



Working checklist

Shopify prelaunch checklist

Verify the store before opening sales: requirements, evidence and launch decisions.

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How to use this checklist

Before launch, I walk through the store as a customer would: find a product, choose a variant, read costs and conditions, test checkout and see what happens afterwards. Admin configuration is the starting point. The decisive evidence is how the store behaves on the domain and version customers will actually use.

The checklist produces a launch record, and it works after a migration or major change too. It does not guarantee that no defects remain: it makes tested cases, exclusions and open responsibilities visible. The examples are test scenarios to adapt to your catalogue. Legal references show where to look for an obligation and are not legal advice: your legal adviser confirms whether they apply to your store.

Prepare the test

Field	Complete here
Store and public domain	...
Theme or version to publish	...
Launch markets, languages and currencies	...
Planned date and launch decision owner	...
Order, support and technical owners	...
Evidence location and recovery plan	...

Give each check one of these results: **OK**, **NEEDS CORRECTION**, **NOT VERIFIED** or **NOT APPLICABLE**, always with evidence or a reason. P0 blocks the affected launch journey: an impossible purchase, a wrong price, delivery you cannot handle, compromised access or a material data-handling issue. P1 is fixed before launch or explicitly excluded from the published scope. P2 can go into the follow-up plan with an owner and a deadline.

Pick a sample that represents the risks: a simple product, a variant, an out-of-stock item, a discount, a shipping threshold, an ordinary destination and an excluded one. Add bundles, digital products, subscriptions or B2B only if they are in scope. A successful domestic order does not verify an international market.

L01 - Sales channels and published catalogue (P0/P1)

List the channels you actually need at launch. For each one, check eligibility, published products, price, inventory, currency and order handling. Seeing a channel in the admin does not prove that every product is approved or synced.

- ☐ The online store shows only products that are ready to sell.
- ☐ External channels have a verified publication status.

- ☐ Differences between catalogues are intentional and documented.
- ☐ An order from the channel reaches the planned fulfilment workflow.

If a channel still needs approval, I mark it as excluded from launch. I don't add a channel just to lengthen the row of logos.

Useful evidence. Channel → products → status → owner. For the website, keep public URLs and variant checks; for external channels, the status observed in the channel's own system.

L02 · Domain, access and public version (P0)

Open the domain in a session with no admin access. Check HTTPS, the primary domain and redirects from the domain variants used in communications. Make sure visitors don't see an old store, an unexpected password page or a preview version.

Record the identity of the tested version. Before changing the theme or settings, keep what you need to restore them: a theme copy, relevant exports and notes on the settings. A theme copy is not a full backup of products, orders and configuration.

- ☐ Work accounts have appropriate access and an identifiable owner.
- ☐ The public domain serves the intended version.
- ☐ HTTPS works without material blocked-content problems.
- ☐ Password and plan settings allow sales to open.
- ☐ Recovery has an owner and clear steps.

Record. Domain ... / version ... / check time ... / recovery procedure State the time zone used in the launch record.

L03 · Payments and checkout (P0)

Start with a test mode the provider supports. Shopify documents a test payment gateway and a test mode for Shopify Payments: neither charges you, and the test gateway needs a paid plan. While the provider is in test mode, customers cannot place live orders. A test with a real payment, cancelled and refunded afterwards, can still incur processor fees. Test orders do not appear in payouts or reports.

Go through variant selection, cart, address, shipping and payment. Check at least one successful and one declined payment, where available, and the correction of a wrong field. An error must not wipe out the customer's work or create an unexpected second order.

Case	Expected	Observed	Evidence
Successful payment	Correct order, total and status	...	...
Declined payment	Useful message, no false confirmation	...	...
Planned alternative method	Journey can be completed	...	...
Discount code allowed or excluded	Commercial rule respected	...	...

For wallets and accelerated checkouts, check the methods actually shown on compatible devices: a method you haven't tested stays not verified. After testing, switch test mode off and re-read the provider's status before opening. Handle test orders so they don't go into real fulfilment.

L04 - Prices, taxes, shipping and destinations (P0)

Prepare a matrix approved by the business: where you sell, which products, prices and currency, taxes to apply, shipping costs, stated delivery times and any handling of import charges. Compare the configuration with this matrix. The checklist does not determine tax rates or tax obligations.

