-3%	31 of 69
15	Delaware	-3%	26 of 60
16	Nevada	-4%	31 of 65
17	South Carolina	-5%	33 of 70
18	New Jersey	-6%	20 of 70
19	Kansas	-6%	28 of 69
20	Missouri	-7%	28 of 69
21	Idaho	-8%	28 of 63
22	Ohio	-10%	20 of 70
23	Connecticut	-10%	27 of 68
24	Illinois	-10%	17 of 70
25	Minnesota	-11%	25 of 69
26	Indiana	-12%	22 of 70
27	Massachusetts	-15%	25 of 70
28	Oklahoma	-17%	13 of 69
29	Pennsylvania	-17%	14 of 70

Rank	State	Click index vs the US	Trades pricier than the US
30	New Hampshire	-18%	20 of 66
31	Kentucky	-18%	10 of 69
32	Michigan	-18%	14 of 70
33	Rhode Island	-20%	11 of 60
34	New York	-21%	15 of 70
35	Wisconsin	-21%	16 of 69
36	Louisiana	-21%	13 of 68
37	Alabama	-23%	16 of 70
38	Arkansas	-24%	6 of 67
39	Nebraska	-25%	14 of 66
40	Iowa	-27%	14 of 65
41	New Mexico	-27%	8 of 64
42	Maine	-33%	9 of 62
43	South Dakota	-34%	10 of 49
44	West Virginia	-34%	2 of 62
45	Alaska	-34%	11 of 44
46	Mississippi	-35%	6 of 66
47	North Dakota	-37%	9 of 46
48	Montana	-37%	7 of 54
49	Wyoming	-40%	4 of 39
50	Hawaii	-41%	8 of 55
51	Vermont	-42%	3 of 45

A trade counts in a state only when Google prices at least 5 of its searches there, with at least 300 searches a month. Source: GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026 (docs.dataforseo.com).

Example (sample numbers). A made-up roofer works in Georgia, where clicks run a little above the US. They set their first budget 5% higher than the national numbers suggest.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Find your state's click index.
- [ ] Adjust the US price for your trade by that much to get a first guess.
- [ ] Check it against Google Keyword Planner for your own town.

9 The Southeast metro areas

The idea. Of the 10 Southeast metro areas, only Nashville costs more than the US, +6%. Montgomery is the cheapest, -36%, and Jackson, MS is close behind. Metro areas here are TV markets, wider than the city itself, and smaller ones have fewer trades with enough data.

Metro area (TV market)	Click index vs the US	Trades pricier than the US
Nashville	+6%	40 of 70
Tulsa	-13%	21 of 61
Huntsville-Decatur	-13%	20 of 57
Louisville	-14%	22 of 61
Memphis	-20%	17 of 60
Birmingham	-21%	18 of 69
Lexington	-26%	13 of 56
Little Rock	-29%	9 of 57
Jackson, MS	-34%	6 of 46
Montgomery	-36%	7 of 44

Source: GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026 (docs.dataforseo.com).

For the six trades with their own guides, here is the main "near me" search in each metro area. Small metros have only a few hundred of these searches a month, so read them as a range:

Metro area	Roofing ($)	Landscaping ($)	Plumbing ($)	HVAC ($)	House cleaning ($)	Painting ($)
Nashville	19.31	10.93	40.80	20.54	12.79	13.54
Tulsa	40.55	10.56	61.03	33.74	10.21	11.79
Louisville	29.61	5.91	48.21	31.36	9.79	15.65
Huntsville-Decatur	33.47	12.87	41.78	36.46	7.00	10.86
Lexington	9.75	10.18	32.07	29.89	10.23	8.68
Birmingham	29.77	9.96	37.95	26.44	8.63	11.66
Memphis	22.88	3.62	52.39	30.88	12.67	9.75
Little Rock	22.27	5.14	29.85	14.03	6.65	10.78
Montgomery	6.58	5.38	20.93	24.09	7.51	3.96
Jackson, MS	21.85	7.58	28.82	30.05	9.02	4.46

Searches: roofer near me, landscapers near me, plumber near me, hvac near me, maid service near me, painters near me. Source: GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026 (docs.dataforseo.com).

