Grow That Local

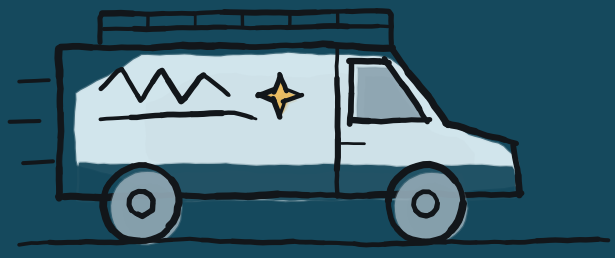
a free guide

What a Google Ads click costs a plumber, by city

What one Google Ads click on a plumbing search costs in the US, the Southeast and 10 Southeast cities, which searches cost most, and what a monthly budget really buys.

For plumbing business owners comparing lead sources.

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



growthatlocal.com · Text us at (423) 924-2014

Contents

Before you start: how this guide works 3

Part 1 **What a plumbing click costs** 4

1 The plumbing click price across the US 4
2 The Southeast and its 10 metro areas 4
3 Where clicks cost most and least 5

Part 2 **The searches behind the price** 7

4 The priciest searches 7
5 The cheapest searches, and why cheap isn't a bargain 7

Part 3 **What a monthly budget buys** 9

6 Clicks for your budget 9
7 From clicks to leads 9

Part 4 **Ads, or reviews and the map first?** 11

8 When ads make sense for a plumber 11
9 When reviews and the map come first 11

Part 5 **Four ways to pay less per click** 13

10 Bid on exact searches 13
11 Show ads only when you can answer 13
12 Draw your area tight 14
13 Block the searches that waste money 14

Your first 24 hours, in one list 15

Where to go next 16

If you'd rather hand it off 17

Sources 18

GTL estimates 18

Before you start

Plumbing clicks are among the most expensive of any local trade, and the emergency ones cost about twice the rest. Before you spend on Google Ads, it helps to know what "plumber near me" costs where you work, and what happens to that money when nobody answers.

We took Google's click price estimates for 28 searches people use when they want a plumber ("plumber near me", "water heater repair", "emergency plumber", "drain cleaning" and more) for 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 all of the plumbing searches, weighted by how often people make each one. Busy searches count more.
- **Middle search** is the median: half the searches cost more per click, half cost less.
- **The "plumber near me" click** is the price of the one search most owners want to show up for. It's usually the best number to plan a budget with.

The limits, in plain words:

- **These are Google's estimates, not your bill.** Each price is Google's average cost per click for that search in that place (Google Ads API reference, developers.google.com). It's what advertisers paid on average, not what any one business pays.
- **Your own price depends on you.** How good your ad and page are, the hours you run, how tightly you match searches and where you show all move it. Part 5 covers each one.
- **Small places are rough.** Google leaves many small searches unpriced, and one pricey search can pull a metro's average up. Read the three numbers together.
- **A click is not a lead.** Most people who click don't call. Every per-lead figure here is our estimate, built from a click price and a conversion rate we state.
- **A metro area here is a TV market**, which is wider than the city itself.

Every click price comes from one source: GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026. Where we do math on top of it, we say "GTL estimate" and give our reasoning. Every example is made up to show the idea.



Part 1

What a plumbing click costs

1 The plumbing click price across the US

The idea. Across the US, the typical plumbing click costs $38.82. The middle search costs $33.66. Prices run from $4.41 for "frozen pipes" to $83.67 for "24 hour plumber". The "plumber near me" click costs $41.07, and people make that search about 1,000,000 times a month (GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026, docs.dataforseo.com).

"plumber near me" is the busiest search in our plumbing list, ahead of "plumber" at 673,000 a month (GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026, docs.dataforseo.com). When the water's on the floor, people call the first plumber who answers, so plumbers bid hard for the top spot (GTL estimate).

Of the 70 local trades we measured, plumbing has the 4th priciest typical click. Google's competition score for these searches averages 24 out of 100. That score is the share of ad spots that advertisers fill (Google Ads API reference, developers.google.com).

Example (sample numbers). A made-up plumber is pitched "leads for $25." The table says a single "plumber near me" click costs about $41 in the US. They ask the seller what kind of lead costs less than one click.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Write down the US "plumber near me" price from this section.
- [ ] Find your metro area or state in sections 2 and 3 and write its price next to it.
- [ ] Open Google Keyword Planner, set your town, and check "water heater repair" there.