Test one representative address for each different rule, including special zones where relevant. With a free-shipping threshold, test below, exactly at and above it, then repeat after a discount. Weights, shipping profiles and locations can change the result for a mixed cart.

- ☐ The total shown matches the expected total for the market.
- ☐ Served destinations have usable options and realistic delivery times.
- ☐ Excluded destinations get no delivery promise.
- ☐ Mixed carts and special products follow the intended rules.
- ☐ Taxes and charges are described consistently on the product page, in policies and at checkout.

Keep the non-personal test address, the cart contents, the expected total and the observed total. If you can't explain a difference, stop that journey before opening it for sales.

L05 - Orders, inventory and fulfilment (P0)

Open the order the test created. The work doesn't end at the thank-you page: whoever packs the goods must receive the right variant, quantity, address and service.

Check the stock decrease, any reservation, locations and the rules for selling out-of-stock items. For digital products, check delivery and access permissions; for subscriptions, the schedule and recurring amounts; for bundles, components and availability.

- ☐ The order reaches the system the operations owner uses.
- ☐ No automation fulfils the test order by mistake.
- ☐ Confirmation, tracking and any cancellation follow a clear flow.

- ☐ Refund and inventory restock are tested within the limits of the test.

L05 done. Someone other than the person who set up the catalogue understands what to ship and how to handle an exception. Record the test order ID and the steps observed, without exporting unnecessary personal data.

L06 - Information pages, terms and withdrawal (PO/P1)

Read the published pages, translations included. Contact details, business identity, delivery, returns, refunds, privacy and terms of sale must describe the service actually available. Templates and generators need adapting and checking by the person responsible.

- ☐ No placeholders, other companies' names or references to old domains remain.
- ☐ Times, costs and procedures match checkout and operations.
- ☐ The footer and the relevant points of the journey link to the right pages.
- ☐ Translations keep the conditions, exclusions and contact details.
- ☐ Information required for particular products or markets has been validated.
- ☐ The privacy notice describes the store's real processing, including analytics, email and installed apps.

For sales to consumers in the EU, check these points with whoever maintains your terms of sale. They are references to verify, not a conclusion of compliance.

Topic	What the source says	Source and date
Withdrawal	Standard period of 14 days (art. 9); up to 12 months if the withdrawal information was not given (art. 10); refund within 14 days (art. 13); among the pre-contractual information, who bears the cost of returning the goods (art. 6). Some categories of contract are excepted: check which apply to your catalogue.	Directive 2011/83/EU, EUR-Lex, read 17 Oct 2026
Online withdrawal function	For distance contracts concluded through an online interface, the trader provides a function labelled "withdraw from the contract here" or equivalent, visible for the whole withdrawal period, followed by a confirmation step labelled "confirm withdrawal" or equivalent. The trader promptly sends an acknowledgment on a durable medium. Applies from 19 June 2026.	Directive (EU) 2023/2673, art. 11a; in Italy art. 54-bis of the Consumer Code, Legislative Decree 209/2025, read 17 Oct 2026

Check. The withdrawal button is reachable from a test order where withdrawal is allowed. The acknowledgment reaches the mailbox used in the test, with date and time. The model withdrawal form remains part of the pre-contractual information: the secondary sources I consulted say the button does not replace it, but I did not read the annex in the official text (UNVERIFIED).

A published policy does not certify that the store complies. Write down who checked the content and which markets the review covers. Don't replace a real doubt with a generic tick.

L07 - Operational emails, forms and support (P1)

Send a message from the contact form with test data and check that it arrives in the mailbox someone actually monitors. Also test a form error and the confirmation message. Check recipient, sender, reply-to address and domain authentication where applicable.

Open the notifications from the test order on a phone: confirmation, shipping and refund, if they are part of the flow. Links, amounts, logo, language and support references must be readable. Operational and promotional messages serve different purposes: don't mix them without checking the conditions that apply.

Record. Message ... / sent ... / received ... / mailbox ... / link result State only the hours and response times the team can keep; every published contact channel has an owner.

L08 - Copy, product information and navigation (P1)

Reread the pages starting from the decision the customer has to make: what they are buying, what is included, which variant to choose, what they pay and what happens next.

