Google Search Console

Setup Guide

How to add your real estate listings site to Google Search Console so your properties appear in Google search results.

Contents

1. What is Google Search Console?

Google Search Console (GSC) is a free tool from Google that lets you:

- See how your site appears in Google search results
- Submit your sitemap so Google knows about all your listings
- Monitor which pages are indexed and fix issues
- See what search queries bring visitors to your site

Setting it up ensures your property listings get found by people searching Google for real estate in your area.

> **Good news:** Your site already has a dynamic sitemap and SEO-friendly robots.txt configured. This guide just connects your site to Google so you can monitor and manage how it appears in search.

2. Sign In

1. Go to `search.google.com/search-console`

2. Sign in with your Google account

3. If this is your first time, you'll see a welcome screen asking you to add a property
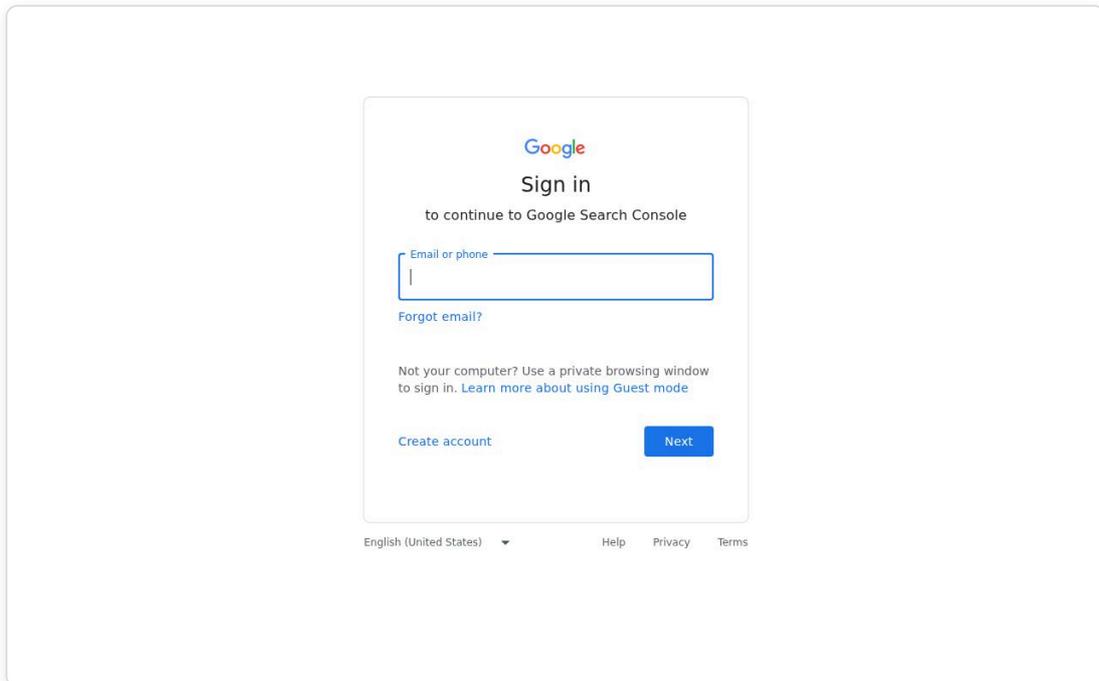
*The Google sign-in page for Search Console*

3. Add Your Property

You'll be asked to choose a property type. Here's the difference:

Type	What It Covers	Verification
URL prefix	Only URLs under a specific prefix (e.g. `https://listings.resp.ph`)	Multiple options: HTML file, meta tag, or DNS
Domain	All URLs across all subdomains and protocols (e.g. `listings.resp.ph` covers http + https, www + non-www)	DNS TXT record only

Option A: URL Prefix (Recommended)

This is the simpler option and sufficient for a single site.