Example (sample numbers). A made-up plumber in Little Rock sees clicks there well below the US. They still plan with their own "plumber near me" price from the table, because one trade can sit above its metro's index.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Find your metro area's index.
- [ ] If your trade is one of the six, find its "near me" price for your metro.
- [ ] Open your trade's guide for the full metro table.



Part 4

What it means for owners

10 From a click price to a lead price

The idea. A click is not a lead. We use two rates, both GTL estimates. About 7 in 100 clicks becoming a call or form is a cautious month: most clickers are comparing a few businesses, outside your area or not ready yet. About 15 in 100 is a strong month, with a clear page, a phone number at the top and tight targeting. Our free Google Ads calculator starts close to 7 in 100.

Trade	Main "near me" click ($)	Cost per lead ($), 7 in 100	Cost per lead ($), 15 in 100
Roofing	27.11	387	181
Landscaping	11.43	163	76
Plumbing	41.07	587	274
HVAC	26.88	384	179
House cleaning	11.65	166	78
Painting	14.78	211	99

GTL estimate: click price divided by 7 in 100 or 15 in 100. Click prices: GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026 (docs.dataforseo.com).

Then a lead is not a job. Divide the cost per lead by the share of leads you book to get the cost per job, and compare it with what a job is worth to you. Our free how many leads you need tool does the second half.

Example (sample numbers). A made-up house cleaner pays $12 a click. At 7 in 100, a lead costs about $170. They book half of them, so a new customer costs about $340 in clicks. A weekly customer pays that back in three visits.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Find your trade's click price in section 1 or your trade guide.
- [ ] Divide it by 0.07 for a cautious cost per lead.
- [ ] Run the free Google Ads calculator with your own job value and close rate.

11 When ads make sense, and when the map comes first

The idea. Clicks in Google's map results are free. Google says local results are mainly based on relevance, distance and prominence, and that there's no way to pay for a better local ranking (Google Business Profile Help, support.google.com). Ads make most sense when a job is worth many clicks, when you have capacity to fill this week, or when you're new and not yet in the map (GTL estimate). When you have fewer reviews than the top three businesses near you, reviews and your profile usually come first (GTL estimate).

Google's Local Services Ads charge per lead instead of per click, for trades that qualify. Our guide on whether Local Services Ads are worth it compares the two.

Example (sample numbers). A made-up dog groomer pays about $3 a click and has 200 reviews, more than anyone nearby. They skip ads: the map already brings more bookings than they can take.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Search your main service from your shop and count the reviews of the top three map results.
- [ ] Compare with your own count.
- [ ] Decide whether this month's money goes to ads or to reviews.

12 Four ways to pay less per click

The idea. Four settings decide how much of a budget reaches buyers, and each one is in Google's own help pages:

1. **Exact searches.** Broad match, the default, can show your ad on any related search. Exact match, in square brackets, sticks to searches with the same meaning (Google Ads Help, support.google.com).
2. **Hours.** You can choose the hours and days your ads run (Google Ads Help, support.google.com). Run them when someone answers.
3. **Area.** You can set a radius around your shop, and "Presence" sticks to people who are in or regularly in your area (Google Ads Help, support.google.com, Google Ads Help (support.google.com)).
4. **Blocked searches.** Negative keywords keep your ad off searches you don't want, and the search terms report shows what triggered your ads (Google Ads Help, support.google.com, Google Ads Help (support.google.com)).

Each trade guide has a 24-hour checklist for all four, with a starter list of searches to block for that trade.

Example (sample numbers). A made-up fence company switches from broad to exact match, cuts its radius from 40 miles to 20 and blocks "diy" and "for sale." Clicks fall by half and calls stay the same.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Check whether any campaign you run is on broad match.
- [ ] Set ad hours to when someone answers.
- [ ] Read your search terms report and block three searches that would never hire you.

or we can do it for you

Free sample: Your first report card, this month

: how you stack up against the local competitors your customers see first. The monthly report card is free.