Remove placeholder copy, unproven superlatives, fictitious reviews and certifications you can't verify. Strike-through prices, availability and urgency messages must match real conditions. Also check button labels, empty search results and error messages: a review of product descriptions alone often misses them.

- ☐ Menu and search reach the important products.
- ☐ Variants, sizes, materials and instructions are enough to choose.
- ☐ Calls to action lead to the stated destination.
- ☐ Every published language was read in its own context.
- ☐ Empty cart, empty search and sold-out states behave usefully.

Evidence. A real journey from the home page to a product and back, with errors collected by URL and language. For a copy problem, keep the original sentence and the approved replacement.

L09 - Essential SEO before opening (P1)

Check the home page, collections, products and main pages on the live site. Titles and descriptions should be specific, match the page language and make no promises you can't keep. The template should make the main heading recognisable and organise sections readably.

Check public accessibility, HTTP status, canonical tags and the absence of accidental noindex on pages meant for search. Shopify generates the sitemap automatically at the root of the domain (`/sitemap.xml`) and updates it when products, collections, pages and posts change; it is not accessible while the store is in private mode. With international domains, each has its own sitemap, to be submitted in the right Search Console property (Indexing → Sitemaps). A sitemap helps discovery; it doesn't guarantee indexing or ranking.

If you are migrating a site, prepare an old URL → relevant new URL map, test the redirects and update internal links. Don't change slugs just to make a report look tidier. Language versions need consistent URLs and international links: translating the home page isn't enough.

L10 · Images, video and performance (P1/P2)

Check sharpness and actual dimensions on the intended devices. Informative images need a relevant text alternative; purely decorative ones can have an empty alt. Videos need usable controls and, where needed, an accessible alternative to the content.

Identify the main loading image and don't delay it with lazy loading; defer off-screen media instead. Measure the weight and requests the theme actually serves: don't assume that a compression setting or an app guarantees a fixed result.

Record a baseline measurement for the key pages and test menu, variants and cart after changes. Lab data helps find problems; real-user data may not exist before launch. A single score doesn't replace testing the functions.

L11 · Analytics, consent and data quality (P0/P1)

Decide which measurements you need and who maintains them. Shopify Analytics provides its core features on Shopify plans. For GA4, use the current Google & YouTube channel integration: in Sales channels → Google & YouTube, choose "Get started" in the GA4 banner, then pick an existing property you administer or create a new one. The connection doesn't require a Google Merchant Center account. Avoid adding more than one implementation of the same event.

- ☐ Property, account and identifiers belong to the right business.
- ☐ Each essential event has a single technical owner.
- ☐ A test purchase doesn't generate duplicate purchases.
- ☐ Value, currency and transaction ID are consistent.
- ☐ No unexpected personal data ends up in URLs or analytics parameters.
- ☐ Accepting, refusing and changing preferences produce the intended behaviour.

A visible banner doesn't prove the tags respect the choices. Check behaviour before and after the choice, using the privacy settings that apply to the market. Consent Mode is a technical feature, not a legal certification.

For Italy, the Italian Data Protection Authority's cookie guidelines (10 June 2021, read 17 Oct 2026) point to these things to test in the banner:

- consent needs a clear, documentable positive action: scrolling alone is not enough, and neither are pre-ticked boxes;
- closing the banner with the "X" keeps the default settings, meaning no non-technical cookies;
- the banner carries a short notice, a link to the full one, an accept-all control and a link to granular choices, with buttons of equal prominence;
- users can change their choices at any time, for example from a footer link;
- after a refusal the banner should not reappear, unless there are significant changes, you can't tell whether the cookie was already stored, or at least six months have passed since it was last shown;
- analytics can be treated like technical cookies, with no consent, only if they reduce the risk of identification (for example by masking the IP address), produce aggregate statistics for a single site and are not combined with other data by the provider. Check the conditions of the tool you use.

Keep the evidence without unnecessary personal data.

L12 - Launch marketing and necessary apps (P1/P2)

Test campaign destinations: page, available product, language, promo code and attribution parameters. A finished ad is useless if it lands on a sold-out variant or a benefit that doesn't apply.

For newsletters and checkout recovery, check recipients, preferences, sending conditions, unsubscribe and deduplication. Don't switch on every available automation on launch day: assign a purpose and an owner first.