1. Select **URL prefix** on the right side
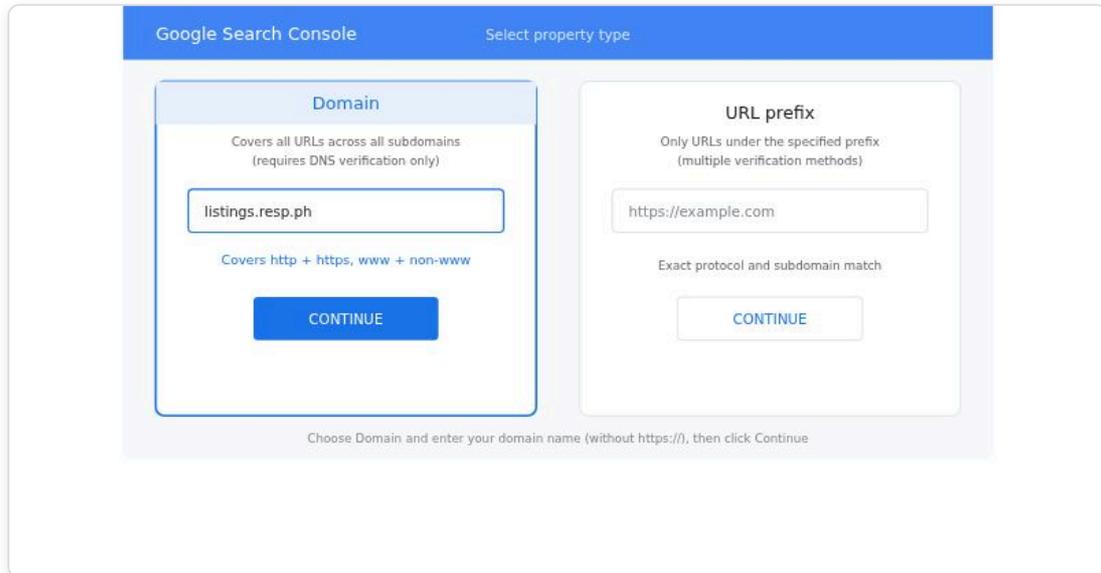2. Enter: `https://listings.resp.ph`
3. Click **Continue**
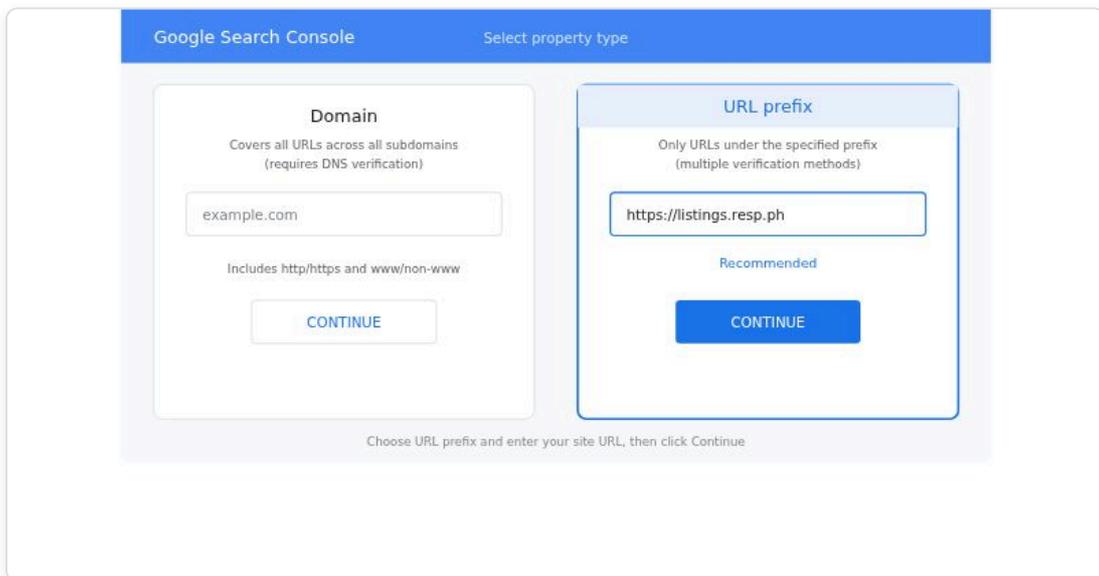
Select "URL prefix" and enter https://listings.resp.ph

Why URL prefix? It gives you more verification options (HTML file, meta tag, or DNS) and is all you need for a single site. Choose this if you only manage `listings.resp.ph` .

Option B: Domain

Choose this if you manage multiple subdomains under `resp.ph` and want one property to cover them all.

1. Select **Domain** on the left side
2. Enter: `listings.resp.ph` (no `https://` — just the domain name)
3. Click **Continue**

Select "Domain" and enter listings.resp.ph (without https://)

> **Important:** Domain properties can *only* be verified using a DNS TXT record. You'll need access to your domain's DNS settings (e.g. Cloudflare, GoDaddy, or wherever `resp.ph` is managed).

