FREE CHECKLIST · APP STORE + GOOGLE PLAY · 2026

Submit once. Get approved.

The 8-point pre-submission checklist: what to fix before you press Submit.

Why this matters: in 2024 Apple reviewed 7.77 million app submissions and rejected 1.93 million of them, about 1 in 4. Every rejection means fixing, resubmitting and waiting in the queue again, and your launch date slips each time.

How to use this: go through it on the exact build you're about to submit. Only tick a box once it's done in that build, not just planned. Each item gives you the **why** (what the stores check) and the **do** (the fix).



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Store guidelines change often. Check the current Apple App Review Guidelines and Google Play policies before you submit.

Build & data 01–04

01 Test every critical flow — on a real device

WHY Bugs and crashes fall under Guideline 2.1 (App Completeness). In Apple's 2024 transparency report, performance problems were the #1 reason submissions were rejected.

DO Walk through login, sign-up, payments, subscriptions, push notifications and password reset on a real phone. Then throttle the network (slow 3G, then offline) and make sure every screen shows a clear message and a retry button instead of freezing or crashing.

02 Privacy policy & terms, linked in the app and in the listing

WHY Apple requires a privacy-policy link in App Store Connect and inside the app (5.1.1(i)). Google Play requires one in the listing, plus an accurate Data safety form. Reviewers will also ask why you need each permission.

DO Host the policy and terms at public URLs and link both from Settings and sign-up. Fill in App Privacy (Apple) and Data safety (Google) so they match what the app really collects. Write a specific purpose string for every permission (camera, location, contacts). Collect only what the feature needs.

03 Account deletion inside the app

WHY If users can create an account, Apple requires that they can also start deleting it from inside the app (5.1.1(v)). Google Play requires an in-app path plus a web link where users can request deletion.

DO Add Settings › Delete account. Delete or anonymise the user's data, and tell them about anything you must keep (invoices, for example). Add the web deletion URL in Play Console. A "please email us" link isn't enough.

04 Store billing for digital goods

WHY Apple 3.1.1: digital features, content and subscriptions unlocked in the app must use In-App Purchase. Google Play's Payments policy requires Google Play Billing for the same things. Dropping in PayPal, Paystack, Stripe or Flutterwave for these gets you rejected.

DO List every purchase and label it digital or physical. Use StoreKit / Play Billing (or a wrapper such as RevenueCat) for digital ones, and add a Restore Purchases button. Physical goods and real-world services (deliveries, rides, bookings) can use normal payment gateways. Rules differ by region (for example US court rulings and the EU's DMA), so check the current guidelines before you launch.

Listing & review 05–08

05 Store assets that show the real app

WHY Apple 2.3 (Accurate Metadata): screenshots must show the app in use, and the description must match what it actually does. Stock photos, mock-ups of features that don't exist and placeholder text get flagged.

DO Prepare an App Store icon (1024×1024), Google Play icon (512×512) and feature graphic (1024×500), plus real screenshots at every required device size. Write a description, keywords and a support URL. Only use images you have the rights to.

06 Remove unfinished features

WHY Apple 2.1 and 2.2 say to submit final builds; demos and betas belong in TestFlight. If a reviewer taps a button that crashes or goes nowhere, the app is rejected.

DO Remove or hide behind a feature flag every "coming soon" button, dead link, lorem ipsum and test screen. Tap every button once in the release build before you submit.

07 Give reviewers a working test account

WHY If reviewers can't sign in, they can't review the app, and Apple 2.1 treats that as incomplete. Google Play asks for the same details under App content › App access.

DO Create a dedicated reviewer account with realistic sample data. If you use OTP or 2FA, give that account a fixed code or a bypass. Keep the backend live during review, and explain hidden features or required hardware in the review notes.

08 Test the production build, not your laptop

WHY Debug builds hide problems: wrong API URLs, missing production keys, code-shrinking (R8/ProGuard) crashes and push certificates that only work in development.

DO Android: build the release .aab and install it on an emulator and a real device (Play's internal testing track or bundletool). iOS: archive a release build and test it through TestFlight. Confirm production endpoints, analytics, payments and push on that exact build.

Copy-paste review notes TEMPLATE

```
Hello App Review team,

Sign-in: username review@yourapp.com · password ********
OTP / 2FA: this account always accepts code 246810.
Sample data: the account already has [orders / bookings / content] so you can test every
feature.
Purchases: Pro features use In-App Purchase (product IDs: pro_monthly, pro_yearly). Restore
is under Settings › Subscription.
Account deletion: Settings › Account › Delete account.
Permissions: camera is used only for [profile photo]; location only for [nearby stores].
Anything special: [hardware, region, or a feature that needs setup].

Thanks! Contact: you@yourapp.com · +1 (000) 000-0000
```

10-minute pre-submit audit YES / NO

- ☐ Release build installed from TestFlight / internal testing
- ☐ Offline and slow network show a message + retry
- ☐ App Privacy / Data safety match what you really collect
- ☐ Digital purchases use store billing, and Restore works
- ☐ No "coming soon" buttons, dead links or placeholder text
- ☐ Login, sign-up, reset and payments tested on a real device
- ☐ Privacy policy and terms open from the app and the listing
- ☐ Delete account works inside the app (and via web for Google)
- ☐ Screenshots show the real app at every required size
- ☐ Reviewer account and review notes filled in, backend live

Want us to get it through review for you?

Global McLien Software Solutions runs pre-submission audits and fixes on mobile apps: store billing, account deletion, privacy forms, production builds and reviewer setup. Then we submit and handle the back-and-forth with review until the app is approved.

Book a pre-submission audit →

Sources: Apple App Review Guidelines (2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1.1, 5.1.1) developer.apple.com/app-store/review/guidelines · Apple, Offering account deletion in your app developer.apple.com/support/offering-account-deletion-in-your-app · Apple App Store Transparency Report 2024, as reported by MacRumors (May 30, 2025) macrumors.com/2025/05/30/app-store-2024-transparency-report · Google Play, account deletion requirements support.google.com/googleplay/android-developer/answer/13327111 · Google Play Payments policy support.google.com/googleplay/android-developer/answer/9858738

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