2 The Southeast and its 10 metro areas

The idea. In the Southeast and Upper South, the typical plumbing click costs $37.87, 2% less than the US. The "plumber near me" click costs $40.69 there (GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026, docs.dataforseo.com).

Plumbing clicks cost about the same in the Southeast as in the US. Tulsa has the priciest typical click of the 10 metros, $57.41, and its "plumber near me" click is $61.03. Montgomery is the cheapest, at $18.13 (GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026, docs.dataforseo.com).

Place	Typical click ($)	Middle search ($)	"plumber near me" ($)
Whole US	38.82	33.66	41.07
Southeast and Upper South	37.87	34.34	40.69
Tulsa	57.41	34.67	61.03
Louisville	48.23	28.18	48.21
Memphis	42.78	27.71	52.39
Birmingham	41.40	28.62	37.95
Lexington	41.07	30.08	32.07
Nashville	39.17	23.74	40.80
Huntsville-Decatur	38.97	33.51	41.78
Jackson, MS	27.90	20.23	28.82
Little Rock	26.89	19.99	29.85
Montgomery	18.13	15.46	20.93

Metro areas are sorted from the priciest typical click to the cheapest. Source: GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026 (docs.dataforseo.com).

Example (sample numbers). A made-up plumber in Nashville plans around the "plumber near me" column, then checks the middle search too. Because the middle search is lower, they expect cheaper clicks on repair searches and pricier ones on emergencies.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Find your metro row. Circle the "plumber near me" column.
- [ ] If your metro's three numbers disagree a lot, plan with the highest.
- [ ] If you're not in one of these 10 areas, use your state in section 3.

3 Where clicks cost most and least

The idea. Across the lower 48, the Desert Southwest has the priciest typical plumbing click at $63.65, and New England the cheapest at $25.16. By state, Colorado tops the list at $70.27 and North Dakota is lowest at $11.45 (GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026, docs.dataforseo.com).

The West pays most for plumbing clicks. Colorado, Arizona, Nevada and Utah all sit in the top five (GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026, docs.dataforseo.com). Fast-growing cities with lots of new homes bring many plumbers bidding for the same searches (GTL estimate).

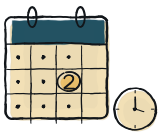
Rank	Priciest states	Typical click ($)	Cheapest states	Typical click ($)
1	Colorado	70.27	North Dakota	11.45
2	Arizona	68.91	Montana	14.01
3	Nevada	57.98	Alaska	14.34
4	Utah	57.82	Vermont	15.76
5	Delaware	54.74	Wyoming	16.01

"Cheapest states" counts up from the very cheapest. A state's average also moves with which searches people there use most, not only with price. Source: GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026 (docs.dataforseo.com).

Example (sample numbers). A made-up plumber moves from Arizona to Alabama. Their old click budget now buys about twice the clicks, so they cut the budget instead and keep the extra for a second van.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Find your state. Is it above or below the US typical click?
- [ ] If you work in two states, note both prices.
- [ ] Decide which side of your area gets the ad budget first.



Part 2

The searches behind the price

4 The priciest searches

The idea. The priciest plumbing searches are emergencies: "24 hour plumber" costs $83.67 a click and "emergency plumber" $78.70, about twice the typical plumbing click (GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026, docs.dataforseo.com). In the Southeast, "24 hour plumber" costs $79.18 and "emergency plumber" $76.54.

Search	Click ($)	US searches a month
24 hour plumber	83.67	9,900
emergency plumber	78.70	90,500
repipe house	57.78	1,000
clogged drain	50.58	6,600
water heater repair	49.99	90,500

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

These clicks cost the most because the caller hires on the spot (GTL estimate). They're only worth it if you really answer at night. An emergency click that reaches voicemail is the most expensive way to send a customer to another plumber.

Example (sample numbers). A made-up plumber with no night crew stops bidding on "24 hour plumber" and puts that money on "water heater repair" and "leak detection" during the day. Their cost per booked job drops by a third.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Decide honestly whether you answer at night. If not, skip the 24-hour searches.
- [ ] Pick two daytime searches from the table that match jobs you want.
- [ ] Check your site has a page for each.