What Domain covers that URL prefix doesn't:

- Both `http://` and `https://` versions
- Both `www.` and non- `www.` versions
- All subdomains under the entered domain

4. Verify Ownership

Google needs proof that you own the site. The available verification methods depend on which property type you chose in the previous step.

If You Chose URL Prefix

You'll have three verification options. Pick whichever is easiest for you:
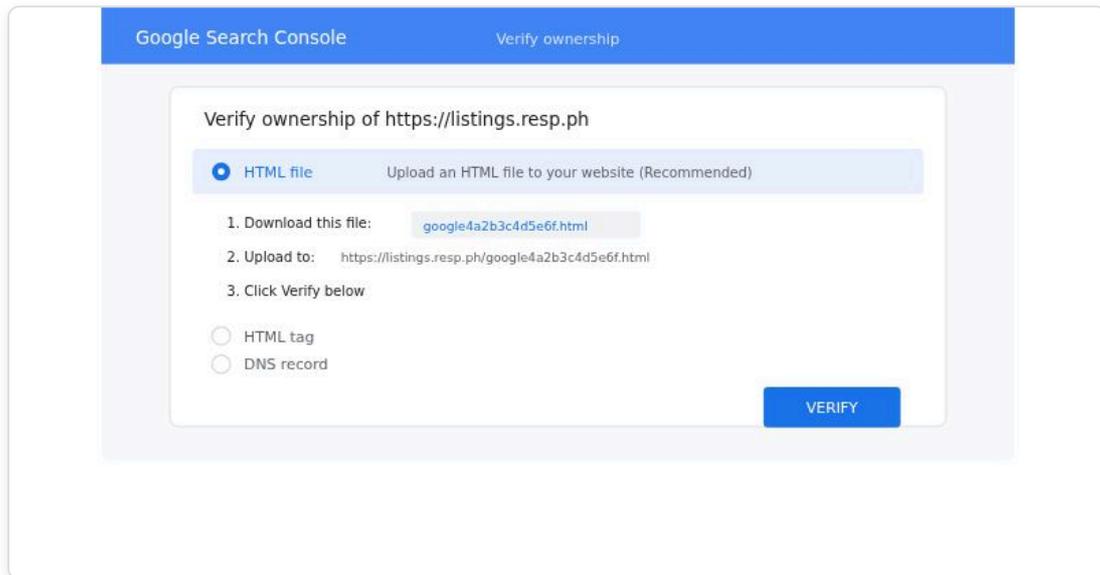
The verification screen with HTML file upload selected (recommended)

HTML File Upload (Recommended)

This is the easiest method for your site.

1. Google will provide a file named something like `google1234abcd.html`
2. Download the file
3. Place it in the `client/` folder of the project
4. Deploy the site so the file is live
5. Visit `https://listings.resp.ph/google1234abcd.html` to confirm it loads
6. Go back to Search Console and click **Verify**

Where to put the file:

```
reb-listings/
  client/
    google1234abcd.html   ← place it here
    index.html
```

```
listings.html
...
```


Place the verification file in the client/ folder alongside your other HTML files

Everything in `client/` is served as static files, so the verification file will be accessible at the site root.
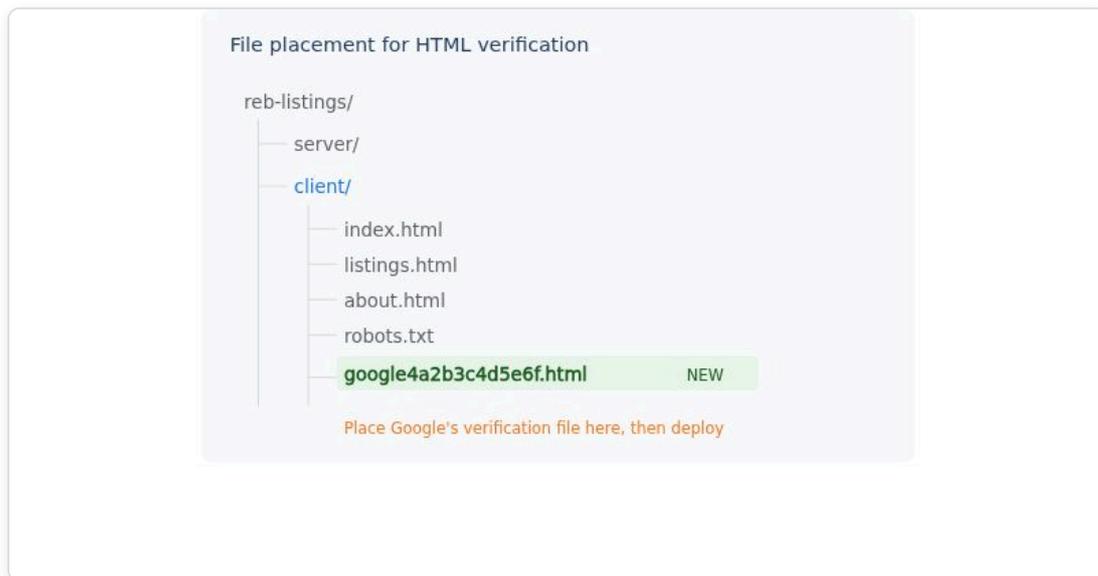
HTML Meta Tag