Monthly report card: growthatlocal.com/services/report-card



Part 5

How we did it

13 What we collected

The idea. We wrote a list of buyer searches for each of 70 local trades: 25 to 28 for the six trades with their own guides, 10 to 14 for the rest, 922 in all. On November 12, 2026, we pulled Google Ads keyword data for every search through DataForSEO's Google Ads search volume service, once for the whole US, once for each state and DC, and once for each of 10 Southeast TV markets.

For each search and place, Google gives an average cost per click in US dollars, a competition score from 0 to 100 and an average number of monthly searches over the last 12 months (DataForSEO, docs.dataforseo.com, Google Ads API reference (developers.google.com)).

Then, for each trade and place:

1. We kept the searches Google prices there.
2. Google gives one shared number to close variants, such as "ac repair" and "air conditioner repair," so we counted each pair once.
3. **Typical click** = each search's price times its monthly searches, added up, divided by all the searches. **Middle search** = the median price.
4. Regions pool their states. The **click index** for a state or metro compares it with the US for each trade that has at least 5 priced searches and 300 searches a month there, and takes the middle value.

Example (sample numbers). A made-up trade has two searches. One costs $10 a click with 900 searches a month, the other $30 with 100. The typical click is $12, because the busier search counts nine times as much. The middle search is $20.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] If you quote a number, quote the typical click and say it's weighted by searches.
- [ ] For your own town, check Google Keyword Planner, which uses the same source.

14 The limits, and how to quote this report

The idea. These numbers are a map, not a bill. In plain words:

- **These are Google's estimates of the average price advertisers paid for a click on each search, not what any one business pays.**
- **Real cost depends on the advertiser:** ad quality, the hours ads run, match type, location settings and who else is bidding that week.

- **Small places are rough.** Google leaves many small searches unpriced, and one pricey search can pull a small metro's average up.
- **A click is not a lead.** Every per-lead figure in this report is a GTL estimate, built from a click price and a conversion rate we state.
- **A place's average moves with its search mix,** not only with price: if people there use a pricey search more, the typical click rises.
- **Metro areas are TV markets,** wider than the cities.
- **Five trades mix research with hiring:** insurance, mortgage brokers, realtors, med spas and personal training. They are marked "(interest)."
- **Our search lists are our own.** A different list would give somewhat different prices.

To quote a figure, please credit "GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026" and link to this page. Every free guide and tool we make is at growthatlocal.com/free.

Example (sample numbers). A made-up local reporter writing about roofers quotes: "A Google Ads click on a roofing search costs about $26 across the US, according to a GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026."

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] If you write about a trade, pick its typical click and its priciest search.
- [ ] Credit the source line above and link to this page.



Your first 24 hours, in one list

If you do these today, you'll know what a click costs your trade before you spend a dollar:

- [ ] Find your trade's typical click and priciest search (section 1).
- [ ] Find your state or metro area's click index (sections 8 and 9).
- [ ] Work out a cautious cost per lead: click price divided by 0.07 (section 10).
- [ ] Count your reviews against the top three map results (section 11).
- [ ] Check your ads for broad match, hours, area and blocked searches (section 12).



Where to go next

Six trades have their own guide, with the click price in every Southeast metro area, the priciest and cheapest searches, budget math and a list of searches to block:

- What a Google Ads click costs a roofer
- What a Google Ads click costs a landscaper
- What a Google Ads click costs a plumber
- What a Google Ads click costs an HVAC company
- What a Google Ads click costs a house cleaner
- What a Google Ads click costs a painter

To check whether ads would pay at your own numbers, try the free Google Ads calculator. For Google's pay-per-lead ads, read Google's Local Services Ads: worth it?. For when customers search each of these 70 trades, read When Customers Search: The Local Trade Season Calendar 2026.



If you'd rather hand it off

Grow That Local does this work for local businesses every month. Each service starts with a free sample, so you see the work before you pay.

Best fit for this guide: Monthly report card. Free sample: your first report card, this month. The monthly report card is free.

Monthly report card — **free**
See how you stack up against local competitors. Free sample: your first report card, this month.

Websites — **from $1 a month · 7-day full refund**
A fast, good-looking site that turns visitors into calls. Free sample: a preview of your new site.