Inventory your apps with function, approved cost, permissions, observed impact and dependencies. Remove or deactivate what you don't need by following the app's instructions, then check that no orphaned scripts or blocks remain. The number of apps alone doesn't measure the load on the site.

L13 - Devices and journey accessibility (P0/P1)

Use at least one real phone and one desktop that represent your audience, plus the relevant browser combinations, and note what you actually tested. Simulating a viewport width doesn't verify every Safari or wallet behaviour.

Check menu, keyboard focus, buttons, field labels, errors, zoom, contrast and content that runs off the screen. Open and close the cart, filters and dialogs: focus must stay manageable and the close button reachable. Banners and chat widgets must not cover necessary actions.

Device and browser	Journey and language	Result	Evidence or limit
...	Product → checkout	...	...
...	Menu, search, contact	...	...
...	Keyboard, zoom, forms	...	...

Accessibility as a legal duty (EU/Italy). Directive (EU) 2019/882 (the European Accessibility Act) covers e-commerce services, meaning services provided at a distance through websites and apps at a consumer's individual request to conclude a consumer contract. It applies to services provided after 28 June 2025; Italy transposed it with Legislative Decree 82/2022, which gives the same date. For e-commerce, Annex I, section IV includes identification, security and payment functions, which must be perceivable, operable, understandable and robust, and accessibility information about the products sold when the responsible operator provides it. Microenterprises (fewer than 10 people and annual turnover or balance sheet total up to EUR 2 million) that provide services are exempt from the requirements (directive, art. 4(5)). Directive and decree read on 17 Oct 2026. How the exemption is worded in the Italian text and which declaration duties remain: UNVERIFIED, as I did not read the relevant articles of the decree. A technical test or WCAG score does not prove legal compliance on its own.

L14 · Launch review and Done criteria

Collect the issues by check, L01 to L13. Each row states the problem, impact, evidence, owner and decision; add rows if needed.

Check and issue	Result and evidence	Decision	Owner and deadline
...	...	...	...
...	...	...	...

Done for launch. PO closed on the published journeys; P1 fixed or the feature excluded; test mode off; public version reread; support and fulfilment ready; limits of the test stated; monitoring owner present; recovery workable. An unverified item does not become OK to meet the date.

Decision OPEN / OPEN WITH REDUCED SCOPE / POSTPONE. **Excluded scope and reason ... Approval ... Launch date and time ...**

L15 - First checks after opening

As soon as the store is live, recheck the domain, a product page, the cart and the payment status. Watch the first real order within the agreed roles: amount, notification, inventory and handover to fulfilment. If no orders arrive, don't blame checkout straight away: check traffic, availability and the journey test first.

On day one, assign check windows for errors, support requests and unusual orders. In the following days, review the data, the most visited pages, destinations with no shipping option and reported problems. Frequency depends on traffic and operations, but every check has a named owner.

First review date ... / owner ... / indicators ... / suspension condition The checklist stays reusable: after a change, repeat the affected checks and the dependencies of the purchase journey.

Sources

- Shopify Help Center, test orders: <https://help.shopify.com/en/manual/checkout-settings/test-orders>
- Shopify Help Center, sitemap: <https://help.shopify.com/en/manual/promoting-marketing/seo/find-site-map>
- Shopify Help Center, connect GA4 from Google & YouTube: <https://help.shopify.com/en/manual/online-sales-channels/marketplaces/google/getting-setup/connect>
- Directive 2011/83/EU, consumer rights: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32011L0083>
- Directive (EU) 2023/2673, withdrawal function: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32023L2673>
- Italian Legislative Decree 209/2025, art. 54-bis Consumer Code: <https://www.normattiva.it/uri-res/N2Ls?urn:nir:stato:decreto.legislativo:2025-12-31;209>
- Directive (EU) 2019/882, European Accessibility Act: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32019L0882>
- Italian Legislative Decree 82/2022, Italian EAA transposition: <https://www.normattiva.it/uri-res/N2Ls?urn:nir:stato:decreto.legislativo:2022-05-27;82>
- Italian Data Protection Authority, cookie guidelines (10 June 2021): <https://www.garanteprivacy.it/home/docweb/-/docweb-display/docweb/9677876>

Sources checked on 17 October 2026.