1. Google provides a meta tag like:
   ```
   <meta name="google-site-verification" content="abc123..." />
   ```
2. Add it to the `<head>` section of `client/index.html`
3. Deploy the site
4. Go back to Search Console and click **Verify**

> **Downside:** If `index.html` is ever regenerated or heavily edited, the tag might get lost.

DNS TXT Record

1. Google provides a TXT record value like: `google-site-verification=abc123...`
2. Go to your DNS provider (wherever `resp.ph` DNS is managed)
3. Add a TXT record for `listings.resp.ph` with the value Google provides
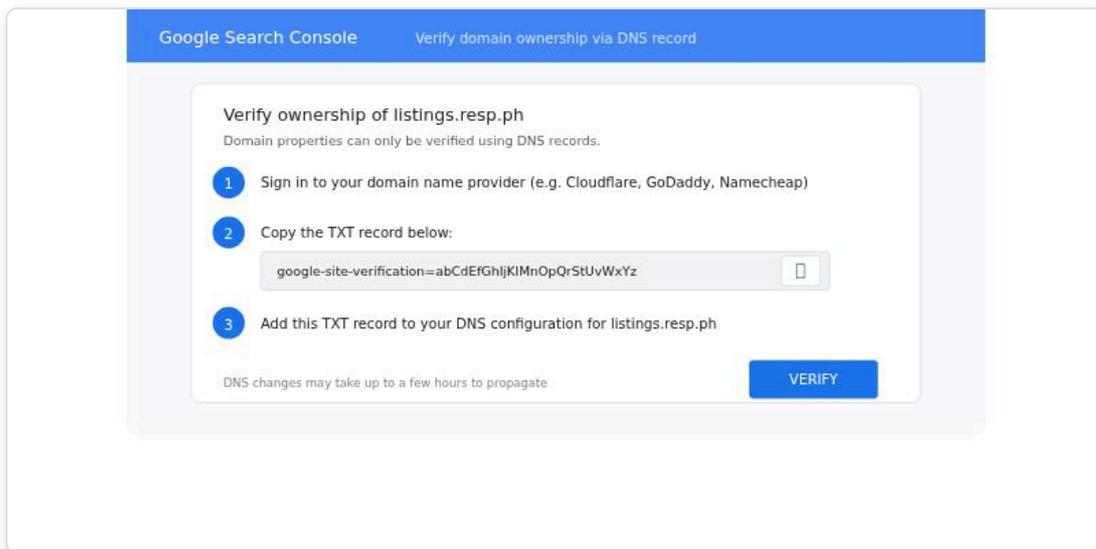4. Wait 5–10 minutes for DNS propagation
5. Go back to Search Console and click **Verify**

> **Note:** DNS changes can take up to 48 hours in rare cases, but usually work within minutes.

If You Chose Domain

Domain properties can **only** be verified using a DNS TXT record. There are no other options.

Domain verification — copy the TXT record and add it to your DNS

1. Google will display a TXT record value (e.g. `google-site-verification=abCdEfGh...`)
2. Copy the TXT record using the copy button
3. Sign in to your DNS provider (wherever `resp.ph` DNS is managed — e.g. Cloudflare, GoDaddy, Namecheap)
4. Go to the DNS settings for your domain
5. Add a new **TXT record**:

Field	Value
Type	`TXT`
Name / Host	`listings` (or `listings.resp.ph` — depends on your provider)
Value / Content	The verification string Google gave you
TTL	Auto (or 3600)

6. Save the DNS record
7. Wait a few minutes for DNS propagation
8. Go back to Search Console and click **Verify**

> **DNS propagation:** Usually takes 5–10 minutes, but can take up to 48 hours in rare cases. If verification fails, wait and try again later.

