The Small Business DIY SEO Checklist for 2026

NORTH STAR
WEB SOLUTIONS
Guiding Your Digital Growth

In 2026, SEO is no longer about "tricking" Google; it's about providing the most accessible, high-speed, and authoritative answer to a user's question. Follow these 5 steps to audit your own site in under 30 minutes.

1. The "On-Page" Technical Basics

- [ ] Single H1 Tag: Does every page have exactly one $H1$ tag that includes your primary keyword and city? (e.g., Plumbing Services in Denver).
- [ ] Slug Optimization: Is your URL short and descriptive? (Use /services/ac-repair/ instead of /p=123/).
- [ ] Meta Descriptions: Does every page have a unique 150-character summary that encourages a click?

2. The "Mobile & Speed" Audit

- [ ] Thumb-Zone Check: Open your site on your phone. Can you reach the "Call" button easily with your thumb?
- [ ] Image Compression: Are your images under 200kb?.
- [ ] Core Web Vitals: Does the site load in under 2.5 seconds on a 4G connection?

3. The "Local Authority" signals

- [ ] NAP Consistency: Is your Name, Address, and Phone number identical on your website and your Google Business Profile?
- [ ] Local Geotags: Have you mentioned specific landmarks, neighborhoods, or service areas in your text?
- [ ] Review Schema: Are your 5-star reviews "readable" by search engines (not just images of text)?

4. The E-E-A-T Proof (Trust)

- [ ] Bio & Photos: Does your "About" page show real faces and professional certifications?
- [ ] Internal Linking: Does every blog post link back to a main service page?
- [ ] Outbound Links: Do you link to authoritative local sources (like the Chamber of Commerce or local news)?

5. The "Search Intent" Verification

- [ ] Answer the Question: Does your content actually answer the specific question a user asked?
- [ ] Clear CTA: Is the "Next Step" obvious on every page? (e.g., Get a Free Quote).