Google Business Profile — **$200 a month · 7-day full refund**
Show up in the map when neighbors search for what you do. Free sample: a profile check-up with 10+ fixes.

Review requests — **$100 a month · 7-day full refund**
More 5-star reviews, without the awkward asking. Free sample: your first 10 requests sent.

Social media posts — **$200 a month · 7-day full refund**
Fresh posts every week, made from your real job photos. Free sample: two weeks of posts, ready to go.

Email newsletter — **$50 a month · 7-day full refund**
Stay top of mind, so past customers call you first. Free sample: your first newsletter, written.

SEO — **$400 a month · 7-day full refund**
Climb Google for the searches that bring in jobs. Free sample: a ranking check and 10 fixes.

Win-back texts — **$100 a month · 7-day full refund**
Bring past customers back for their next job. Free sample: your first 25 customers texted.

Neighborhood postcard — **$400 a month · 7-day full refund**
Your ad in mailboxes across nice neighborhoods. Free sample: your ad, designed and shown on the card.

Text us at (423) 924-2014, or start at growthatlocal.com/start.

Sources

Every statistic above, with where it comes from:

1. GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026. Google Ads average cost per click, competition score and monthly search estimates for 922 buyer searches across 70 local trades, for the US, all 50 states and DC, 10 regions and 10 Southeast metro areas (TV markets), pulled November 12, 2026. Method and limits in sections 13 and 14. (sections 1 to 12)

Rules, tools and guidance cited (not statistics), each checked on the official page on 2026-11-13:

- DataForSEO, Google Ads search volume API, response fields (cpc: the amount paid in US dollars for each click on the ad for a keyword; competition_index: 0 to 100): docs.dataforseo.com (section 13)
- Google Ads API reference, KeywordPlanHistoricalMetrics ("Average Cost Per Click in micros for the keyword"; average monthly searches over the past 12 months): developers.google.com (section 13)
- Google Business Profile Help, "Tips to improve your local ranking on Google" (relevance, distance and prominence; no way to pay for a better local ranking): support.google.com (section 11)
- Google Ads Help, "About keyword matching options": support.google.com (section 12)
- Google Ads Help, "About Ad Scheduling": support.google.com (section 12)
- Google Ads Help, "Target ads to geographic locations" (radius targeting): support.google.com (section 12)
- Google Ads Help, "About advanced location options" (Presence): support.google.com (section 12)
- Google Ads Help, "About negative keywords": support.google.com (section 12)
- Google Ads Help, "About the search terms report": support.google.com (section 12)

GTL estimates

These are our own judgment, not measured facts:

1. Emergency searches cost about twice as much because the caller hires the first business that answers (section 4). Reasoning: every emergency search we measured costs about twice its trade's typical click, and urgent callers rarely compare.
2. Clicks cost most where one customer is worth most (sections 2, 5). Reasoning: the top of the table is big one-off jobs and trades with repeat visits or plans, and businesses bid what a customer is worth to them.
3. The cheapest searches are mostly product shoppers and do-it-yourselfers (sections 3, 6). Reasoning: they name a product, a tool or a small task, and few businesses bid on them.
4. Many people searching "painter" want an artist or a class (section 6). Reasoning: its click costs a fraction of "painters near me," and the word covers fine art.
5. The priciest regions are priced up by growth (section 7). Reasoning: they hold many fast-growing cities, which bring more businesses into the same auctions.
6. About 7 in 100 ad clicks become a call or form in a cautious month, and about 15 in 100 in a strong one (section 10). Reasoning: most clickers compare a few businesses or aren't ready yet; 7 in 100 is close to our calculator's starting point, and a clear page and tight targeting can about double it.

7. Ads make most sense when a job is worth many clicks, when you have capacity, or when you're new; reviews come first when you trail the top three (section 11). Reasoning: map clicks are free, and ads only pay when the job covers the clicks.
8. Small personal-service sales make ads hard even at low click prices (section 3). Reasoning: one visit brings in little, so a customer has to come back for the clicks to pay.

want it done for you?

Every part of this guide is something we do.

Each one starts with a free sample, so you see the work before you pay. Text us at (423) 924-2014 or start at growthatlocal.com/start.

Grow That Local