> **Don't delete the TXT record** after verification. Google periodically re-checks ownership. If the record is removed, you may lose access to Search Console for your site.

Verify your site ownership

What is ownership verification?

Ownership verification means proving to Search Console that you own a specific website. A verified owner has the highest degree of permissions in Search Console.

Why is this so complicated?
Site owners in Search Console have access to sensitive Google Search information about a site. Site owners can also perform actions that can affect a site's presence and behavior on Google Search and other Google services. Because of this, we want to make sure that only a real site owner is granted owner permissions on Search Console.

Verify site ownership

1. Either add a new property or choose an unverified property from your property selector.
2. Choose one of the verification methods listed below and follow the instructions. The verification page will list which methods are available and recommended for your site.
3. If you are unable to verify site ownership for some reason, ask a current owner to grant

Managing properties and users on Search Console

📄 Add a website property to Search Console

📄 Remove a property

📄 Verify your site ownership

📄 Managing owners, users, and permissions

📄 Property and user settings

📄 I don't recognize this new owner

Google's official help page with more details on verification methods

5. Submit Your Sitemap

Your site already generates a dynamic sitemap at `/sitemap.xml` that includes all active listings. You just need to tell Google about it.

1. In Search Console, go to **Sitemaps** in the left sidebar
2. In the "Add a new sitemap" field, enter: `sitemap.xml`
3. Click **Submit**
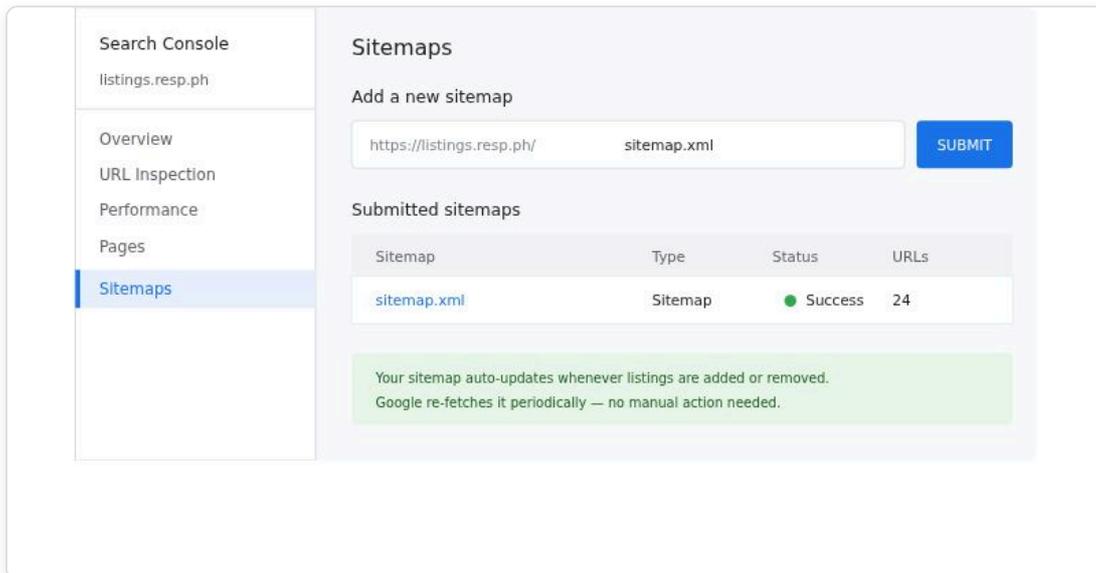
The Sitemaps page — enter "sitemap.xml" and click Submit

Google will show the status as "Pending" initially. Check back in a day or two — it should change to **Success** with the number of discovered URLs.

What your sitemap includes:

Page	Priority	Update Frequency
Homepage (`/`)	1.0	Daily
About page (`/about.html`)	0.7	Monthly
List Property (`/list-property.html`)	0.6	Monthly
Each listing (`/listings/{id}`)	0.8	Weekly

Automatic: The sitemap updates every time listings are added, edited, or removed. You never need to re-submit it manually.