5 The cheapest searches, and why cheap isn't a bargain

The idea. The cheapest plumbing searches are mostly people trying to fix it themselves: "frozen pipes" costs $4.41 a click and "drain cleaning" $15.50 (GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026, docs.dataforseo.com). Many are looking for how to thaw a pipe or which drain cleaner to

buy (GTL estimate).

Search	Click ($)	US searches a month
frozen pipes	4.41	8,100
drain cleaning	15.50	110,000
sewer camera inspection	16.33	8,100
garbage disposal installation	18.83	14,800
faucet repair	19.14	3,600

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

"Drain cleaning" still gets about 110,000 searches a month across the US (GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026, docs.dataforseo.com). Some of those people will pay a plumber. If you want them, bid on phrases that name the service, such as "drain cleaning service," and block the product words.

Example (sample numbers). A made-up plumber's ads show up on "frozen pipes" in January. Clicks are cheap but the callers ask how to use a hair dryer on a pipe. They block "how to" and "thaw" and keep "burst pipe repair."

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Look at the cheap searches in the table. Do you want those clickers?
- [ ] If you do drains, add a phrase that names the service.
- [ ] Note the do-it-yourself words you'll block in section 13.



Part 3

What a monthly budget buys

6 Clicks for your budget

The idea. Divide your monthly budget by the price of a click and you get the clicks it buys. At the US "plumber near me" price of $41.07, $1,000 a month buys about 24 clicks (GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026, docs.dataforseo.com). That count is a GTL estimate: your real price per click will sit above or below Google's average.

Google can spend up to twice your daily budget on a busy day, but no more than 30.4 times it in a month (Google Ads Help, support.google.com). So plan by the month, not the day.

Monthly budget ($)	Clicks at the US "plumber near me" price	Clicks at the Southeast typical price
500	12	13
1,000	24	26
2,000	49	53

GTL estimate: budget divided by click price, rounded. Click prices: GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026 (docs.dataforseo.com).

Plumbing budgets don't buy many clicks, so each one has to land on a page with your phone number at the top (GTL estimate). Our busy season calendar for plumbers shows which months bring the most searches in your region.

Example (sample numbers). A made-up plumber sets $1,500 a month and gets about 38 clicks at $40 each. They decide each click has to reach a page with one big call button and nothing else to read first.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Pick a monthly budget you could lose for one month without worry.
- [ ] Divide it by your click price from section 2. That's your click count.
- [ ] Check that the page your ad sends people to shows your number at the top.

7 From clicks to leads

The idea. A lead here means a call or a quote form from someone who clicked your ad. We use two rates, both GTL estimates. About 7 in 100 clicks is a cautious month: most clickers are comparing a few businesses, outside your area or not ready yet, and 7 in 100 is close to where our free Google Ads

calculator starts. About 15 in 100 is a strong month, with a clear page, a phone number at the top and tight targeting.

At the US "plumber near me" price of $41.07, that puts one lead at about $274 in a strong month and $587 in a cautious one (GTL estimate built on the click price from GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026 (docs.dataforseo.com)).

Monthly budget ($)	Leads at 7 in 100	Leads at 15 in 100	Cost per lead ($), 7 in 100	Cost per lead ($), 15 in 100
500	0.9	1.8	587	274
1,000	1.7	3.7	587	274
2,000	3.4	7.3	587	274

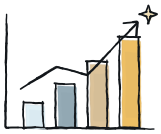
GTL estimate: clicks from section 6 times 7 in 100 or 15 in 100. Click price: GTL analysis of Google Ads keyword data (DataForSEO), November 2026 (docs.dataforseo.com).

Plumbing callers often hire the first plumber who answers, so a strong month near 15 in 100 is more likely for a plumber than for a painter (GTL estimate). Put your own average ticket and close rate into the Google Ads calculator, and use how many leads you need to see how many leads a month hit your goal.

Example (sample numbers). A made-up plumber pays $280 for each ad lead and books two in three. That's $420 per booked job. On a $1,800 water heater swap, it pays. On a $150 faucet repair, it loses money.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Count how many leads you booked last month and how many turned into jobs.
- [ ] Work out the most you could pay per lead on a water heater and on a small repair.
- [ ] Run the free Google Ads calculator with your own numbers.



