

Shopify's Store Trust Checklist

New research shows what customers care about when shopping online

What is the online store trust checklist?

Shopify's research team conducted a series of in-depth interviews with North American shoppers to learn how customer trust is formed in online stores. This checklist is a summary of their findings, created to help business owners understand what essential aspects of their online store experience creates trust among customers, along with the trust-busting mistakes to avoid.

How to use this checklist?

This checklist is divided into five areas that cover the full purchase. Each statement is ranked according to its impact on building trust:

Must have

Crucial for customers' trust

Should have

Important but not crucial for customers' trust

Could have

Desirable but less important for customers' trust

1. Ace the first impression on your homepage

Goal: Create a homepage that invites customers to stay and look around—and that establishes what your store is about at a glance.

Must have

Content should consist of [high-quality photography](#) and error-free copy

The layout should be clean and uncluttered (important for North American shoppers)

Category navigation is easy to understand and use across all devices

Should have

Category names in your navigation are clear and easy to discern (e.g. Shop, Women, Men, About, Contact, etc.)

When [selling internationally](#): Copy and content is translated into the shopper's language and with prices in local currency

Could have

All pages across your store load fast without any errors (shoppers usually only notice when pages are slow or broken)

2. Put the essential information up front

Goal: Make product information easy to discover with detailed product pages, accurate search results, and collection pages.

Must have

A variety of product photos can be found on each product page

The [product description](#) is broken down into distinct sections for readability

When appropriate, the product page contains a size chart, preferably with size conversions

The product page contains recent product reviews

Should have

[Return policy](#) and shipping information are included on the product page

Could have

A product video included on the product page

Desktop only: A “quick view” option on collections that allows customers to view the product without opening the product page

3. Tell customers about your business

Goal: Share your brand story and why the business was started.

Must have

The store has an [About Us page](#)

The store has a [Contact page](#)

Contact page includes a phone number

The content of the About Us page includes a detailed story of the brand

Should have

The contact page includes a professional email associated with their store domain (e.g. info@yourstore.com and not yourstore@outlook.com)

The store offers an option to contact support via an [online chat](#)

Could have

When appropriate, the contact page includes the address of the merchant's physical location(s)

4. Showcase satisfied customers and social proof

Goal: Provide customers with the [social proof](#) they're looking for about your brand and its products.

Must have

Product reviews are [positive](#) and have a rating of 70% or more on product pages

Product reviews outside of the online store are mostly positive (when applicable)

Product reviews are descriptive and with customer ratings on product pages

The store has a social media following on Instagram, Facebook, or other platforms

Store reviews are positive on external websites like Google, Facebook, Yelp, Trust Pilot, Amazon, eBay, etc.

Should have

Product reviews on product pages include photos

Product reviews for clothing/accessories/health and beauty include the reviewer's description of the product

Could have

Product reviews include a video of the product

Links to the store's social media profiles are easily visible in the store

5. Ensure transactions are transparent and easy to complete

Goal: Alleviate the customer's doubts, lower their perception of risk, and avoid surprises throughout the checkout process.

Must have

Return policy is clear and easy to understand

When shipping internationally: Shipping policy should clearly state who pays duties and taxes

Should have

Surface shipping costs on the online store

Discount code can be applied in the cart

The shopper can edit the cart's content

Familiar payment methods are available (such as PayPal and Shop Pay)

Could have

Order status tracking is optional

Rewards and discounts for future sales are surfaced on the order confirmation page

Easy access to the contact page in case order editing is needed

For international stores, a language and currency switcher is available

To learn more about the research, and see visual examples for each criteria, [check out the full report here](#)