6. Request Indexing

If you want a specific page indexed quickly (e.g. a new listing):

1. Go to **URL Inspection** in the left sidebar (or use the search bar at the top)
2. Paste the full URL, e.g. `https://listings.resp.ph/listings/5`
3. Click **Enter**
4. If the page isn't indexed yet, click **Request Indexing**
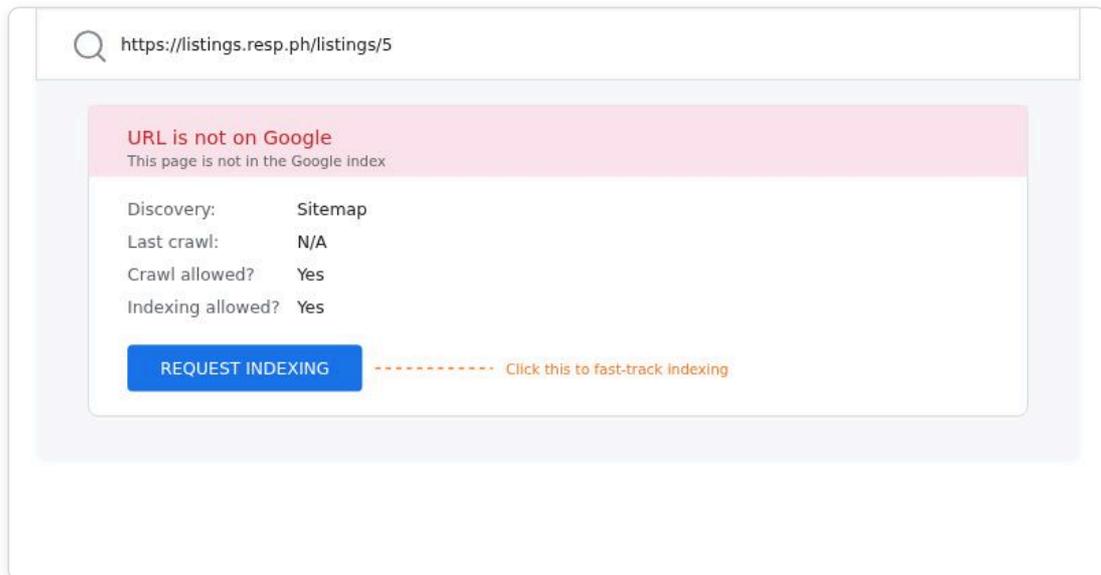
The URL Inspection tool — paste a listing URL and click Request Indexing

Note: This is optional. Google will find your pages through the sitemap on its own — this just speeds things up for important new listings.

7. What to Check Regularly

Pages Report

Go to **Pages** in the left sidebar to see:

- How many pages are indexed
- Pages with errors (broken links, server errors)
- Pages excluded from indexing and why

Performance Report

Go to **Performance** to see:

- Which search queries bring visitors to your site
- Which pages get the most clicks
- Your average position in search results

Common Issues

Issue	What It Means	How to Fix
Discovered – currently not indexed	Google found the page but hasn't indexed it yet	Normal for new sites — wait a few days
Crawled – currently not indexed	Google crawled it but chose not to index	Check that the page has unique, quality content
Page with redirect	A URL redirects somewhere else	Check your server routing
Not found (404)	Page no longer exists	The sitemap auto-updates — deleted listings are removed
Blocked by robots.txt	robots.txt is blocking the page	Your robots.txt allows all public pages — check if a new page was accidentally added to the Disallow list

8. Your Site's SEO Setup

Your site already has these SEO-friendly features in place:

Feature	Status
Dynamic sitemap (`/sitemap.xml`)	Active — auto-updates with listings
robots.txt	Configured — allows all search engines and AI crawlers
Individual listing URLs (`/listings/{id}`)	Active — each listing has its own indexable page
Last-modified dates in sitemap	Active — helps Google prioritize fresh content

9. Tips

- **Don't panic about coverage numbers** — it's normal for Google to not index every page, especially on newer sites.
- **Add listings regularly** — fresh content signals to Google that your site is active.
- **Check for errors weekly** at first, then monthly once things stabilize.
- **Keep the verification file** — if you used the HTML file method, don't delete it. Google re-checks ownership periodically.
- **Sitemap is automatic** — you never need to manually update or re-submit it.

> **Remember:** Google Search Console data has a 2–3 day delay. Don't expect to see results immediately after setup — give it a few days before checking reports.