Part 4

Ads, or reviews and the map first?

8 When ads make sense for a plumber

The idea. Ads make the most sense for a plumber in three cases (GTL estimate). When you have a crew free and want to fill the board this week. For bigger jobs such as water heaters, sewer lines and repipes, where one job covers many clicks. And when you're new and don't show in the map results yet. Google's Local Services Ads charge per lead instead of per click, and plumbing is one of the trades they were built for; our guide on whether Local Services Ads are worth it compares the two. For every plumbing marketing cost, read what marketing should cost a plumber.

Example (sample numbers). A made-up plumber runs ads on water heater and sewer searches all year and adds emergency searches only on the weekends their on-call tech is working.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Decide which job types your ads are for.
- [ ] Decide when you'd turn ads off: a full board.
- [ ] Read the Local Services Ads guide before choosing between the two.

9 When reviews and the map come 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). With plumbing clicks this pricey, every customer who finds you in the map instead of an ad saves real money (GTL estimate). Our guide on how many reviews a plumber needs gives the numbers for 10 Southeast cities.

Example (sample numbers). A made-up plumber spends $2,000 a month on ads and has 25 reviews. They cut ads to $1,200, ask every job for a review and reach 90 reviews by summer, when more calls come from the map.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Search "plumber near me" from your shop and count the top three map results' reviews.
- [ ] Compare with your own count.
- [ ] Text your last 10 customers your review link today.

or we can do it for you

Free sample: A ranking check and 10 fixes

So you can see where you stand in the free results before you pay for clicks. SEO is $400 a month, with a 7-day full refund.

SEO: growthatlocal.com/services/seo



Part 5

Four ways to pay less per click

10 Bid on exact searches

The idea. Google has three ways to match your keywords to searches. Broad match can show your ad on any related search. Phrase match, in quotes, shows it on searches that include your meaning. Exact match, in square brackets, shows it on searches with the same meaning (Google Ads Help, support.google.com). Broad match is the default. At plumbing prices, a few broad-match clicks on "plumber salary" or "how to unclog a toilet" add up fast (GTL estimate).

Example (sample numbers). A made-up plumber starts with five exact keywords: [water heater repair], [emergency plumber], [plumber near me], [sewer line repair] and [leak detection]. After a month they add phrase match for the two that booked the most jobs.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Write five exact keywords in square brackets, for the jobs you want.
- [ ] Check whether any campaign you have is on broad match.
- [ ] Plan one review of results after 30 days.

11 Show ads only when you can answer

The idea. You can choose the hours and days your ads run, and raise or lower bids for certain times (Google Ads Help, support.google.com). If nobody answers after 6 pm, stop ads at 6 pm. The night searches are the priciest ones (section 4), so they waste the most when they hit voicemail (GTL estimate).

Example (sample numbers). A made-up plumber runs ads 7 am to 7 pm on weekdays and raises bids on Monday mornings, when weekend problems come in. Nights and Sundays are off.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Write down the hours someone answers your phone.
- [ ] Set your ad schedule to those hours.
- [ ] If you have an on-call tech, set a separate night schedule for those nights only.

12 Draw your area tight

The idea. You can show ads to people within a set distance of your shop, at least 1 km (Google Ads Help, support.google.com). Google's default, "Presence or interest," also reaches people elsewhere who show interest in your area. "Presence" sticks to people who are in or regularly in it (Google Ads Help, support.google.com). Emergency callers want someone there in an hour, so a plumber's circle should match the drive you can make that fast (GTL estimate).

Example (sample numbers). A made-up plumber sets a 15-mile circle for emergency searches and a 25-mile circle for water heater and repipe searches, in two campaigns.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Mark how far a van can get in an hour.
- [ ] Set your radius to match for urgent searches.
- [ ] Switch location options to "Presence."

13 Block the searches that waste money

The idea. Negative keywords keep your ad off searches you don't want (Google Ads Help, support.google.com). The search terms report shows the real searches that triggered your ads (Google Ads Help, support.google.com). Read it every week for the first month and block what doesn't fit.

Example (sample numbers). A made-up plumber finds clicks from "plumber apprentice jobs," "pvc fittings" and "how to fix a running toilet" in week one. They block all three ideas.

Do it in 24 hours

- [ ] Add these as negative keywords to start: jobs, hiring, salary, apprentice, school, license, "how to", diy, youtube, parts, supply, fittings, pvc, thaw.
- [ ] Open the search terms report after 7 days.
- [ ] Block every search that would never book a plumber.

or we can do it for you

Free sample: A profile check-up with 10+ fixes

For the map results you don't pay per click for. Google Business Profile is $200 a month, with a 7-day full refund.

Google Business Profile: growthatlocal.com/services/google-business-profile



Your first 24 hours, in one list

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

- [ ] Write down your metro or state "plumber near me" price (sections 2 and 3).
- [ ] Decide whether you really answer at night (section 4).
- [ ] Count your reviews against the top three map results (section 9).
- [ ] Pick five exact keywords (section 10).
- [ ] Set ad hours to when someone answers (section 11).
- [ ] Add the starter negative keywords (section 13).



Where to go next

To see whether Google's pay-per-lead ads would suit you better, read Google's Local Services Ads: worth it?. For every plumbing marketing cost on one page, read What marketing should cost a plumber in 2026. For the whole job of getting more plumbing calls, read The Plumber Marketing Playbook.

To check whether ads would pay at your numbers, try the free Google Ads calculator. To see how plumbing clicks compare with 69 other local trades, read What a Click Costs: Google Ads Prices for 70 Local Trades, 2026.



If you'd rather hand it off

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

Best fit for this guide: SEO. Free sample: a ranking check and 10 fixes. SEO is $400 a month, with a 7-day full refund.

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.

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.

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.

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

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 and monthly search estimates for 28 plumbing searches, for the US, all 50 states and DC, 10 regions and 10 Southeast metro areas (TV markets), pulled November 12, 2026. Typical click = average weighted by each search's monthly searches; middle search = median. (sections 1 to 13)

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 (all sections)
- Google Ads API reference, KeywordPlanHistoricalMetrics ("Average Cost Per Click in micros for the keyword"; competition index "determined by the number of ad slots filled divided by the total number of ad slots available"): developers.google.com (before you start, section 1)
- Google Ads Help, "About overdelivery and your average daily budget" (up to twice the daily budget in a day, no more than 30.4 times it in a month): support.google.com (section 6)
- Google Business Profile Help, "Tips to improve your local ranking on Google" (local results are mainly based on relevance, distance and prominence; no way to pay for a better local ranking): support.google.com (section 9)
- Google Ads Help, "About keyword matching options" (broad, phrase and exact match; quotes for phrase, square brackets for exact): support.google.com (section 10)
- Google Ads Help, "About Ad Scheduling" (choose hours and days; bid adjustments by day and time): support.google.com (section 11)
- Google Ads Help, "Target ads to geographic locations" (radius targeting, at least 1 km): support.google.com (section 12)
- Google Ads Help, "About advanced location options" ("Presence or interest" is the default; "Presence" reaches people in or regularly in your area): support.google.com (section 12)
- Google Ads Help, "About negative keywords" (exclude search terms; negative broad, phrase and exact match): support.google.com (section 13)
- Google Ads Help, "About the search terms report" (shows the searches that triggered your ads): support.google.com (section 13)

GTL estimates

These are our own judgment, not measured facts:

1. Clicks per budget = budget divided by the click price (sections 6, 7). Reasoning: Google charges per click, and your own price will sit above or below its average.
2. 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 7). Reasoning: 7 in 100 is close to our calculator's starting point; urgent plumbing callers often call the first ad, which pushes a good month toward 15 in 100.
3. Emergency searches cost most because the caller hires on the spot (section 4). Reasoning: advertisers bid most where clicks pay back fastest.

4. Cheap searches like "frozen pipes" are mostly people fixing it themselves (section 5). Reasoning: they read like how-to questions or product shopping.
5. Western plumbing clicks cost more because many plumbers bid in fast-growing cities (section 3). Reasoning: the priciest states are the fastest-building ones.
6. Ads suit spare crew time, big jobs and new businesses; reviews come first when you trail the top three (sections 8, 9). Reasoning: map clicks are free, and one water heater job pays for many clicks.
7. Exact match, ad hours, a drive-time radius and negative keywords cut wasted clicks (sections 10 to 13). Reasoning: each one keeps your ad off searches, hours or places that can't become a job.

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